

NFHS 2017 Baseball Rules Changes and POEs

2-32-2c: Clarified when a base runner can slide through home plate in a straight line.

3-2-2 PEN: Clarified when a coach-assisted runner is declared out.

3-3-1 PEN: Developed a three-step process when administering disciplinary action to a player(s) or coach(es) for inappropriate behavior on the bench and in the field.

6-2-6: Clarified that the pitching restriction is based on number of pitches thrown.

8-3-6: Clarified when an umpire hinders the actions of the catcher in a defensive attempt and how baserunning awards are administered.

8-4-2s: A companion rule to support the above-mentioned 3-2-2 PEN modification regarding coaches' and players' conduct.

Points of Emphasis

1. Correct use of authenticated marked baseballs
2. Umpires asking assistance from partner on call
3. Positioning of team personnel
4. Legal slides

NFHS 2016 Baseball Rules Changes

Beginning with the 2016 season, umpires will be required to issue a warning to coaches before restriction to the bench/dugout or ejecting them as part of a new penalty progression to promote preventive officiating.

The revision to Rule 3-3-1 Penalty was one of two changes recommended by the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee at its June 7-9 meeting.

Previously, issuing a warning to an offending coach was optional for umpires, who will now restrict to the bench/dugout or eject coaches who commit a violation after previously being warned for a minor offense. However, coaches can still be ejected on a first offense if it is deemed to be major.

Also part of the modification to Rule 3-3-1 Penalty, coaches who receive a written warning (Rule 10-2-3) will be restricted to the bench and/or dugout for the remainder of the game.

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Baseball Rules Interpretations - 2016

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SITUATION 1: A head coach uses vulgar and profane language when addressing the base umpire. The base umpire ejects the head coach without first issuing a warning. **RULING:** When an unsportsmanlike act using profane language directed at an umpire is judged to be a major violation, the penalty is an immediate ejection. No warning is necessary. (3-3-1f2 Penalty)

SITUATION 2: A written warning accompanied by a bench restriction must occur prior to an ejection. **RULING:** If an unsportsmanlike act is judged to be a major violation, an ejection may be made without a prior warning being given. Additionally, there are specific acts in Rule 3-3-11-q, where the penalty is an immediate ejection. (3-3-1f-k Penalty, 3-3-11-q Penalty)

SITUATION 3: A head coach is upset about a close call at home plate. During an animated discussion, he bumps the plate umpire. **RULING:** The head coach is ejected. Physical contact with an umpire, even if unintended or accidental, shall result in an ejection of the offender. (3-3-1q Penalty)

SITUATION 4: The first base assistant coach is upset over an “out” call on a steal at second base. The assistant coach goes to the area around second base and, while arguing the call, kicks dirt on the base umpire. **RULING:** The assistant coach is ejected; no warning is needed prior to the ejection. The head coach is restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game. (3-3-1q Penalty, 3-3-1f6 Penalty)

SITUATION 5: During the course of the game, the plate umpire has utilized numerous non-verbal, preventative warnings to the head coach. In the sixth inning, the coach continues to complain about various calls and is ejected by the plate umpire. **RULING:** Unless the last event was a major unsportsmanlike act, the head coach must first receive a written warning and be restricted to the bench before an ejection. (3-3-1f Penalty, 10-2-3j)

SITUATION 6: Having previously received a written warning and a restriction to the dugout for a minor unsportsmanlike outburst, the coach again loudly complains about the plate umpire’s strike zone and performance. **RULING:** The coach is ejected from the game. Having been previously warned and restricted to the bench, any subsequent minor or a major violation results in ejection. (3-3-1f Penalty)

SITUATION 7: What is a head coach who is restricted to the bench allowed to do? **RULING:** Even though the head coach is restricted to the bench and may not occupy a coaching box, he is still the head coach. He still represents the team in communications with umpires and may address and coach base runners, the batter, defensive players and other coaches. He may hold team conferences at the dugout or bench area. He may leave the bench/dugout area to attend to a player who becomes ill or injured and may request to talk to an umpire concerning a rule or rule enforcement. However, he shall be ejected for any further misconduct. (3-2-1, 3-3-1f Penalty)

SITUATION 8: What may a coach who is ejected do? **RULING:** A coach who is ejected shall immediately leave the vicinity of the playing area and is prohibited from further contact – direct or indirect – with the team during the remainder of the game. His presence away from the field shall be such that he cannot be seen or heard from the playing field. He may return when requested to attend to an ill or injured player. (3-3-2)

SITUATION 9: A pitcher comes to the mound wearing a “camouflaged” compression sleeve that does not extend below the elbow. **RULING:** A camouflaged compression sleeve worn by the pitcher is legal. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 10: A pitcher is wearing a compression sleeve on his pitching arm that extends to his wrist. The compression sleeve is a solid black color. **RULING:** This compression sleeve is legal. Compression sleeves worn by the pitcher that extend below the elbow shall be solid black or solid dark color. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 11: The pitcher has a white compression sleeve that extends only to his elbow on his (a) pitching arm, (b) non-pitching arm or (c) both arms. **RULING:** This is legal in (a), (b) and (c).

Compression sleeves worn by a pitcher that extend only to the elbow may be white, gray, solid black or a dark color. Compression sleeves may be worn on one arm (pitching or non-pitching) or both arms. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 12: The pitcher is wearing a long, dark black compression sleeve to his wrist on one arm and a white compression sleeve that extends only to the elbow on the other arm. **RULING:** This is legal provided the plate umpire does not judge this to be distracting to a batter. (1-4-2; 6-2-1f)

SITUATION 13: The pitcher has a compression sleeve that extends to his wrist. The portion of the sleeve that is below the elbow is a dark solid color, while the portion of the sleeve that extends to the elbow is white. **RULING:** This is illegal. A compression sleeve that extends below the pitcher's elbow must be solid black or a solid dark color. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 14: The home team is wearing a vest-type uniform with a white shirt worn underneath. The sleeves of the shirt under the vest extend only to the elbow. **RULING:** This is legal. A pitcher's shirt worn under the vest is not an undershirt. It may be white, provided it does not extend below the elbow. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 15: The visiting team is wearing a vest-type uniform with a white shirt worn underneath. The sleeves extend to the players' wrists. The plate umpire informs the coach that this is not legal for the pitcher. The pitcher changes to a black shirt under the vest with sleeves that extend to his wrists. The opposing coach argues that this is not legal as uniforms must be of the same color and style. **RULING:** It is legal, in this instance, for the pitcher to wear a shirt under his vest of a different color than the rest of the team. Any sleeve worn by the pitcher that extends below his elbow must be a solid black or a solid dark color. (1-4-1, 1-4-2)

SITUATION 16: The catcher helps warm up a pitcher in (a) the bullpen or (b) on the field. He takes a crouch position and is wearing a skull cap and a catcher's mask that is not attached. **RULING:** This is not compliant equipment for the catcher. The catcher's helmet and mask combination shall meet the NOCSAE standard and shall have full ear (dual ear flaps) protection. (1-5-4)

SITUATION 17: A left-handed pitcher attempts to pick-off the runner at first base. Simultaneously with his throw, the pitcher picks up his pivot foot and places it behind the pitcher's plate. The throw bounces off the first baseman's glove and goes into dead-ball territory. The base umpire awards the runner third base, ruling that the pitcher was an infielder and the award is two bases. **RULING:** The award should be second base; only one base. The status of the pitcher at the time he made the attempted pick-off throw

was still that of a pitcher, not an infielder. After the pitcher places his pivot foot on the ground clearly behind the pitcher's plate, his status then changes to that of an infielder. Moving his pivot foot at the same time he attempts the pick-off does not change his status as a pitcher. (6-1-3, 8-3-3d)

SITUATION 18: With a runner on first and no outs, the batter hits the pitch in the left-center gap and R1 attempts to reach third base. The center fielder overthrows third base and the pitcher, backing up the play, catches the throw, and then steps into the dugout. **RULING:** This is a two-base award to both runners, awarded from the time the pitcher stepped into the dugout. The throw from the outfielder was complete when the pitcher caught it, and the subsequent action is a new one. If both runners are between second and third, they both will be awarded home. If they were both between first and second, R1 is awarded third and the batter is awarded second base. (5-1-1i, 8-3-3c2, 8-3-5)

SITUATION 19: R1 is attempting to score from third base and is obstructed by the catcher who tags him on the play. After the play is over, the home plate umpire declares "Time" and awards the runner home. R1 does not touch home plate. The next batter enters the batter's box and the plate umpire announces "Play." The pitcher next requests "Time" and appeals the runner not touching home plate. **RULING:** This is a legal appeal. The runner will be declared out and the run will no longer count. All bases must be touched, even on an award. A dead-ball appeal may be made before the next legal or illegal pitch. (8-2-1, 8-2-5 Penalty)

SITUATION 20: The batter singles to right field and (a) the ball rolls to a stop and the right fielder, attempting to pick up the ball, kicks it into dead-ball territory; or (b) the bounding ball strikes the right fielder's leg and deflects into dead-ball territory. **RULING:** In (a), the right fielder applied the impetus that caused the ball to go into dead-ball territory, the same as if he had thrown it there. The award to any runner is two bases from the base occupied at the time of the kick. In (b), the force on the batted ball caused the ball to go into dead-ball territory, so the award to any runner is two bases from the base occupied at the time of the pitch. (8-3-3c, 8-3-5)

NFHS 2015 Baseball Rules Changes

Beginning with the 2015 high school baseball season, teams will be allowed to use video monitoring or replay equipment for coaching purposes during games.

This revision to Rule 3-3-1 was one of five changes recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee at its June 8-10 meeting in Indianapolis. The committee's recommendations were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Previously, video equipment was permitted but it could not be used during games for coaching purposes.

"With advancements in technology, it was extremely difficult for officials to determine if teams were using video replay during games," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of sports and educational services and liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee. "The committee determined it was the right time to permit teams to use these technological aids if they so choose."

In other baseball rules changes, the committee expanded the definition of interference in Rule 2-21 to include follow-through interference and backswing interference.

Rule 2-21-4 will state that "follow-through interference is when the ball hits the catcher after the batter has swung at a pitch and hinders action at home plate or the catcher's attempt to play on a runner," and Rule 2-21-5 will state that "backswing interference is when a batter contacts the catcher or his equipment prior to the time of the pitch."

Hopkins said that follow-through interference and backswing interference are separate and distinct acts that previously were not addressed in Rule 2-21. The rule previously covered offensive, umpire and spectator interference.

The rules committee approved a change in Rule 1-5-1 regarding the batting helmet to be consistent with the rule for helmets used by defensive players. As is the case with head protection worn by field players, the batting helmet now must have a non-glare surface (cannot be mirror-like in nature) and meet the NOCSAE standard at the time of manufacture.

The definition of a foul ball in Rule 2-16-1 was expanded to be consistent with language elsewhere in the rules book. Specifically, Rule 2-16-1f will now state that a foul is a batted ball "that hits the batter in the batter's box." Article "g" will state that a foul is a batted ball "that hits the ground or home plate and then hits the batter or the bat which is held by the batter while he is in the batter's box."

The final change approved by the Baseball Rules Committee involves the following additional language to Courtesy Runner Rule No. 1: "In the event that the offensive team bats around, the pitcher and/or catcher who had a courtesy runner inserted on their behalf may bat in their normal position in the batting order."

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Helmet maintenance and usage
2. Pitching substitution/change
3. Sportsmanship – Celebrations around or near home plate
4. Sportsmanship – Post-game ejections

2015 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1: The lead-off batter comes to the plate wearing a batting helmet that has tape around and through one of the ear holes. When asked about the helmet, the batter says the helmet is in good shape with no cracks and the tape is present to hold the ear pad in place.

RULING: The helmet is not legal. The batter must obtain a legal helmet, one that is free of cracks and damage and has no tape. (1-5-1, 4-1-3b)

SITUATION 2: In the second inning, a batter comes to the plate wearing a batting helmet that has a mirror-like glare surface to it. The plate umpire instructs the batter to obtain a legal helmet and asks the coach to remove this helmet from play. In the fifth inning, another batter for the same team comes to bat wearing a batting helmet with a mirror-like surface. The opposing coach inquires if the head coach of the offensive team should be restricted to the bench since this is the second instance of a batter wearing an illegal helmet. **RULING:** The

coach of the offensive team is not restricted for this issue. The batter is instructed to replace his batting helmet with a legal one and to remove this helmet from play. (1-5-1, 4-1-3b Penalty)

SITUATION 3: An open media area was designated and properly lined before the game. The home coach has placed a video recording camera on a tripod in the media area. The opposing coach objects to the camera's placement, stating that the camera must be in the dugout.

RULING: This is legal. Video monitoring or replay equipment must be placed in the dugout or another dead-ball area. (3-3-1, 1-2-8)

SITUATION 4: The home coach has expanded both dugouts legally and has placed a video camera in the expanded area. The opposing coach tells the plate umpire that he thought the equipment must be within the confines of the structure of the dugout. **RULING:** This is legal. Video monitoring or replay equipment must be placed in the dugout or another dead-ball area. (3-3-1, 1-2-8)

SITUATION 5: The home coach has placed a wireless camera in the stands behind the dugout which transmits its recording to a monitor in the dugout. **RULING:** This is legal. Video monitoring or replay equipment must be placed in the dugout, stands or another dead-ball area. (3-3-1, 1-2-8)

SITUATION 6: To obtain information on the opposing pitcher, the team is using a radar gun in (a) its own dugout or (b) in the stands, where it is being handled by a parent of the team. **RULING:** Legal in both (a) and (b). (3-3-1)

SITUATION 7: An assistant coach in the uniform of his team, is sitting in the stands recording the game and using a radar gun on his pitcher. **RULING:** While it is legal for a camera or radar gun to be placed in the stands, it may not be used by a coach, player, attendant or other bench personnel. The assistant coach must be in the dugout or a dead-ball area inside the confines of the field. (3-3-1i)

SITUATION 8: As the pitcher looks into the catcher for a sign, the batter is moving his bat back and forth across the plate. The batter accidentally contacts the catcher with his bat during this movement. **RULING:** This is backswing interference. The ball is immediately dead and all players are provided time to regain their positions. (2-21-5, 5-1-1n, 7-3-7 Penalty)

SITUATION 9: With a crucial play at the plate not going his way, the coach of the defensive team checks his replay equipment and sees that the call of safe was not correct. He calls time and approaches the plate umpire with his tablet to show him the call needs to be reversed. **RULING:** The plate umpire may not use videotape or replay equipment for the purpose of rendering a decision. The plate umpire should professionally inform the coach that he cannot look at the video play and request that he return to the dugout. (10-1-5)

SITUATION 10: After bringing in a substitute pitcher, the defensive head coach is still at the mound after the eighth warm-up pitch. Shall a defensive conference be declared by the plate umpire? **RULING:** To maintain a solid pace of play for the game, the coach should be on his way back to the dugout at the conclusion of the pitcher's warm-up throws. If the coach lingers, the plate umpire should ask the coach if he wants a defensive conference to now be charged and, if not, the game needs to resume. (3-4, 2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 11: After a team's player has hit a go-ahead home run, the team gathers around home plate to congratulate him. **RULING:** Since the ball is dead with the home run, the players may gather outside the dugout to congratulate their teammate. However, they must provide the plate umpire the ability to observe all the players on base touch home to verify that they

scored. Preventative umpiring by the plate umpire, urging players to stay away from the plate, may assist in this need. (2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 12: In the fifth inning, the batter hits a bases-clearing home run for the fifth hit in a row by his team. As his teammates gather to congratulate him, one of them taunts the catcher with a comment on all the hits that have occurred. **RULING:** While it is acceptable for a team to celebrate and congratulate each other on such an exciting event, good sportsmanship must be maintained. The plate umpire should immediately warn and/or eject depending upon the content of the comment. (3-3-1f-2, 2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 13: Following the completion of the game, one of the umpires is still within the confines of the field. The losing coach berates him for his performance and directs some inappropriate language toward him. **RULING:** Since both umpires have not left the confines of the field following the completion of the game, the umpire still has jurisdiction over the game. The umpire may warn or eject the coach, even though the game is over. (10-1-2, 2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 14: After the umpires have left the field following the conclusion of the game, the visiting coach and some of the parents follow the umpires to their cars to state their opinions on the umpires' performance. **RULING:** The umpires are to be left alone and allowed to leave the field without being subject to poor sportsmanship. While the umpires no longer have jurisdiction to eject a player or coach, a report should be made to the state association concerning the incident. (10-1-2, 2015 Points of Emphasis)

SITUATION 15: A batter with his foot on the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box hits the pitch which goes directly to the catcher's hands and is caught by the catcher. **RULING:** The batter is out and the ball is dead. (7-3-2)

SITUATION 16: The batter legally contacts the pitch with his bat and his lead foot then lands on the ground outside of the batter's box. The batted ball contacts the ground in front of home plate and spins back, contacting the batter's leg that is outside the batter's box. **RULING:** This is a foul ball. With one foot still in the batter's box, the batter is considered to be in the batter's box at the time he was contacted by the batted ball. (2-16-1g)

SITUATION 17: With first base empty, the batter swings and misses the pitch for strike three. The catcher is unable to catch the pitch, which rolls some distance away from home plate. The batter moves from the batter's box to first base and the plate umpire goes up the first base foul line to observe the batter advancing in the running lane. The catcher's throw hits the umpire in the back and rebounds away, allowing the batter-runner to easily advance to first base. **RULING:** The ball remains live and in play. This is not umpire interference as he did not hinder the catcher's attempt to throw. Proper use of umpire mechanics would prevent this from happening. (2-21-2)

SITUATION 18: The batted fly ball lands past first base in fair territory and rebounds into foul ground. The base umpire, mistakenly declares "Foul Ball." The plate umpire, having a great view of the ball, immediately overrules the base umpire and declares the hit to be fair. **RULING:** Since the base umpire declared it to be a foul ball and it did touch the ground, it is a foul ball and immediately dead. The plate umpire cannot overrule the call. (2-16-1e, 5-1-1h)

SITUATION 19: Caught in a rundown between home and third, R2 is returning to third base when the catcher throws the ball to the third baseman who is covering the base. The third baseman does not catch the ball, which is caught by the shortstop who is backing up the play behind third base. Everyone else, including the third baseman, believes the third baseman has the ball when he tags R2 as he slides back into third base. The third baseman shows the umpire

an empty glove and is confused as R2 safely slides into third base. The offensive head coach wants the umpire to declare a fake tag and award R2 home. **RULING:** This is not a fake tag. The third baseman simply did not catch the ball. (2-22-2)

SITUATION 20: The batter hits the ball to the shortstop who bobbles the ball and throws late to first base. The batter-runner beats the throw but does not touch first base. **RULING:** The runner beats the ball on the play and is considered to be safe. The defense must appeal the missed base or tag the batter-runner before he returns to first in order to have the out declared for the missed base. (8-2-1 Penalty)

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NFHS 2014 Baseball Rules Changes

6-1-3 ART. 3 . . . For the set position the pitcher shall have the ball in either his gloved hand or pitching hand. His pitching hand shall be down at his side or behind his back. Before starting the delivery, he shall stand with his entire non-pivot foot in front of a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate and with his entire pivot foot in contact with or directly in front of and parallel to the pitcher's plate...any other infielder.

Rationale: To eliminate any confusion or circumvention of the set position pitching rule by a pitcher or coach. Also, to emphasize the pivot foot requirement to be in a legal set position.

7-3-5c ART. 5 . . .Interfere with the catcher's fielding or throwing by:

- a. Unchanged language.
- b. Unchanged language.
- c. Making any other movement, including backswing interference, which hinders action at home plate or the catcher's attempt to play on a runner, or
- d. Unchanged language.

Rationale: Current rule does not address this specific type of interference.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Malicious Contact
2. Coaching Attire
3. Umpire Authority and Enforcement

Baseball Rules Committee Addresses Batter Interference with Catcher

Changes to high school baseball rules will include an additional example of how a batter can interfere with the catcher's ability to field or throw. This year's rules changes were approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee at its June 2-4 meeting in Indianapolis. The rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The committee voted to add "including backswing interference" to Rule 7-3-5c to address that specific type of batter interference. The rule now reads, "A batter shall not interfere with the catcher's fielding or throwing by making any other movement, including backswing interference, which hinders action at home plate or the catcher's attempt to play on a runner.

The committee also revised Rule 6-1-3 to state that the pitcher's entire pivot foot must be in contact with or directly in front of and parallel to the pitcher's plate.

The committee also established several points of emphasis for the 2014 season, including malicious contact, coaching attire and umpire authority and enforcement.

"These are topics that I get calls and e-mails about during the course of a season," Hopkins said. "I share those with the committee and if they are seeing the same types of problems, then the red flag goes up."

Contact or a collision is considered to be malicious if:

The contact is the result of intentional excessive force;

The contact occurs close to the bag or home plate or above the waist of the receiving player; or

There was intent to injure.

Malicious contact can occur without these conditions if determined by the umpire, but these provide a starting point.

Even with cutbacks for uniform funds, coaches should still be dressed in a similar fashion to the players as a means of helping umpires recognize members of the coaching staff.

The final point of emphasis deals with umpires' authority. The committee noted that coaches must set the example of appropriate behavior so the team and its fans can follow.

Disputing the umpire's calls, failing to comply with an umpire's command, exaggerating the time for offensive conferences, gamesmanship and challenging the umpire's authority cannot be tolerated, the committee stated. "We want coaches to be role models for civility," Hopkins said. "The umpire has to make a final decision and the coach has to handle it with class and character."

2014 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1: With the bases empty, the batter's backswing causes his bat to contact the catcher, thereby dislodging the baseball from the catcher. **RULING:** Since there was no play that could be made, there is no interference. Play will continue. (7-3-5c)

SITUATION 2: With the runner from third attempting to steal home, the batter swings and misses and his backswing contacts the catcher, causing him to drop the ball. The action occurs with a) one out or b) two outs. **RULING:** This is backswing interference. In a), the runner from third is out; in b), the batter is out. (7-3-5c Penalty)

SITUATION 3: R1 on first base gets a great jump on the pitcher's move and is sliding into second base when B2 swings and misses the pitch for strike three. B2's follow-through strikes the catcher. **RULING:** B2 is declared out for his interference and R1 is returned to first base. (7-3-5c Penalty)

SITUATION 4: R1 on first base attempts to steal second base and is about halfway to second when B2 swings and misses the pitch for strike three. B2's follow-through strikes the catcher causing him to drop the baseball. **RULING:** B2 is guilty of interference. Since the pitch was a

third strike and B2's interference prevented a possible double play, both B2 and R1 are declared out. (7-3-5c Penalty)

SITUATION 5: The pitcher places his pivot foot on the pitching plate with the toe of the pivot foot in front of a line through the front edge of the plate and the heel of his pivot foot behind the back edge. His non-pivot foot is in front of the line extending through the front edge of the pitching plate. The pitcher attempted to pick-off the runner at second base. **RULING:** This is an illegal pitching position. When the pitcher moved in his pick-off attempt, he made an illegal pitch and a balk would be enforced. (6-1-2 Penalty)

SITUATION 6: The pitcher places his entire pivot foot on top of and parallel to the pitching plate. No part of his pivot foot is on or in front of the front edge of the pitching plate. His entire non-pivot foot is in a line with the pivot foot, on top of the pitching plate with no part of the non-pivot on or in front of the line of the front edge of the pitching plate. **RULING:** While this appears to be an unusual and a non-functional pitching stance, it is a legal wind-up position. (6-1-2)

SITUATION 7: The pitcher places his non-pivot foot on top of the pitching plate at a 45-degree angle with one-third of his pivot foot in front of the front edge of the pitching plate and the heel of his pivot foot behind the back edge of the pitching plate. His non-pivot foot is entirely in front of the front edge of the pitching plate. Without making any other movement, the pitcher places his pivot foot entirely behind the pitching plate. **RULING:** The pitcher initially assumed an illegal pitching position. Since he made no other movement, he is allowed to step back off of the pitching plate with his pivot foot and correct his illegal position. (6-1-2, 3)

SITUATION 8: The head coach appears at the game dressed in sweatpants and a sweatshirt. This combination is not an approved team uniform for a coach by the state association. **RULING:** The coach is restricted to the dugout for the balance of the game. He may coach his team from the dugout and provide instruction to his players. (3-2-1)

SITUATION 9: The home plate umpire, while positioned to make a call on a runner attempting to score, is hit by the ball in the mouth. His uniform shirt and pants become soaked with blood. **RULING:** The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee re-affirmed that if blood is on an umpire's uniform, he will need to have it cleaned with the proper solution by a trainer, or change his uniform/ gear. If he is unable to do so and he does not have spare clothing, and his partner does not have any gear or uniform pieces that will fit, it is permissible to wear what is needed to be able to finish the game. (3-1-6)

SITUATION 10: With runners on third and first, the pitcher legally steps and feints to third and then legally turns and picks off the runner at first base. **RULING:** Provided all the aspects of the pick-off moves are legal, the out will stand. The "31" move is legal in high school baseball. (6-2-4)

SITUATION 11: As the head coach moves to the pitching mound for a defensive conference, he tosses a baseball to his third baseman and has him take warm-up throws with another player to get ready to pitch. **RULING:** A team cannot have a fielder, in the game, throw a baseball for the purpose of warming up as a pitcher, during a defensive conference or a pitching change. If a team desires to warm up a player in the game to prepare him to pitch, it would need to take him out of the game to warm up and then later re-enter him under the substitution rule. (3-4-1)

SITUATION 12: The visiting team has developed an orchestrated team action to cheer on a teammate to get a rally going. The action consists of a rhythmic series of hand claps and foot stomps. **RULING:** As long as the action is within the spirit of fair play, and not intended to

induce a balk, create a distraction for the opposing team or intimidate/demean them, this action is acceptable. There have been some instances where a team, for example, begins to pound bats in the dugout only when the opposing pitcher begins to deliver a pitch. That action is clearly intended to gain an advantage and is not to be allowed. (3-3-1)

SITUATION 13: The home team has scheduled a game against Team A followed by a game against Team B. During the first game, a soft mist fell and the plate umpire believes he has the responsibility to determine if the field conditions are suitable for the second game. **RULING:** While the home team has scheduled two games on the same day, this should not be considered a doubleheader (two games between the same teams during the same day). The home coach has the responsibility to determine whether the grounds and other conditions are suitable for starting the game against Team B. (4-1-1)

SITUATION 14: In the fifth inning, the starting pitcher is removed for the first time in the game and goes to the bench. In the seventh inning, the original starting pitcher is re-entered to face the last batter. The opposing coach argues that the player cannot return to pitch, saying "once removed, he cannot come back to pitch." **RULING:** If a starting pitcher was removed to the bench, he may return to pitch in a game provided a) he has re-entry eligibility; b) he faced the first batter of the game, or faced the first batter as a relief pitcher until that batter was on base or out or the third out of the inning occurred; c) his departure was not due to a violation of the defensive charged conference rule (fourth defensive conference in a seven-inning game); and d) his relief did not take more than eight warm-up throws. If those conditions are met, a pitcher may return to the mound. If a pitcher is removed and goes to another defensive position, he may be removed and return to pitch once an inning, provided the above requirements are met. (3-1-2, 3; 3-4-1 Penalty)

SITUATION 15: One of the players for the visiting team has beads in his hair. The home coach complains to the plate umpire that this is jewelry and the player may not participate in the game. **RULING:** Hair styles are as varied as players. One is not preferred over another with regard to baseball rules. A player with cornrows is as compliant as one with a flattop. Beads that are in the cornrows are considered to be a "hair adornment," not jewelry. High school baseball rules have not concerned themselves with players' hair styles or adornment. The beads are legal and the player may participate. (1-5-12)

SITUATION 16: Following a home run, the catcher picks up the bat, shakes it and hands it to the home plate umpire stating that the bat rattles. The home plate umpire verifies that the bat does rattle. The defensive coach wants the bat declared to be illegal and the appropriate penalties imposed. **RULING:** Per Rule 1-3-2a-3, "Each legal wood, aluminum or composite bat shall be free of rattles, dents, burrs, cracks and sharp edges." A bat that has a rattle is an illegal bat. A player who uses one is subject to Rule 7-4-1 and his head coach will be subject to Rule 4-1-3b. The batter would be out and the head coach restricted/ejected. If the plate umpire did not notice the bat having a rattle prior to the at-bat, it should be assumed that the bat became illegal during the contact with the pitch and should not impose the penalties. The home run will count and the bat will be removed from further use in the game. (1-3-2-2a-3; 4-1-3b; 7-4-1)

SITUATION 17: The starting pitcher comes to the mound to take his warm-up throws to start the game. He is wearing a compression sleeve only on his throwing arm. The opposing coach demands that the sleeve be taken off before the pitcher may pitch. **RULING:** A pitcher may wear a compression or medical sleeve on one or both arms that is any color, including one that is white or gray, provided it does not extend below the elbow. A doctor's signed permission slip is not required. If the pitcher wears a sleeve that extends below the elbow, it can be worn on either arm, provided it is not white or gray or have white/gray on it. It also cannot be of a color or color combination that would be deemed distracting by the plate umpire. (1-4-2; 6-2-1i)

SITUATION 18: B1 hits a home with an illegal bat. The bat was left not far from the plate area. B2 has taken his position in the batter's box and has received the first pitch for a ball. The plate umpire, noticing the bat used in the home run, walks over to get it back to the respective team's dugout. When he picks it up, he notices it is one of the bats that has been decertified by the NFHS. **RULING:** Since a pitch has been thrown to the next batter, B1's home run stands. B1's head coach, however, is still restricted to the dugout for his use of the illegal bat. (7-4-1a; 4-1-3b Penalty)

SITUATION 19: F7 makes a diving catch. As he slides over the line designating dead-ball territory, his feet remain in live-ball territory. Is the ball dead? **RULING:** The ball remains live and in play. F7 must be entirely in dead-ball territory before the ball shall be declared dead. As long as any part of F7's body is touching the designated dead-ball line, the ball remains live. (5-1-1i)

SITUATION 20: In the second inning, the field umpire ejects the first baseman of Team A from the game for objecting to a call. In the seventh inning, one of Team A's players is injured, leaving it with only eight eligible players. The coach of Team A appeals to both umpires to allow his team's ejected player to re-enter. **RULING:** The player may not be allowed to re-enter the game. An ejection is not retractable. (10-1-6)

SITUATION 21: As the home team prepares to take the field on defense, F2 pulls on his one-piece catcher's mask/helmet as he sets up in the catcher's box. Both the offensive team and umpire-in-chief notice that the catcher's mask/helmet is one of the new ACME shiny-chrome, reflective-paint models. **RULING:** The umpire-in-chief instructs F2 to put on a compliant catcher's mask/helmet, the outer cover of which shall have a non-glare surface. F2 explains that there is no other mask available; however, adding dull/matte black tape over the helmet would make the helmet less reflective, which would meet the criteria of the rule. There would be no penalty unless F2 does not comply with the umpire's direction, then he would be ejected from the contest. (1-5-5)

SITUATION 22: R1 leads off the inning wearing a highly polished reflective batting helmet. The opposing coach inquires as to the legality of R1 wearing such a helmet as it would be distracting to his pitcher and the infielders. R1 and his coach explain that, a) the helmet meets the current NOCSAE performance standard for batting helmets; b) there is no rule prohibiting such product for use; and c) the player has a right to own and use the helmet when there is no rule preventing such use. **RULING:** The umpire explains that the use of such helmet presents a risk minimization issue for the team playing defense. The bright reflection of the sun off the helmet poses a dangerous situation for the defense. In a) and b), the fact that the helmet meets the NOCSAE performance standard for batting helmets is admirable and is compliant to NOCSAE standards; unfortunately, it is judged by the umpire to be unreasonably dangerous and is illegal for use. There are several rules references prohibiting the use of such equipment. (1-5-9,10) Regarding c), the player does have the right to own and use the helmet, just not for high school baseball competition. **COMMENT:** If the offensive team would like to use the batting helmet, it could make it less reflective by adding dull/matte black tape over the helmet in order to meet the intent of the rule.

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

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NFHS 2013 Baseball Rules Changes

1-3-2 NOTE: Clarifies and places additional emphasis on the importance and legal repercussions of altering non-wood baseball bats.

3-3-1f: Restricts the use of any video monitoring or replay equipment for coaching purposes during the course of the game.

3-3-1i: Restricts the use of any [electronic devices](#) in the coach's box.

6-2-2c Exception: Clarifies that an incoming pitcher be treated equally. If a pitcher is ejected, an incoming pitcher should be afforded the same warm-up criteria as if he were replacing an injured player.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Pace of Play
2. Compliant Bats
3. Pitcher's Stance
4. Risk Minimization
5. Good Sporting Behavior

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 19, 2012) — New language has been added to the high school baseball rules to re-emphasize that non-wood bats cannot be altered.

This additional note in Rule 1-3-2 was one of four rules changes approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee at its June 3-5 meeting in Indianapolis. All rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The new note in Rule 1-3-2 is as follows: "The NFHS has been advised that certain manufacturers consider alteration, modification and 'doctoring' of their bats to be unlawful and subject to civil and, under certain circumstances, criminal action." "Not only is it a violation of NFHS baseball rules to alter a non-wood bat, this new language emphasizes that an individual could be subjected to a civil or criminal lawsuit for tampering with a bat," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of sports and educational services and staff liaison to the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee.

Two other changes deal with the use of new technology. Rule 3-3-1f prohibits the use of video monitoring equipment for coaching purposes during the game, and Rule 3-3-1i prohibits the use of any electronic devices in the coach's box.

"Technology has improved to the level that mobile devices can accurately video different aspects of the game, which provides an unfair advantage to a coach by replaying the footage in the dugout during the contest," Hopkins said. "The committee also agreed that there was no reason to have any electronic devices in the coach's box."

The final change approved by the Baseball Rules Committee deals with the warm-up criteria for a pitcher who replaces an ejected player during an inning. If a pitcher is ejected, an incoming pitcher will be afforded the same warm-up criteria as a replacement for an injured player.

Under normal circumstances, a relief pitcher is allowed eight warm-up throws; however, the umpire may allow additional pitches because of an injury, ejection or inclement weather.

Decertification of 32-inch Reebok Vector TLS Non-Wood Baseball Bat

8/12/12 - Please be advised that the BBCOR decertification process has been implemented for the Reebok Vector TLS 32-inch model.

Effective immediately and until further notice, this bat (Reebok Vector TLS 32 length) should be considered a non-compliant bat and subject to NFHS Baseball Rules 4-1-3b and 7-4-1a.

NFHS 2012 Baseball Rules Changes

NFHS 2011 Composite Bat Lists are no longer needed. All bats must be BBCOR certified and stamped.

The two exceptions which are stamped are the Reebok Vector-TLS bat, 33 inch only and the Marucci CAT5 33-inch model, which have both been decertified.

See photos of the [Vector-TLS](#) and the [Marrucci CAT5](#).

High School Baseball Rules Changes Emphasize Responsibility of Coaches

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 6, 2011) — Rules changes approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee will place more responsibility on coaches for rules-compliant player equipment, effective with the 2012 high school baseball season.

At its June 5-7 meeting in Indianapolis, the committee also took steps to define a new tamper-evident protocol for non-wood bats. All changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Prior to the start of each game, each head coach must now verify to the umpire in-chief that all participants are legally equipped and equipment is in accordance with NFHS rules. Such rules include "compliant bats that are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design and production and helmets that are free of cracks and damage."

Another rule was added to address unsportsmanlike conduct toward umpires after a game has ended and after the umpires have departed the game site. It calls for state associations to determine appropriate action when dealing with these situations.

In addition, umpires no longer will be required to perform pregame equipment checks, as that responsibility will fall to coaches beginning next year. Coaches can still ask umpires at the pregame conference to confirm that equipment is compliant.

"The committee is placing a great importance on increased coach responsibility," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee. "It is one of our top priorities."

Prior to the June 2012 meeting of the Baseball Rules Committee, the NFHS will work with appropriate parties to research and develop a baseball bat tamper-evident protocol for non-wood bats and present the recommendations to the committee for its consideration. The goal for implementation is for non-wood bats manufactured after January 1, 2015.

"Bat tampering is illegal and a major problem in high schools," Hopkins said. "Everyone is looking for a competitive edge. With this note, we want to make sure that the state associations, coaches, teams and the public are aware that we are committed to minimizing any risk for players with bat tampering."

In addition, a minor change to **Rule 1-3-5** states that "No artificial or intentional means shall be used to control the temperature of the bat," based on scientific research that altering the bat damages the bat and poses an unnecessary risk of injury.

Changes to **Rules 1-5-8 and 3-1-6** deal with players' equipment on the field. State associations may now authorize exceptions to NFHS rules to provide "reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs and unique and extenuating circumstances," so long as they do not fundamentally interfere with the sport. Players and coaches must also clean or remove "any" (formerly "excessive") amount of blood from a uniform or piece of equipment before being allowed back into the game. Other rules changes approved by the committee include:

- **Rule 6-2-2c** Note: The starting pitcher may warm up by using no more than eight throws, completed in one minute (timed from the first throw). This rule applies to relief pitchers as well. At the beginning of each subsequent inning, the pitcher may warm up with no more than five throws, completed in one minute.
- **Rule 10-1-2:** The game officials retain clerical authority over the contest through the completion of any reports, including those imposing disqualification, that are responsive to actions occurring while the umpires had jurisdiction. State associations may intercede in the event of unusual incidents after the umpires' jurisdiction has ended or in the event that a game is terminated prior to the conclusion of regulation play.
- Suggested Double First Base Rules: Runner should use the colored base on initial play at first base (dropped third strike only), unless the fielder is drawn to the side of the colored base, in which case the runner would go to the white base and the fielder to the colored base.

2012 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1: B1 walks to the batter's box with a bat that has (a) a BBCOR certification mark on the barrel; (b) both a BBCOR and a BESR certification mark on the barrel; or (c) only a BESR certification mark on the barrel. **RULING:** In both (a) and (b), the bat is legal and may be used. In (c), a bat without a BBCOR certification is an illegal bat. Had B1 entered the batter's box with this bat, he would be declared out. (1-3-2d, 7-4-1a)

SITUATION 2: B1 enters the batter's box with a bat that has a BBCOR certification mark that measures 1¼ inch by ½ inch. The catcher sees that the certification mark does not meet the rule book requirement and wants the bat declared illegal. **RULING:** The bat is legal. While the certification mark is not 1 inch-by-1 inch, the key point is that the bat is a legal BBCOR bat and does have a certification mark. B1 may use the bat. (1-3-2d)

SITUATION 3: It is a cold, blustery day and the plate umpire looks into the home team's dugout and observes two players warming their bats over a space heater. **RULING:** The plate umpire shall inform the head coach that the two bats in question are now illegal because of the use of the space heater and cannot be used for the remainder of the game. (1-3-5)

SITUATION 4: The home team's third baseman takes his position on the infield. The visiting team's head coach notices his glove and protests to the plate umpire that the glove is illegal. The home team's head coach comes out and voices his belief that the glove is legal for play. **RULING:** The umpire-in-chief shall rule on the legality of the glove. Any questions regarding the legal use of a player's equipment shall be resolved by the umpire-in-chief. (1-5-10)

SITUATION 5: As the catcher is receiving warm-up throws from the pitcher, the plate umpire notices that he has some blood on his jersey. The catcher's coach argues that the amount of blood is insignificant. **RULING:** If there is any amount of blood on the uniform, it shall be changed or cleaned before that individual participates again. (3-1-6)

SITUATION 6: The second baseman has a cut on his arm and some blood has soaked into his jersey. The team does not have a means to clean the uniform and the player does not have a backup jersey with him. **RULING:** The player must change the jersey before he can participate again. He may borrow another player's jersey (and inform the opposing team of the number change), use a jersey from a player on the junior varsity or freshman team, or even obtain a T-shirt and place his jersey number on it. While the player must change to another jersey, he does not have to wear the identical style uniform he had to start the game. (3-1-6)

SITUATION 7: S1 has been in the game for several innings, playing for the shortstop. On a play at second, he scrapes his knee and there is some blood on his uniform pants. The team does not have another pair of pants that he may use and has no means to clean them. **RULING:** S1 must change or clean the pants before he may participate again in the game. Since he must leave the game, and the re-entry rule applies, S1 cannot return. (3-1-6, 3-1-3)

SITUATION 8: U1 and U2 have just cleared the confines of the field with the game having ended, and look back to the field to see several players and coaches engaged in a shoving confrontation. **RULING:** While their jurisdiction over the contest ended when they left the playing field at the conclusion of the game, both officials retain authority to provide a report on what they observed to their state association. (10-1-2)

SITUATION 9: It was a close, tumultuous, emotion-filled rivalry game between two competitively close teams. The game ended on a controversial play at the plate with the home team losing by one run. As the umpires leave the field and are walking to their cars in the parking lot, an assistant coach and some parents follow them wanting to discuss the play and offer their opinions on the umpires' ability to officiate. **RULING:** Game personnel shall not confront or direct unsportsmanlike conduct to game officials after the game has concluded. Since the umpires have left the playing field, they cannot eject the coach, but do retain the authority to provide a report to their state association. The state association shall determine appropriate action. (3-1-7 Penalty, 10-1-2)

SITUATION 10: With a hard slide at second base, R1 and F6 exchange words that leads to a fight. Several players leave the dugout and advance to near the foul line, where they stop. They do not engage in any confrontational activity. **RULING:** The players are ejected. Players who leave their positions on the field or the bench during a fight or physical confrontation are to be ejected. (3-3-1q)

SITUATION 11: At the pre-game conference, the head coaches of both teams verify that their respective teams are properly equipped and are using legal equipment. In the third inning, B1 hits a single and the plate umpire notices before the next pitch that the bat has only a BESR certification mark. **RULING:** The bat is illegal and B1 is declared out. The head coach is restricted to the dugout for the balance of the game. (4-1-3b Penalty, 7-4-1a)

SITUATION 12: At the pre-game conference the visiting head coach verified that his team was properly equipped and was using legal equipment. In the third inning, his lead-off batter entered the batter's box with a bat that was determined to have been altered. The batter was declared out and the head coach was restricted to the bench. In the sixth inning, B2 enters the batter's box with a bat that he had artificially kept warm. The opposing team brings that action to the attention of the plate umpire. **RULING:** Any bat that has been altered from the manufacturer's original design or has used artificial or intentional means to control its temperature is an illegal bat. The lead-off batter and B2 are both declared out, and the head

coach is ejected from the game because this is his second offense in the game. (1-3-5, 4-1-3b Penalty, 7-4-1a)

SITUATION 13: At the pregame conference, the home team's head coach verifies that his team is properly equipped and is using legal equipment. In the second inning, with two outs, B4 takes his position in the batter's box with a batting helmet that is cracked on the side of the helmet. **RULING:** The helmet shall be immediately removed from play and B4 shall obtain a legal helmet. (4-1-3b Penalty)

SITUATION 14: How many pitches and with how much time do pitchers have to complete their warm-up throws? **RULING:** The starting pitcher and any relief pitcher may warm up by using not more than eight throws completed in one minute timed from the first throw. A pitcher who was the pitcher in the prior inning may warm up by using not more than five throws completed in one minute timed from the third out of the previous half-inning. (6-2-2c Exception)

SITUATION 15: Runch, who was the starting pitcher, takes the mound in the fifth inning and takes his five warm-up throws. After getting B1 out, he changes positions with the first baseman, Lewis, who takes his eight warm-up throws. Lewis gets B2 to pop out and Runch now returns to pitch. How many warm-up throws is Runch allowed? **RULING:** When Runch became a first baseman, he obviously no longer was the pitcher in the game. When he legally returns to pitch later in the same inning, he is considered to be a relief pitcher. Accordingly, Runch is allowed up to eight warm-up throws to be completed in one minute timed from the first throw. (6-2-2c)

SITUATION 16: As the umpires enter the field prior to the game, the home team's head coach tells them that his bats are ready for inspection. **RULING:** The umpire-in-chief's duties are to inspect the condition of the field, receive the batting order of both teams, announce any special ground rules, designate the official scorer and see that each player properly takes care of his glove and loose equipment. It is no longer mandatory for the umpires to inspect the bats and helmets of each team. Prior to the start of the game, both head coaches are to verify to the umpire-in-chief that their players are properly equipped and are using only legal equipment. (4-1-3b, 10-2-3a)

SITUATION 17: With one out and R1 on third base, the head coach puts on a squeeze play. B3, a left-handed batter, steps with his left foot on home plate and pops up to the pitcher, who catches the ball and throws to third base for an apparent inning-ending double play. **RULING:** B3 has illegally batted the ball and the ball becomes immediately dead. R1 is returned to third base and B3 is declared out for the second out of the inning. (5-1-1b, 7-3-2 Penalty)

SITUATION 18: In the bottom of the eighth inning, the score is tied, with the bases loaded and two outs. B6 draws a walk and runs and touches first base. B1 trots in from third and touches home plate. B2, however, begins celebrating and never touches third base. **RULING:** All runners must legally touch the next base in advancing. If the defense legally appeals while at least one umpire is still on the field of play, B2 is declared out for the third out. Since this out would be a "force" out, no runs would score and the game would continue into the ninth inning. (8-2-1, 8-2-6j, 9-1-1a and d)

SITUATION 19: Having already had an offensive conference, the head coach asks for time to talk with the new batter. U1 informs the coach that he is allowed only one charged conference per inning while on offense. The head coach ignores U1 and attempts to talk with the batter. **RULING:** U1 should do his best to professionally prevent the offensive conference from taking place. If the conference is taking place before the plate umpire realizes the infraction, he should stop the conference and warn the coach. If the head coach ignores the umpire and holds his conference to completion, he shall be restricted to the bench. Depending upon his subsequent

behavior, the coach may be subject to ejection. Upon being notified by the plate umpire that the conference is not allowed, the head coach should stop his conference and he and his player return to their positions. (3-4-2, 10-1-1)

SITUATION 20: With runners on first and second and no outs, B3 has a 1-2 count. The next pitch is swung at and missed. The ball skips underneath the catcher's glove, bounces up and lodges in the plate umpire's clothing. While everyone is looking for the ball, R1 scores, R2 advances to third base and B3 obtains first base. **RULING:** Once the ball is found in the umpire's clothing, the ball is declared to be dead immediately. R1 will be awarded third base and R2 will be awarded second base. B3 is declared out. (5-1-1g4, 7-4-1b, 8-3-3d)

NFHS 2011 Baseball Rules Changes

1-1-2

Addition: The umpire shall not accept the lineup card until all substitutes are listed. There is no penalty assessed.

Rationale: Having all known substitutes listed will speed up substitution and player changes. A coach will still be able to add a substitute to the game with no penalty.

1-3-2 through 5

Effective beginning the 2010-11 school year, composite bats shall be illegal until meeting the standards of 1-3-2(e). ART. 2 . . . The bat shall have the following characteristics and components.

a. Each legal wood, aluminum or composite bat shall:

- 1. Be one piece, multi-pieces and permanently assembled, or two pieces with interchangeable barrel construction.**
- 2. Not have exposed rivets, pins, rough or sharp edges or any form of exterior fastener that would present a hazard.**
- 3. Be free of rattles, dents, burrs, cracks and sharp edges. Bats that are broken, altered or that deface the ball are illegal. Materials inside the bat or treatments/devices used to alter the bat specifications and/or enhance performance are prohibited and render the bat illegal.**

b. Each legal wood, aluminum or composite bat shall have the following components:

- 1. Knob. The bat knob shall protrude from the handle. The knob may be molded, lathed, welded or permanently fastened. Devices, attachments or wrappings are permitted except those that cause the knob to become flush with the handle. A one-piece rubber knob and bat grip combination is illegal.**
- 2. Handle. The bat handle is the area of the bat that begins at, but does not include, the knob and ends where the taper begins.**
- 3. Barrel. The barrel is the area intended for contact with the pitch. The barrel shall be round, cylindrically symmetric and smooth. The barrel may be aluminum, wood or composite (made of two or more materials). The type of bat (wood, aluminum or composite) shall be determined by the composition of the barrel.**
- 4. Taper. The taper is an optional transition area which connects the narrower handle to the wider barrel portion of the bat. Its length and material may vary but may not extend more than 18 inches from the base of the knob.**
- 5. End Cap. The end cap is made of rubber, vinyl, plastic or other approved material. It shall be firmly secured and permanently affixed to the end of the bat so that it cannot be removed by anyone other than the manufacturer, without damaging or destroying it. By definition, a one-piece construction bat does not have an end cap.**

c. Each bat not made of a single piece of wood shall:

1. Have a safety grip made of cork, tape (no smooth, plastic tape) or commercially manufactured composition material. The grip must extend a minimum of 10 inches, but not more than 18 inches, from the base of the knob. Slippery tape or similar material shall be prohibited. Resin, pine tar or any drying agent to enhance the hold are permitted only on the grip. Molded grips are illegal.

2. Be 2 5/8" or less in diameter at thickest part and 36 inches or less in length.

3. Not weigh, numerically, more than three ounces less than the length of the bat (e.g., a 33-inch-long bat cannot be less than 30 ounces).

d. Through December 31, 2011, each aluminum bat shall meet the Ball Exit-Speed Ratio (BESR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. No BESR label, sticker or decal will be accepted on any non-wood bat.

e. Beginning January 1, 2012, all bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum and composite bats shall be labeled as approved tamper evident, and be marked as to being aluminum or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

f. An aluminum bat meeting the standards of 1-3-2(e) is legal immediately.

g. A composite bat shall be illegal until meeting the standards of 1-3-2(e).

ART. 3 . . . A bat made of a single piece of wood may be roughened or wound with tape not more than 18 inches from the handle end of the bat. No foreign substance may be added to the surface of the bat beyond 18 inches from the end of the handle. Each bat made of a single piece of wood shall be:

a. 2³/₄ inches or less in diameter at the thickest part

b. 36 inches or less in length

ART. 4 . . . Only bats may be used in warming up (including weighted bats used for this purpose) at any location. Only bats and items designed to remain part of the bat, such as weighted bats, batting donuts, and wind-resistant devices are legal at any location.

ART. 5 . . . Bats that are altered from the manufacturer's original design and production, or that do not meet the rule specifications, are illegal (See 7-4-1a). No foreign substance may be inserted into the bat. Bats that are broken, cracked or dented or that deface the ball, i.e., tear the ball, shall be removed without penalty. A bat that continually discolors the ball may be removed from the game with no penalty at the discretion of the umpire.

Rationale: Recent bat products have circumvented the intent and spirit of the current rule. Improvements in science and technology now allow this change that will require bats to be within performance limits during the life of the bat. In addition, this change will minimize the ability for the bat to be tampered with or altered.

1-5-8

Change: Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, splints, etc.) must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than 1/2" thick. Knee and ankle braces which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require any additional padding.

Rationale: Risk minimization and clarification from the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

2-16-2

Change: A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly to the catcher's hands and is legally caught by the catcher. It is a strike and the ball is in play.

Rationale: Clarification and ease of application for the umpires and coaches.

3-1-5

New: Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (See NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussions)

Rationale: Clarification from the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee

8-2-6l

New: Last Time By. If a runner correctly touches a base that was missed (either in advancing or returning), the last time he was by the base, that last touch corrects any previous base running-infraction.

The BBCOR Standard

Approved BESR-ABI Composite Baseball Bats

Composite bats that meet the Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) and the Accelerated Break In (ABI) Procedure and approved for the 2010-11 academic year:

NFHS Approved BESR-ABI Composite Baseball Bats

Composite bat BBCOR standard requires compliance with Accelerated Break In (ABI) testing; i.e., the bat remains within the performance limits throughout its life. Current composite bats exceed the top performance limit with use.

Waivers for Composite Bat Ban to be Considered

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 16, 2010) — The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), in a ruling by its Board of Directors, announced today that waivers or modifications of the recent ban on composite bats in high school baseball may be considered in certain circumstances.

Earlier this month, the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee approved a new rule that bans composite bats, effective with the 2010-11 school year, until they can meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard.

The NFHS enacted the ban on composite bats because of a concern about the increased performance of the bats after the initial "break-in" that would lead the bats to exceed the current Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) standard or the BBCOR standard take takes effect in the 2011-12 school year.

After reviewing information from Dr. James Sherwood, director of the Baseball Research Center at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell; Dr. Alan Nathan, University of Illinois; and the NCAA, as well as consulting with manufacturers, the NFHS Board of Directors has agreed that if certain types or models of composite bats can produce consistent results through the life of the

bat and remain within the applicable test standard, a waiver or modification of the rule may be considered.

The NFHS is the recognized national playing-rules maker for high school sports and publishes playing rules in 17 sports for the more than 7.5 million young people involved in interscholastic athletic programs.

"The NFHS is concerned about minimizing the inherent participation risks faced by student-athletes in high school sports, which is why standards have been placed on baseball bats," said Bob Gardner, NFHS executive director. "At the same time, our Board is open to discussion with bat manufacturers regarding a waiver for composite bats that can meet the current BESR standard or the new BBCOR standard. We have advised the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association in this regard."

In addition to manufacturers, the NFHS welcomes input from other interested parties.

Baseball Rules Change Puts Moratorium on Composite Bats

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 7, 2010) — One of six new rules changes by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee forbids the use of composite bats until they can meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard. The changes, which were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors, will take effect with the 2010-11 school year.

After thorough testing by the Baseball Research Center at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee voted to outlaw composite bats until they can produce consistent results through the life of the bat, be made tamper-evident and be labeled as a composite product.

Elliot Hopkins, NFHS liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee, visited with James Sherwood, director of the Baseball Research Center, and spent several hours witnessing composite bat testing. "Rolling the bat gives it a higher performance," Hopkins said. "It can significantly increase the performance and that's huge in our game."

Rolling the bat isn't the only problem. Rolling only speeds up the performance enhancement that would occur over time after normal use. Even composite bats that were not altered will eventually see this increase in performance, and the rules committee views that as a major concern.

Rule 1-3-2 through 5 was completely rewritten with the intention of creating a rule that preserves the intent and spirit of the old rule, but is better suited to products resulting from new technology.

Under the new rule, bats with composite handles and tapers would still be legal. The stricter language applies primarily to the barrel of the bat.

"While the handles and taper are important components of the bat," Hopkins said, "the area that we recognized as more susceptible to abuse is the barrel."

Other rules changes this year aim at increasing convenience for coaches and umpires by simplifying the substitution policy and clarifying several rules.

Rule 1-1-2 now requires coaches to list all known substitutes on the lineup card before the umpire accepts it. Coaches will still be able to add a substitute without a penalty, but this should speed up substitutions and player changes during the game.

A change to Rule 2-16-2 was also made to clarify an existing rule and ease its application for coaches and players. The rule now reads: "A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly to the catcher's hands and is legally caught by the catcher. It is a strike and the ball is in play."

Similarly, a "last-time-by" rule has been instituted. The new rule states that if a runner correctly touches a base that was missed the last time he was by the base, that last touch corrects any previous base-running infraction. This last-time-by practice is commonly accepted, but is now legally Rule 8-2-6l.

The last two rules changes were approved on recommendation from the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee. First, in a change to Rule 1-5-8, all hard and unyielding items such as braces, casts, etc., must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than one-half-inch thick. Knee and ankle braces that are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require additional padding.

Second is an update to concussion language that has been added to the rules for all high school sports. The new rule, 3-1-5, puts strict constraints on players who may have suffered a concussion. The rule states that any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, including but not limited to loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion of balance problems, must be removed from the contest immediately and shall not return to play before being cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.

A complete listing of all rules changes approved by the committee is available on the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org. Click on "Athletics & Fine Arts Activities" on the home page, and select "Baseball."

Baseball is the fourth-most popular sport for boys at the high school level, according to the 2008-09 NFHS Athletics Participation Survey, with 473,184 participants nationwide. The sport ranks third in school sponsorship with 15,699 schools sponsoring the sport.

2011 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1: With R1 on first base and no outs, the scoreboard shows one out. B2 hits a ground ball that the shortstop turns into a 6-4-3 double play. The first baseman rolls the ball to the mound and all the defensive players go to their dugout. The team that was on offense comes on the field, taking their defensive positions. The umpires go to their respective positions between innings. **RULING:** The official scorer should inform the officials of the error. Both teams will retake their respective positions with the bases empty and two outs. (9-2-2)

SITUATION 2: In the bottom of the fourth inning, Jones comes to the plate to pinch-hit for Smith. The plate umpire checks the lineup card and finds that Jones was not listed as a possible substitute. The opposing coach argues that since Jones was not listed as a substitute at the start of the game, he cannot pinch-hit. **RULING:** The plate umpire shall accept the substitution, make the appropriate change on the lineup card and notify the opposing team and official scorer. Jones may pinch-hit for Smith. There is no penalty. (1-1-2)

SITUATION 3: The plate umpire is reviewing the submitted lineup cards at the pre-game conference. He asks both head coaches if they have listed all known substitutes on their respective lineup card. Team A's head coach states he will not list any substitutes on his lineup. **RULING:** The umpire shall not accept the lineup card until all substitutes are listed. The game cannot begin until the umpire has received lineup cards from both teams. (1-1-2, 4-1-3)

SITUATION 4: With R2 on first base and one out, B3 swings and misses on a 1-2 fastball for strike three. R2 was stealing on the pitch and B3's follow-through interferes with the catcher's

ability to throw to second base. At the time of the interference, R2 was just over half way to second from first. **RULING:** In the umpire's judgment, B3's interference prevented the catcher from possibly throwing out R2 at second base. B3 is out for strike three and R2 is declared out because of B3's interference. The half-inning is over. (7-3-5c Penalty)

SITUATION 5: With one out, R2 gets a great jump at first base and is just a couple of feet from second base when B3 strikes out. B3's follow-through interferes with the catcher, who drops the ball and cannot throw to second base. **RULING:** The ball is declared dead when play is no longer possible. B3 is out on strikes for out No. 2. Since the catcher had no possible play on R2 (being so close to second base at the time of the interference), R2 is returned to first base. (7-3-5c Penalty)

SITUATION 6: Smith enters the batter's box with a BESR aluminum bat. The opposing coach protests that since the handle of the bat is not round and that the taper is not smooth, it is an illegal bat. **RULING:** There are no restrictions on the shape of the handle, and the taper of the bat is not required to be smooth or round. Only the barrel of the bat shall be round, cylindrically symmetric and smooth. The bat is legal for play. (1-3-2b)

SITUATION 7: The batter enters the batter's box with a BBCOR composite bat. The opposing coach wants him declared out for having an illegal bat. **RULING:** All BBCOR bats, aluminum or composite, are legal for play in 2011. The batter will be allowed to use the bat. (1-3-2e, f)

SITUATION 8: B3 enters the batter's box with a bamboo bat and hits a bases-clearing triple. The opposing coach protests stating that a bamboo bat is not legal for play. **RULING:** The plate umpire will inspect the bat. If it has a BESR or BBCOR certification mark, it is legal for play in 2011. In the 2012 high school season, only non-wood bats that meet the BBCOR performance standard are legal for use. (1-3-2d, e, f)

SITUATION 9: During the pre-game inspection of the team's bats, the umpires notice a hollow, composite BESR bat in the bat rack. **RULING:** If the hollow composite BESR bat has been granted a waiver and is listed on the "Approved Bats List," it is legal for play. If the bat has not been granted a waiver, the umpires shall inform the coach that the bat is illegal and must be removed. (1-3-2g)

SITUATION 10: With the bases loaded and no outs, B4 hits a ground ball to the shortstop. The defense is able to get the out at third base on R2 and at second base on R3, but R1 scores and B4 is safe at first. The plate umpire picks up the bat used by B4 and notices that it is a hollow composite bat that is not on the approved waiver list. **RULING:** B4 is guilty of using an illegal bat. The defense has the option of taking the play or the penalty for using an illegal bat. The play will result in two outs, a runner at first and one run scored. The penalty will have B4 declared out and all runners will be returned to their respective bases at the time of the pitch – bases loaded, one out, no run scored. (7-4-1a)

SITUATION 11: The pitcher has a hard cast on his non-pitching forearm. The coach asks what must be done for him to pitch in the game. **RULING:** The cast must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½-inch thick. Since the player is to pitch, the padding cannot be white, gray or deemed to be a color distracting to the batter by the plate umpire. (1-4-2, 1-5-8)

SITUATION 12: The short stop is wearing an unpadded ankle brace and his coach asks if it is legal for play. **RULING:** If the ankle brace is unaltered from the manufacturer's original design and production, it does not require any additional padding. (1-5-8)

SITUATION 13: With a runner on first stealing on the pitch, B2 hits a ball directly to the catcher's hands which rebounds high in the air and is caught by the pitcher. The pitcher turns

and throws the runner out at second base. **RULING:** The ball is dead and treated as a foul ball since it was not caught by the catcher. Had the catcher caught the batted ball, it would be a foul tip and would have remained in play. (2-16-2)

SITUATION 14: Jones, the center fielder, and Brown, the right fielder, collide going after a fly ball. Brown never loses consciousness and tells his coach he is OK. Brown finishes the half-inning. As Brown heads for the dugout, he has some balance problems and stops running, complaining of dizziness. **RULING:** Brown shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until he is cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (3-1-5)

SITUATION 15: R1 misses second base as he advances to third, but touches it as he safely returns to first base. The defense appeals his missing second as he advanced. **RULING:** The appeal is denied. The last time R1 went by second base, he properly touched the base and thus corrected the previous base running error. (8-2-6l)

SITUATION 16: As R1 attempts to score from second base, he misses third base by cutting well inside the infield. With the fly ball being caught, Brown attempts to return, touching third as he goes back to second base. **RULING:** Brown will be declared out on the appeal because a runner who misses a base in a manner to gain an unfair advantage is still vulnerable to appeal. (8-2-6l)

SITUATION 17: R1 is moving on the pitch as the batter hits a fly ball to left center field. R1 touches second base and heads for third when the ball is caught. R1 stops and returns to first base, missing second base. The ball is thrown into the dugout and R1 is awarded third. He touched first, second and third base on the award. The defense appeals his miss of second base as he attempted to return to first. **RULING:** R1's actions are legal and the defensive appeal will be denied. R1 satisfied his base running obligations when he touched second on his last time by the base. (8-2-6l)

SITUATION 18: R1 leaves first base too soon on a caught fly ball. He touches second and nears third when his coach instructs him to return. R1 does so by running directly across the diamond toward first base. The ball gets by the first baseman, and R1 retouches first and makes it safely to second base. **RULING:** R1 would be declared out upon proper appeal by the defense as the principle of "Last Time By" would not apply. (8-2-6l)

SITUATION 19: Bases loaded with one out. B5 hits a fly ball into the gap between center field and right field. He is thrown out trying for second base. R2, advancing from second base, misses third base and scores. The defense properly appeals R2's miss of third. **RULING:** R2's out is the third out and the half-inning is over. No runs score since R2 was forced when he missed third base. (9-1-1b)

SITUATION 20: With R1 on third base, the pitcher is in the windup position. At the top of his motion, he pauses for two or three seconds and then delivers. **RULING:** The umpire shall declare a balk and score R1 from third base. After a pitcher starts his motion to pitch, he must continue the motion without interruption or alteration. (6-1-2)

2010 Baseball Rule Revisions

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 6, 2009) - **The clarification of baseball bat specifications was among four rules adjusted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee at its annual meeting June 7-9 in Indianapolis. The rules changes subsequently were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.**

A change to Rule 1-3-2 regarding bat specifications was made in the hope it will clarify bat compliance. The rule, which will be effective January 1, 2012, specifies that the bat should be a "smooth cylinder implement from the top of the cap to the top of the knob."

"The committee was looking to clarify the rule and make the purchase of bats an easier process," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of educational services and liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee. "We want to make sure that kids and parents know what is permissible."

The change will also require that all non-wood bats meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, which is the standard used by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Formerly, non-wood bats had to meet the Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) standard.

The new rule also states that non-wood bats must be labeled with a rectangular certification mark "a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color." The new standard ensures that performances by non-wood bats are more comparable to those of wood bats. It's also expected to minimize risk, improve play and increase teaching opportunities.

"After working with the NCAA and having access to its research, we've concluded it's in our best interest to make this change," Hopkins said. "BBCOR includes the BESR standard, so we're actually expanding upon our current standard, which will be more appropriate for our age and skill level."

Another major rule addition applies to assistant coaches and their behavior during the game. Rule 3-3-1g6 prohibits any member of the coaching staff who is not the head coach from leaving "the vicinity of the dugout or coaching box to dispute a judgment call by an umpire." The penalty for this infraction is that both the head coach and the offending coach will be restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game. If severe enough, the umpire also has the authority to eject the offending coach and/or the head coach.

The intention of this change is to cut down on the disruptive and counterproductive behavior of assistant coaches. It also reinforces to head coaches that they are responsible for their staff and players.

"The committee found that assistant coaches were taking license with their roles and becoming disruptive," Hopkins said. "By doing that, they're sending the wrong message to their players. It's one thing to ask the official for a clarification, but it's another to challenge and charge an umpire. We cannot and will not allow that."

A clarification was made to Rule 1-2-4 concerning the temporary extension of dugouts. The modified rule explains that when the dugout is to be temporarily extended, it shall be extended toward the outfield and not toward home plate.

The final adjustment was made to Rule 7-4-1f, concerning the instances when a batter will be declared out. The change reads that the batter is out if "any member of the offensive team or coach **other than the runner** interferes with a fielder who is attempting to field a foul fly ball." The addition of the phrase "other than the runner" clarifies the responsibility of the runner and that the runner - not the batter - will be declared out for the runner's interference.

"Previously, it just wasn't fair to the batter," Hopkins explained. "If the runner interferes with the defense, it's not the batter's fault. It was the runner who created the infraction, so the runner will be called out."

Additional 2010 Baseball Rule Revision

If the runner interferes with a foul fly ball, the RUNNER will now be out, rather than the batter, as had been the rule in the past. This brings it in line with the pro and college rules on the play.

The final adjustment was made to Rule 7-4-1f, concerning the instances when a batter will be declared out. The change reads that the batter is out if "any member of the offensive team or coach other than the runner interferes with a fielder who is attempting to field a foul fly ball." The addition of the phrase "other than the runner" clarifies the responsibility of the runner and that the runner — not the batter — will be declared out for the runner's interference. "Previously, it just wasn't fair to the batter," Hopkins explained. "If the runner interferes with the defense, it's not the batter's fault. It was the runner who created the infraction, so the runner will be called out."

2010 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented. Robert F. Kanaby, Publisher, NFHS Publications © 2010

SITUATION 1: While in the set position, F1 has his pitching hand hanging straight down in front of his body, stationary, as he gets the sign from the catcher. **RULING:** The use of the "gorilla" stance in the set position is legal provided the arm is not moving. The batter, runner(s) on base, and coaches are able to view the pitcher and the ball and are not placed at a disadvantage. (6-1-3)

SITUATION 2: While in the set position, F1 has his pitching hand hanging straight down in front of his body, swinging back and forth, as he gets the sign from the catcher. **RULING:** This is not legal and is an illegal pitch or a balk if there are runners on base. While this "gorilla" stance is legal if the pitching hand is stationary, it is illegal if the arm is swinging back and forth. (6-1-3)

SITUATION 3: While in the set position, F1 has his pitching arm resting on his thigh and his pitching hand is at rest in his lower abdominal area. **RULING:** This is illegal. Having his pitching hand at rest in this area gives the offense little to no visibility of the baseball and action by the pitcher. (6-1-3)

SITUATION 4: R1 is at third base and is taking his lead a few feet down the line in foul ground. B2 hits a sharp ground ball that hits third base and caroms off the base and (a) hits R1 accidentally, or (b) R1 intentionally moves so that he is hit by the fair ball. **RULING:** In (a), the ball remains live and in play. In (b), the ball is dead, R1 is out for his interference and other runner(s) are returned to the base they occupied at the time of the interference. B2 is awarded first base. (8-4-2k, 2-5-1e)

SITUATION 5: R1, with one out, is on second base and is off with the pitch as B2 hits a high foul fly ball near third base. As F5 moves in foul territory in an attempt to catch the foul fly, (a) R1 runs into him or (b) the head coach does not vacate his position in the coaching box and F5 contacts him in his attempt. **RULING:** In both situations this is interference and the ball is immediately dead. In (a), R1 is declared out and in (b), B2 is declared out and R1 is returned to second base. (7-4-1f)

SITUATION 6: R1, on second base, rounds third and runs into F5 as he attempts to field a foul fly ball. This action occurred with (a) a count of 1-1; (b) a count of 1-2; or (c) two outs. **RULING:** In all three instances, R1 is out for his interference. In (a), the batter returns to bat with a count of 1-2 and in (b), the batter returns to bat with a count of 1-2 as the pitch is

treated as a foul for the batter's count. In (c), B4 will lead off in his team's next offensive half-inning. (7-4-1f)

SITUATION 7: B1 lays down a bunt that is fielded by F2 in fair territory a few feet in front of home plate. As B1 is 60 feet from home base, he is running outside the running lane with one foot completely in fair ground and not touching the lines of the running lane. F2 fields the ball and (a) attempts to throw to first but throws high into right field as he tries not to hit B1, or (b) does not attempt a throw. **RULING:** B1 is required to be in the running lane the last 45 feet to first base when the ball is fielded and thrown from an area behind him. In (a), this is interference and B1 is out and the ball is declared dead. In (b), since there was no throw, there is no interference. F2 is not required to hit B1 to demonstrate that B1 is out of the running lane, but a throw must be made for the interference to be declared. (8-4-1g)

SITUATION 8: F1, while on the pitcher's plate in either the windup or set position, (a) adjusts his cap, or (b) shakes off the signal with his glove, or (c) shakes off the signal with his head. **RULING:** In (a), (b) and (c) these are legal actions, provided these movements of the arms and legs were not associated with the pitch. (6-1-1, 6.1.2D case book)

SITUATION 9: R1, on third base, attempts to score on a squeeze play. B4 attempts to bunt, but misses the pitch and F2 comes up with the ball and gets R1 in a rundown between third and home. F2 eventually attempts to throw R1 out at third, but makes a bad throw into left field. R1 steps on third, but his momentum takes him several steps down the foul line behind third base. R1, seeing the bad throw, turns, misses third base as he advances to home. After R1 has touched home plate and enters the dugout, the defense calls "Time" and verbally appeals R1 missing third. **RULING:** R1 is out on the valid defensive appeal. R1 must touch third base again on his way to home plate. (8-2-1, 8-2-6c)

SITUATION 10: The visiting team is wearing "quarterback-style" wristbands that have defensive plays listed under a Velcro flap. The pitcher is wearing a black wristband down near his fielding glove. The home coach claims that the wristbands are illegal, and all players must take them off. **RULING:** Provided the wristbands are not dangerous, they are legal. If the plate umpire judges the wristband worn by the pitcher to be distracting, he would need to remove it. Otherwise, it is legal for the pitcher as well. (1-5-9, 6-2-1f, penalty)

SITUATION 11: R1 is on third and R2 on first with one out. B4 hits a sinking line drive to center field. R1 tags properly and goes home, while R2 is off with the hit. F8 makes a great catch. R2 is beyond second base as F8 throws back to first in an attempt to double up R2. The ball goes into the dugout with R2 still between second base and third base. R2 touches second base and goes back to touch first base. **RULING:** The ball is dead and R1's run will count. R2 will be awarded two bases from the base he had at the time of the pitch (first base), so he will be awarded third base. If the defense properly appeals R2 being beyond second base at the time the ball went dead, R2 will be declared out. R1's run would still count. (5-1-1g-3, 8-2-5, 8-2-6d-1, 8-4-2q)

SITUATION 12: With no outs, B1 has a 2-1 count when his nose begins to bleed. He is not able to get it stopped and as a result cannot finish his at-bat. The team has no substitutes available. His coach believes that the batter next up in the order can assume his count. **RULING:** B2 cannot assume B1's count. With no substitutes available, B1 is declared out and B2 will come to bat with one out. An out will be called each time that spot in the batting order comes to bat. When an eligible substitute becomes available, the team may return to playing with nine players. (4-4-1f, Note 1, Note 2)

SITUATION 13: R1 is on third and R2 is on second with no outs. Both runners attempt a double steal. As R1 gets into a rundown between home and third, R2 advances and stays on third base. With R2 on third base, R1 commits interference during the rundown. **RULING:** The

ball is dead immediately. R1 is declared out for the interference. R2 will be kept at third base since he had legally reached third at the time of the interference. (8-2-9, 8-2-8)

SITUATION 14: With R1 on third base and no outs, B2 hits a pop fly in fair territory in front of home plate. The catcher misses the ball completely, never touching it, and the backspin on the ball causes it to move back toward home where it strikes R1 in fair territory. The ball continues to move into foul ground, where it comes to rest. The offensive head coach claims R1 is not out since the batted ball "passed" an infielder. **RULING:** The ball is dead immediately and R1 is declared out for being contacted by a fair batted ball. B2 is awarded first base. The action of the ball in this situation is not considered to be "passing" an infielder. Had the ball contacted R1 in foul ground, the ball would be dead immediately, R1 would be returned to third and B2 would remain at bat. (8-4-2k, 5-1-1f-1)

SITUATION 15: With one out, R1 is on third base and R2 is at second base when B4 misses the sign for the squeeze bunt. B4 hits a high chopper near first base as R1 touches home plate. F3 fields the ball, touches first to retire B4 and sets to throw to third in an attempt to put out R2 who got a late start going to third base. As F3 releases the throw, B4 intentionally reaches out and hits his arm for obvious interference. **RULING:** R2 is declared out for the third out due to B4's interference. R1's run will count as he had legally acquired home before the interference occurred. (8-4-2g, 8-2-9, 5-1-1e)

SITUATION 16: The head coach requests "Time" and goes to the mound for a visit. He removes F1 and brings in S1 to pitch from the bullpen. The coach remains at the mound talking with S1 as he takes his eight warm-up throws. The opposing head coach claims that this is a charged conference because the defensive coach stayed at the mound until S1 had completed his warm-up throws. **RULING:** There is no charged conference to be recorded on the defensive team since F1 was removed as the pitcher. As long as the head coach leaves when S1 completes his warm-up throws and does not delay the game, no defensive conference will be charged. (3-4-1)

SITUATION 17: With R1 on first attempting to steal second base, B2 swings and misses as the ball hits the catcher's mitt and pops up in the air. B2's follow-through hits the ball to the backstop. **RULING:** This is batter interference and the ball is declared dead. B2 is out and R1 is returned to first base. (7-3-5c penalty)

SITUATION 18: With R1 on first, a pitch hits the catcher's shin guards and is deflected toward the dugout. R1 had left first base headed for second as F1 released the pitch and is standing on second base when the deflected pitch rolls into the dugout. R1's head coach argues that R1 should be awarded third base. **RULING:** R1 is awarded one base from where he was at the time of the pitch. R1's award is second base and he will remain at second, and not be advanced to third base. (8-3-3d, 8-3-5b)

SITUATION 19: Bases are loaded with two outs and a 1-1 count on B6. The scoreboard has a 0-2 count. The plate umpire gives the correct count and verbally states "1-1." B6 swings and misses the next pitch to make the count 1-2, but F2, thinking it is strike three, tosses the ball toward the mound as the infield players begin to leave the diamond. The third-base coach has his runners running and all of them cross home plate. The visiting defensive head coach protests that the runs should not score since the scoreboard was in error and it put them at a disadvantage. **RULING:** The umpires did not err on the play and both teams are responsible to know the count and the number of outs. The play stands and all three runs count. (10-2-3g)

SITUATION 20: Two outs, R3 at second base. On a 1-2 pitch, R3 attempts to steal third base as the batter attempts to check his swing. R3 is thrown out at third base for the third out. The

defense now wants to appeal the check-swing on B4 so that if he went around, he struck out and would not come back to bat in the next half-inning. U1 checks with the base umpire and U2 confirms that B4 did indeed swing at strike three. **RULING:** Since B4's out is a "fourth" out, the defense may select the out which is most to its advantage. B4 is out for out No. 3 and the batter following him in the lineup will bat first in the next half-inning. (2-20-2, 9-1-1d)

2009 Baseball Rule Revisions

1-2-2: Change: All non-permanent lines on the playing field shall be marked white with a material not injurious to the eyes or skin. Lime or caustic material of any kind is prohibited.

Rationale: Clarification for proper lining instructions for grass and turf fields.

6-2-3: Change: Intentionally pitch close to a batter.

Rationale: To reinforce the responsibility of the pitcher while he has engaged the pitcher's plate.

7-3-4 Penalty: Change: Penalty: The batter remains at bat (pitch is a ball or strike) unless the pitch was a third strike or ball four.

Rationale: Clarification.

10-1-9 & Umpires' Manual: Delete: ... word "heather" gray

Rationale: Heather gray slacks are slowing becoming difficult to acquire. Equipment dealers are transitioning into charcoal gray slacks. This rule change will provide umpires the opportunity to purchase any shade of dark shade and be in compliance.

Revisions Made to Four Baseball Rules

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (June 30, 2008) - The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee adjusted four rules at its annual meeting June 8-10 in Indianapolis. The rules changes subsequently were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

A revision was made to Rule 6-2-3 regarding infractions by a pitcher. The rule states it is illegal for a pitcher to intentionally pitch close to a batter, replacing the prior phrasing of to "throw" close to a batter. The change was necessary for clarification and in order to be consistent with other pitching rules.

"This rule is violated while the pitcher is pitching, and not just throwing the ball," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of educational services and liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee.

Infractions by a batter were also addressed. The committee is concerned that batters are still attempting to be hit by pitches and earn an undeserved awarded base by "taking one for the team." Rule 7-3-4 clearly prohibits a batter allowing himself to be hit by a pitch.

In such a situation, the pitched ball is deemed either a strike or a ball and the player who permitted the ball to touch him remains at bat unless the pitch results in a third strike or ball four. The phrase "or ball four" was added to the rule to clarify the pitch needed to be called a strike or ball.

Revisions were also made to Rule 1-2-2 regarding painted field lines. All non-permanent lines on the playing field shall be marked white with a material not injurious to the eyes or skin. Non-permanent refers to all lines that must be painted on the field. Only permanent lines, such as on artificial turf, may be a color other than white.

Lastly, umpires will be given more flexibility with their uniforms beginning in 2009. An adjustment to Rule 10-1-9 eliminated the need for umpires to specifically wear heather gray pants.

"Equipment dealers are transitioning to charcoal gray slacks," Hopkins said. "This rule change will provide umpires the opportunity to purchase any shade of dark gray and be in compliance."

In addition to the four rules changes, the committee identified four points of emphasis: 1) simplifying illegal pitch penalty administration, 2) re-emphasizing that team personnel remain in dugouts, 3) keeping the pace of play steady and 4) having all coaching staff members display professional behavior.

Baseball is the fourth-most popular sport among boys at the high school level with 477,430 participants during the 2006-07 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It also ranks third in school sponsorship across the nation with 15,458 participating schools.

2009 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1: The visiting team is wearing a vest-style jersey top over a white shirt with sleeves that end at the elbow. The coach of the home team complains that the pitcher's uniform is illegal since the shirt under the vest is white. **RULING:** The pitcher's uniform is legal. The shirt under the vest is considered to be part of the uniform and not an undergarment. If the shirt worn with the vest top is white, it is legal provided the sleeves do not extend below the elbow. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 2: The pitcher is wearing a vest top over (a) a long-sleeve black shirt or, (b) a long-sleeve white shirt. **RULING:** The pitcher's uniform in (a) is legal. In (b), the long-sleeve white shirt is not legal and must be replaced with either a long-sleeve shirt that is not white or gray, or a short-sleeve shirt, white or any non-distracting color, before the next pitch. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 3: The home team is wearing a vest-style top over a long-sleeve white shirt. The visiting coach complains that this is not legal for the pitcher, but the home team's coach says the pitcher is simply dressed like the rest of his team. **RULING:** The pitcher may not wear a long-sleeve shirt with the vest top that is white or gray. He may wear a short-sleeve white shirt or a long-sleeve shirt that is not white, gray or distracting. It is permissible, if his team is wearing a long-sleeve white shirt with the vest, for the pitcher to wear a short-sleeve white shirt or a long-sleeve shirt that is a different color from the rest of the team. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 4: The pitcher is wearing a white compression type-sleeve on his pitching arm. The opposing coach states that he cannot wear it and, therefore, must remove it. **RULING:** A compression or medical-type sleeve may be worn by any player, including the pitcher. If it is white and worn on the pitching arm, it cannot extend below the elbow. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 5: The pitcher is wearing a white compression sleeve on his pitching arm that extends below the elbow. **RULING:** This is not allowed. While a pitcher may wear a compression sleeve, if it is white and worn on his pitching arm, it may not extend below his elbow. A compression sleeve of any length that is neither white nor gray, or deemed to be distracting, may be worn by the pitcher on either arm. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 6: The pitcher is wearing (a) a white compression sleeve that extends from his bicep to his wrist on his non-throwing arm or (b) a compression sleeve that has a light-blue spider-web design. **RULING:** In (a), provided this is not deemed to be distracting, it is allowed. In (b), provided it is not distracting, it may be worn on either arm. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 7: With a count of 3-2, the batter permits a pitch that is a ball to hit him. RULING: Although the batter did permit the pitch to hit him, he will be awarded first base since it was ball four. (7-3-4 Penalty)

SITUATION 8: With runners on first base and third base and one out, the runner from first base attempts to steal second base. The catcher, despite batter interference, throws out the runner from first at second as the runner from third scores. The defensive coach states he wants the penalty for batter interference and not the result of the play. RULING: The defensive coach does not have the option to take the penalty for the batter interference or the result of the play. Since the runner was tagged out, the ball remains live and the interference is ignored. The run scores. (7-3-5 Penalty)

SITUATION 9: The home team is using a DH for its pitcher. The DH is listed to hit in the No. four spot in the lineup. On the lineup card posted in the dugout, the coach places the DH in the No. four spot and the pitcher in the No. 10 spot. The pitcher misunderstands the lineup and comes to bat after the ninth player. With the pitcher at bat and a 2-2 count, the opposing team brings the infraction to the attention of the umpire. RULING: This is illegal substitution, not batting out of order. The pitcher is declared out and restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game. The role of the DH is terminated and the player who batted in the No. 1 spot is considered to have been substituted for in the game and may return only if he has re-entry eligibility. (2-36-3d, 3-1-1, 3-1-3, 3-1-4a)

SITUATION 10: The batter squares to bunt with both feet in the batter's box, but his knee is touching home plate when he bunts the pitch foul. RULING: The batter is out because he was touching home plate when he hit the ball. (7-3-2)

SITUATION 11: With runners on first base and second base, the batter hits a clean single to left center field. As the runner from second is rounding third base, the catcher picks up the bat and places it in front of home plate in the base line from third base. The runner must alter his stride to avoid the bat. RULING: This is obstruction by the catcher. If the runner does not score on the play, he will be awarded home. The catcher could additionally be warned or ejected for his behavior that is not in accordance with the spirit of fair play. (2-22-1, 8-3-2, 3-3-1g-4 penalty)

SITUATION 12: No outs, runners on first base and third base. A ground ball is hit to the second baseman, who throws home in an attempt to put out the runner advancing from third. The throw is late and wide of the plate and the runner easily slides across the plate. The catcher receives the throw and is preparing to throw to first when he is contacted (not maliciously) by the runner after he has slid across home. The throw to first is wild. The batter-runner had not yet made it to first base. RULING: This is interference by the runner from third. The ball is dead at the time of the interference. Since this is not a force-play slide situation, the run will count, the batter will be declared out for the interference, and the runner from first base will be placed at the base he occupied at the time of the interference. (2-21-1a, 2-32-2c, 8-4-2f)

SITUATION 13: Runner on third with two outs. The batter swings at a pitch in the dirt for strike three and begins to advance to first base. The runner from third scores before the catcher, in an attempt to record the out at first, throws and hits the batter-runner who is out of the running lane. The offensive team's coach says the run should count since the runner scored prior to the interference. RULING: The run does not count. A run is not scored if the runner advances to home plate during action in which the third out is made by the batter-runner before he touches first base. (9-1-1a)

SITUATION 14: One out with runners at second base and third base. The batter hits a fly ball deep to center field. The runner at second base goes halfway, but the runner at third begins to advance to home. The coach grabs him and pushes him back to tag third base. The ball bounces and goes over the fence for a ground-rule double. RULING: The ball is dead when it bounces over the fence. The runner at third is declared out due to the coach's interference. The runner at second is returned to second due to the interference. The batter-runner will be awarded second base for the ground-rule double, which will advance the runner from second base to third base. (3-2-2 Penalty, 8-3-3c)

SITUATION 15: With runners at first and second and one out, the batter hits a bounding ball to left field. The runner from second touches third and is obstructed advancing to home. The obstructed runner then interferes with the catcher attempting to make a play on the runner from first advancing to third base. RULING: The penalties are enforced in the order in which the infractions occurred. The runner advancing from second is awarded home. Following the enforcement for the obstruction, the interference is penalized. The runner from first is declared out and the batter-runner is returned to the base he legally occupied at the time of the interference. Had the interference been malicious in nature, the obstructed runner would be declared out in addition to the out on the runner from first. (2-22-1, 2-21-1a, 3-3-1n Penalty, 8-4-2e, 8-4-2g)

SITUATION 16: The batter-runner hits a ground ball to the shortstop who goes deep into the hole to field the ball. As the shortstop makes the throw, the batter veers into the first baseman in an attempt to disrupt the play. RULING: While this is not a violation of the runner's lane, the batter is out for intentionally interfering with the throw. The ball is dead when the interference occurs. (8-4-2g, 8-4-1g)

SITUATION 17: As the batter-runner nears first base, attempting to beat out a ground ball to third, he intentionally steps on the first baseman's foot to disrupt the play. RULING: The batter is out and ejected for malicious contact. Other runners on base would be returned to the base occupied at the time of the interference. (2-21-1b, 3-3-1n Penalty)

SITUATION 18: On a batted ball down the right-field line, the ball bounces over the right fielder's head, and ricochets off the foul pole above the fence and back onto the field. The right fielder retrieves the ball and throws out the batter-runner at second base. The defensive coach says the play should stand since the ball never left the field, while the offensive coach says the out should not stand. RULING: The out will not stand. The hit is considered to be a ground-rule double, since the ball would have bounced over the fence. The ball is dead when it struck the foul pole over the fence. (8-3-3c, 5-1-1f-4)

SITUATION 19: Having scouted the opposing team, the defensive coach brings the left fielder in to assume an infield position between the second baseman and the first baseman. The batter hits a ground ball to the "additional" infielder who throws the ball into the dugout on the first play. RULING: Two bases will be awarded to runners on base from the time of the pitch. The left fielder is considered at the time of the play to be an infielder. (8-3-5, 2-13-3)

SITUATION 20: Having scouted the player coming to bat, the defensive coach moves the second baseman to the outfield, thereby having four fielders equally spaced in the outfield. The second baseman, now playing in the outfield, takes a batted ball on the bounce and throws it into a dead-ball area. RULING: Two bases will be awarded to the runners from the time of the throw. The second baseman is considered at the time of this play to be an outfielder. (8-3-5, 2-13-3)

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

Obstruction to Bases Prohibited in 2008 Baseball Rules

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 9, 2007) -- Beginning with the 2008 high school baseball season, fielders without possession of the ball will not be allowed to deny access to the base that a runner is attempting to achieve.

This change in Rule 2-22-3 is one of numerous rules revisions approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee at its annual meeting June 12-14 in Indianapolis. The rules changes subsequently were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

"This rules revision will be very beneficial because it will minimize the risk of injury for both offensive and defensive players," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of educational services and liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee.

A revision to Rule 3-2-1 rescinds the previous rule that stated a coach or player occupying the coaches' boxes shall remain there upon the batter entering the batter's box until the release of the ball by the pitcher if requested by the opposing coach. Beginning with the 2008 season, one player or coach may occupy each coach's box while his or her team is at bat.

"This rule was virtually impossible to enforce in the past," Hopkins said. "The umpire does not normally focus on the coach in the box, and shouldn't have to split his or her focus between the coach and the game. In addition, a lot of fields are not properly lined with coaches' boxes, and it's tough to say where the coach should be if the marks are not clear."

Along with the previous rule, multiple rules changes were made regarding head coaches. Rule 3-2-4 requires the head coach to be in attendance at the pre-game conference if available. If he or she is not present, the head coach will be restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game unless he or she must attend to a sick or injured player.

Another rule, Rule 1-1-2, suggests the importance of both the captain and the head coach being in communication with the umpires. Both must be present at the pre-game conference, and the head coach is responsible for ensuring that his or her team is in compliance and will adhere to good sportsmanship. The rule also requires the name, shirt number, position and batting order of each starter to be placed on the lineup card. The name and shirt number of each eligible substitute should also be placed on the card, but are not required.

"It is important and necessary to require lineup cards to be filled out correctly," Hopkins said. "We looked at the vocabulary for the requirements for substitutions and changed "shall" to "should" in the section concerning eligible substitutions because there is no violation or penalty outlined if the eligible substitute's name is not listed on the card."

Two final rules changes deal with equipment and apparel. Rule 1-3-6 will require a pitcher's glove to be removed from the game if it includes the colors of white and/or gray and is noticed by the umpire or opposing team.

"It is the coach's responsibility to make sure his team is properly equipped, and it is the umpire's responsibility to enforce the rules," Hopkins said. "Instead of penalizing the opposing team with a multi-base award, the glove will only be required to be removed."

According to Rule 10-1-9, it is necessary that umpires dress alike in heather gray slacks and either a navy pullover shirt or a state association-adopted shirt. They are not required to supply a wide variety of shirts beyond what is necessary.

Baseball is the fourth-most popular sport among boys at the high school level with 470,671 participants during the 2005-06 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It also ranks third in school sponsorship across the nation with 15,290 schools.

2008 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1: With runners on first and second and no outs, the batter bunts a slow roller down the third-base line. The third baseman, seeing that he has no play on any of the runners, starts blowing on the ball from his hands and knees, trying to make the ball go foul. The ball eventually rolls into foul territory where it comes to rest. **RULING:** This is a fair ball. The fielder is using artificial means to induce the ball to become foul. As soon as a fielder blew on the ball, it would be judged to be the same as if he had touched it. So, if the ball was on fair ground when he blew on it, the ball is fair; if the ball was over foul ground when he blew on it, it would be foul. (2-5-1, 2-16-1)

SITUATION 2: A sharp line drive is hit to the second baseman. The impact of the ball takes the glove off the second baseman's hand, and the glove lands on the ground with the ball still in the pocket of the glove. The second baseman retrieves the glove and takes the ball out of the pocket. Is this a catch or must the ball be thrown to first base in an attempt to record the out? **RULING:** This is not a catch. To record the out on the batter-runner, the second baseman would need to throw the ball to first in an attempt to obtain the force out. A catch is an act of a fielder gaining secure possession in his hand or glove of a live ball in flight and firmly holding it. (2-9-1)

SITUATION 3: A fly ball hit deep to right field along the foul line hits the right fielder on the head. The ball then bounces off his head and, in flight, goes over the outfield fence, but does so on the foul side of the foul pole. Is this a home run? **RULING:** No, this is a ground-rule double. A home run is a fair ball that goes over a fence in flight in fair territory. (8-3-4a)

SITUATION 4: With the bases loaded and two outs and a 3-2 count, the runners are off with the pitch. The pitch is ball four, but the runner from first slides into second and his momentum carries him over and past the base. The catcher makes a quick throw to second base and the tag is applied for the third out before the runner from third trots home and touches the plate. Does the run count? **RULING:** Yes, the run does count. Each runner may, without liability to be put out, advance one base when he is forced to vacate his position on the bases due to the batter being awarded a base-on-balls. The runners advance past the bases to which they are entitled at their own risk. All runners are awarded one base, and as long as all the bases are touched appropriately, the run would count. (8-1-2a, 8-1-1c, Awards Table)

SITUATION 5: With runners on second and third, the batter receives ball four on a pitch that bounces in the dirt. The ball caroms off the catcher's shin guards and goes into the visiting team's dugout. What bases are to be awarded? **RULING:** The batter is awarded first base due to the base-on-balls, and the runners are awarded one base due to the pitch entering a dead-ball area. At the end of the awards, the batter-runner will be on first base, the runner from second will be on third, and the runner from third will have scored. (8-1-2a, 8-1-1c, 8-3-3d)

SITUATION 6: While on the pitcher's plate in the windup position, the pitcher has both hands at his side or both hands together in front of his body. He brings his pitching hand to his mouth and then distinctly wipes it off. **RULING:** This is an illegal pitch. Each runner on base would be awarded one base. If the bases were empty, a ball would be awarded to the batter. (6-1-2 Penalty)

SITUATION 7: While on the pitching plate in the stretch position, the pitcher has the ball in his glove hand and his pitching hand is at his side or has hands together in front of his body. He brings his pitching hand to his mouth, distinctly wipes it off and returns it to his side. **RULING:** This is an illegal pitch by the pitcher. A balk will be called if there are runners on base. If the bases are empty, a ball will be awarded to the batter. (6-1-3 Penalty)

SITUATION 8: While off the pitcher's plate, the pitcher goes to his mouth with his pitching hand, distinctly wipes it off and then legally engages the pitcher's plate. **RULING:** This is legal. (6-1, 6-2-1e)

SITUATION 9: With (a) the bases empty, or (b) runners on first base and second base, the pitcher goes to his mouth with his pitching hand while off the pitcher's plate, but does not wipe it off. He next places his pitching hand on the ball. **RULING:** In both (a) and (b), while off the pitching plate, the pitcher may request to have a new ball from the plate umpire with no penalty. If the pitcher, without having received a new ball from the plate umpire subsequently engages the pitcher's plate, a ball would be awarded to the batter. (6-2-1e Penalty)

SITUATION 10: The lineup submitted by the visiting team does not have any substitutes listed. In the second inning, the visiting team coach attempts to substitute for the center fielder. The coach of the home team complains that there were no substitutes listed, this is illegal. **RULING:** This is legal. While it is encouraged and a benefit to both teams to have all substitutes listed on the line-up card, it is not mandatory. There is no penalty. The umpire-in-chief will allow the substitution and notify the opposing team and the official scorekeeper. (1-1-2, 10-2-3d, j)

SITUATION 11: Baker, who is not listed on the lineup card as a starter or as a substitute, comes in to play left field but does not report. When he comes to bat in the next half-inning, the opposing team argues that since he was not listed on the lineup and that since he did not report, he is an illegal substitute and cannot participate. **RULING:** There is no penalty for not listing the substitutes and Baker may participate. As an unreported substitute, the umpire-in-chief will enter him on his lineup card and notify both teams and the official scorer. (1-1-2, 2-36-2, 3-1-1)

SITUATION 12: As the pitcher moves to attempt a pickoff at first base, the first baseman drops his knee and entirely blocks the runner from getting back to first base. **RULING:** This is obstruction. A fielder who is not in possession of the ball must provide the runner access to the base he is attempting to reach. The runner will be awarded second base for the obstruction. (2-22-3, 8-3-2)

SITUATION 13: Without the ball in possession, the catcher sets up in the base path, but does not allow access to part of home plate. As the ball and the runner converge at home simultaneously, the runner contacts the catcher. **RULING:** As long as the umpire judges that the catcher provided access to the plate for the runner, this is not obstruction. With the play in motion and the timing such that it is about to occur, a fielder may be in the base path without the ball, provided he allows the runner access to the base or home plate. (2-22-3)

SITUATION 14: With a lazy, one-hop single to the right fielder, the batter rounds first base with no intention or action of advancing to second base. As he takes a few easy strides past first base, he contacts the first baseman who is partially in his path. **RULING:** Since the batter was making no attempt to advance to second base, the first baseman did not hinder him or change the pattern of the play. As a result, obstruction would not be called. Any benefit of the doubt would be given to the batter-runner if there was a question in the covering umpire's mind. (3-22-1)

SITUATION 15: With the pregame conference ready to begin, the home team head coach is in the bullpen and refuses to attend. He sends his assistant coach and a captain to be present. The assistant coach provides his team's lineup and verifies to the umpire-in-chief that his team is properly equipped. **RULING:** The umpire-in-chief will accept the assistant coach's verification and conclude all needed activity at the pregame conference. The head coach will be restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game. (3-2-4 Penalty, 4-1-3a)

SITUATION 16: With the game time at hand, the head coach of the visiting team is caught in traffic and is not present at the field. The assistant coach represents the team at the pregame conference. **RULING:** This is permissible. When the head coach arrives at the game, he may resume normal coaching activity. (3-2-4)

SITUATION 17: In the third inning, a substitute pitcher comes to relieve the starting pitcher. After a couple of pitches have been delivered, the umpire-in-chief notices that the reliever's glove has white on it. **RULING:** The umpire shall have the pitcher remove the glove and obtain a legal one before he continues to pitch. (1-3-6)

SITUATION 18: With runners on second and third, the pitcher makes a great catch of a line drive hit back up the middle. The opposing coach notices that his glove has a large manufacturer's logo that is white. He complains to the umpire-in-chief. **RULING:** Upon discovery, the glove used by the pitcher that includes the colors white and/or gray shall be removed. The out stands and there are no subsequent base awards. (1-3-6)

SITUATION 19: The umpire-in-chief notices that the head coach coaching at third base is not in the coach's box. The coach is not gaining an advantage or causing any problems. **RULING:** There is no violation. If the umpire believes that the coach was gaining an advantage for his team, he would require the coach to be within the confines of the coach's box. (3-2-1)

SITUATION 20: With the bases empty, the visiting team is at bat and the assistant coach in the first base coach's box is wearing a dual flap helmet while the head coach in the third base coach's box is wearing a hard liner under his team cap. The home team coach complains to the umpire-in-chief that both coaches must wear the same type of protective helmet in accordance with MLB rules. **RULING:** The NFHS has not mandated that adult coaches shall wear protective head gear while occupying a coach's box. It is the prerogative of the respective coach to wear such protective equipment.

The NFHS is conducting research to determine if protective head gear should be required and, if so, which type (hard liner, flapless, one-flap, dual flap) would be most effective. However, it is mandatory that when occupying a coach's box, a coach shall wear the team cap and that players/students wear a batting helmet that meets the NOCSAE standard and has dual ear flaps. (3-2-1, 1-5-1, 1-4-1)

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2007 NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions

INDIANAPOLIS (July 18, 2006) — Effective with the 2007 high school baseball season, a team playing with fewer than nine players may return to nine players. In addition to this change, 12 other rules revisions were approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee at its June 16-17 meeting in Indianapolis. These rules changes subsequently were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Rule 4-4-1f allows a team that had to drop down to eight players to return to nine later during the game," said Greg Brewer, assistant director of the Alabama High School Athletic Association

and chairperson of the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee. "This will also help promote participation."

Rule 3-3-1n addresses revised penalties for initiating malicious contact on offense or defense. Transgressions will now result in the ball being immediately dead, and if on offense, the player is ejected and declared out, unless he has already scored. If the defense commits the malicious contact, the player is ejected; the umpire shall rule either safe or out on the play and award the runner(s) the appropriate base(s) he felt they would have obtained if the malicious contact had not occurred.

Other rules pertaining to malicious contact were also revised, as were their corresponding entries in the base-running table and dead-ball table.

"With these changes, we hope to be more definitive on offensive and defensive malicious contact," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee.

In another change, Rule 6-2-1 now states that a ball will be called each time a pitcher brings his pitching hand in contact with his mouth, either without distinctly wiping off the pitching hand before it touches the ball or while in contact with the pitcher's plate.

Rule 3-2-1 was revised to state that one player or coach may occupy each coach's box while his team is at bat. A coach or player occupying the coach's box shall remain in the box from the time the batter enters the batter's box until the release of the ball by the pitcher. If the coach or player steps out of the box during this time, regardless of who violates the rule, the head coach will be restricted to the bench/dugout.

"A player or coach standing outside the box gains an unfair advantage as to where the opposing pitcher intends to pitch the ball," Hopkins said. "The box-bound player or coach does not have the same angle or disadvantage. This rule seeks to correct these unfair advantages and prevent distractions the pitcher may experience during his delivery."

Another rule change (Rule 3-3-4) stipulates that whenever team members are loosening up in an area that is not protected by a fence or other structure, another member of the team with a glove must be positioned between them and the batter to protect them from a batted or thrown ball.

"This is a risk minimization initiative to protect individuals who are not watching the activity in the field," Hopkins said.

In another effort to minimize risk, Rule 10-2-1 was revised to specify that when behind the plate, the umpire-in-chief shall wear proper safety equipment including, but not limited to chest protector, face mask, throat guard, plate shoes, shin guards and protective cup (if male).

A new signal was adopted that uses the point motion for the start of the game. This will align NFHS officials with other rules codes to begin a contest and put a ball back in play.

In an effort to make baseball compatible with other NFHS sport rules, Rule 1-4-4 now states that a commemorative or memorial patch, not to exceed 4 square inches, may be worn on jerseys without compromising the integrity of the uniform.

In addition to the rules changes, the committee identified Points of Emphasis for the 2007 season. Among those are malicious contact, concussions, good sporting behavior, face protection, umpire's professionalism, non-adult bat/ball shaggers and game management.

2007 NFHS Baseball Interpretations

SITUATION 1: In the top of the seventh inning, the home team leads 3-2. With a runner on third base, the visiting coach puts on a squeeze play. R1 breaks for home on the pitcher's motion. The first baseman, aware of the situation, races toward home plate, and catches the pitch in front of the plate and tags the sliding runner before he can reach the plate. RULING: This is obstruction on the batter by the first baseman. The ball will be declared dead, R1 will be awarded home and the batter will be awarded first base. (8-1-1e-1)

SITUATION 2: With R1 on first base, B2 hits a ground ball to F4. While running to second base, R1's batting helmet falls off (a) and makes contact with the batted ball, deflecting it away from F4, or (b) in front of F4, which distracts him and results in his misplaying the ball. RULING: If R1's helmet accidentally fell off, there would be no penalty in either (a) or (b). Had the helmet been deliberately removed, and interference occurred, then R1 would have declared out for interference. The umpire could also rule out B2 if he judged the interference prevented a double play. (8-4-2g, 8-4-1h)

SITUATION 3: With no outs and R1 on first base, B2 hits a hard ground ball to F6. F6 fields the ball and steps on second base and then throws to first base in an attempt to double up B2. R1 is running standing up in a straight line to second and is hit by F6's throw. R1 was not even half way to second base and did not intentionally interfere with the throw. The defensive coach states that B2 should also be out since R1 violated the force-play slide rule. RULING: This is not a violation of the force play slide rule. R1 cannot be expected to slide at that point in the base path. The play stands. R1 would be out only if he intentionally interfered. (8-4-2b penalty)

SITUATION 4: In the fifth inning, having had one defensive charged conference, the defensive head coach requests time and goes to the pitching mound to talk with his pitcher. While he is at the mound, the assistant coach runs over and talks with F3. Is this considered one conference, two separate conferences, or should the umpire not allow the assistant coach on the field while his head coach is having a charged conference? RULING: It is legal for the assistant coach to be having a conference with another defensive player while the head coach is also having a charged conference. This would be considered to be one charged conference. When the head coach's charged conference is completed, the assistant coach must end his meeting with F3. If the assistant coach delays the game by not ending his conference, the team could be assessed another charged conference. (3-4-1)

SITUATION 5: With (a) one out or (b) two outs, the visiting team has a runner on third in the top of the seventh. The game is tied 2-2. R1, on third, gets a great jump and easily scores on a suicide bunt. After R1 has scored, F2 picks up the ball and throws to first in an attempt to get B3 out. B3 is out of the running lane and is hit by F2's throw. Does the run by R1 count? RULING: B3 is out for interference. In (a), R1's run counts because he scored prior to the interference by B3. Had the interference by B3 occurred before R1 crossed the plate, R1 would be returned to third base, the base he occupied at the time of the interference. In (b), R1's run would not count as the third out occurred by B3 before he touched first base. (8-4-1g, 9-1-1a)

SITUATION 6: In the top of the seventh in the last game of the season, the visiting team's shortstop is one stolen base short of the record for stolen bases. With one out, he is hit by a pitch and is awarded first base. The pitcher, trying to keep him close to first base, throws over several times. On the last attempted pick-off, the pitcher throws the ball into the dugout. The umpire properly awards the runner second base on the dead ball. The runner and his coach tell the umpire that they will decline the award since they believe he will have a better chance of stealing second base vs. stealing third base. Is the award to a runner optional? RULING: The runner must advance. The award of a base is not optional and cannot be declined by the offense. (8-3-3d)

SITUATION 7: While off the pitching plate, F1 goes to his mouth with his pitching hand. He distinctly wipes it off on his pants and then assumes a pitching position on the pitching plate. RULING: This is legal. There has been no violation by the pitcher. (6-2-1e)

SITUATION 8: While off the pitching plate, F1 goes to his mouth with his pitching hand. Without wiping his pitching hand, he gets on the pitching plate and assumes the windup position with his hands together in front of his body. RULING: A ball shall be called and added to the batter's count. (6-2-1e penalty)

SITUATION 9: While on the pitching plate in the windup position, the pitcher has both hands at his side. He brings his pitching hand to his mouth and then distinctly wipes it. RULING: This is legal and there has been no violation by the pitcher. (6-2-1e)

SITUATION 10: While on the pitching plate in the windup position, the pitcher has his glove hand in front of his body. He brings his pitching hand to his mouth and, without wiping it, brings his pitching hand to the ball, which is in the glove. RULING: This is a violation by the pitcher and a ball shall be called and added to the batter's count. (6-2-1e penalty)

SITUATION 11: While on the pitching plate in the windup position, the pitcher has his hands together in front of his body. He then brings his pitching hand to his mouth and returns it to his glove. RULING: This is an illegal pitch by the pitcher. A balk will be called if there are runners on base. If the bases are empty, a ball will be added to the batter's count. (6-1-2 penalty)

SITUATION 12: While on the pitching plate in the stretch position, the pitcher has the ball in his glove hand and his pitching hand is at his side. He brings his pitching hand to his mouth, distinctly wipes it and returns it to his side. RULING: This is legal and there has been no violation by the pitcher. (6-2-1e)

SITUATION 13: While on the pitching plate in the stretch position, the pitcher has the ball in his glove and his pitching hand at his side. He brings his pitching hand to his mouth and then becomes set with both hands together. RULING: This is a violation as the pitcher did not distinctly wipe his pitching hand after going with it to his mouth. A ball shall be added to the batter's count. (6-2-1e penalty)

SITUATION 14: While on the pitching plate in the stretch position, the pitcher becomes legally set with his hands together in front of his body. He then brings his hand to his mouth and returns it to his gloved hand. RULING: This is an illegal pitch by the pitcher. A balk will be called if there are runners on base. If the bases are empty, a ball will be added to the batter's count. (6-1-3 penalty)

SITUATION 15: With no substitutes available, the center fielder collides with the wall and cannot continue playing. An inning later, another player arrives. Can the coach enter the player? RULING: Once the game has begun, a team may continue to play if it loses a player and has only eight players. It is legal for the coach to enter the arriving player in the vacated spot in the lineup, substitute the player for another player still in the game, or to continue to play with eight players. (4-41f, note 2)

SITUATION 16: The shortstop, trying to stop a ground ball, scrapes his elbow which, despite the trainer's best effort, continues to bleed. The team has no available substitutes. Two innings later, the trainer has the bleeding stopped and the elbow properly bandaged. RULING: It is legal for a team to continue play with only eight players. The shortstop may now re-enter the game in his vacated spot in the lineup provided he has re-entry eligibility left as a starting player. (4-4-1f, note 2)

SITUATION 17: With only nine players, the second baseman twists his ankle jumping for a line drive and cannot continue to play. An inning later, a player who had been taking a test arrives at the game. The coach decides to continue the game with only eight players and hold the newly arrived player as insurance in case another player is injured. RULING: This is legal. It is not mandatory for a coach to return to playing with nine players when another player becomes available. (4-4-1f, note 2)

SITUATION 18: R1 at first base is off and running as the pitcher delivers the pitch. B2 hits a fly ball to deep center field. R1 misses second base and is between second and third when F8 catches the ball at the fence. R1 sees the catch, touches second base returning and beats the throw back to first base. The defense is granted "time" and verbally appeals that R1 missed second as he attempted to advance on the fly ball. RULING: When R1 touched second base as he returned to first, he corrected his base running infraction because he touched the base the last time he went by it. The appeal is denied. (8-2-2, 8-2-6)

SITUATION 19: With R1 on first and no outs in a close game, the first baseman is playing about 20 feet in front of first base in case of a bunt attempt by B2. The pitcher, in the stretch position, throws to F3 in a pick-off attempt on R1. RULING: This is a balk. The first baseman is not in proximity of first base and is not close enough to legitimately make a play on the runner. The ball is dead and R1 is awarded second base. (6-2-4b)

SITUATION 20: With R1 on first base, the right-handed batter B2 swings hard and misses the pitch. The catcher, seeing R1 slow in returning to first, attempts to pick him off. B2's follow-through by the bat hits the catcher and causes his throw to sail into right field. RULING: The ball is dead and the B2 is declared out for batter interference. R1 is returned to first base. A batter is responsible for the follow-through of a bat when he swings. (7-3-5c)

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

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2006 NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions

1-3-6: Revised Rule: A glove/mitt, worn by the pitcher that includes the colors white or gray, shall be illegal.

Rationale: This change will eliminate the confusion this past season with the legality of two-toned gloves. Glove manufacturers are making two-toned gloves which typically have not been distracting and extremely popular.

1-5-5: New Rule: Defensive players are permitted to wear face/head protection in the field. If a pitcher or any defensive player wears face/head protection, its outer covering shall have a non-glare surface.

Rationale: Although not frequent, there are occasions when defensive players suffer serious head injuries as a result of being struck by thrown or batted balls. Not surprisingly, pitchers have suffered a disproportionate share of such injuries. This addition emphasizes that fielder's face and head protection is permitted.

2-10-2: Revised Rule: ...A pre-game conference is a meeting involving the umpires, both head coaches and team captains (if available) near home plate...

Rationale: This reinforces the importance of the head coach at the pre-game meeting and his certification of his players being in compliance.

2-16-1e: Add to the current rule: e. Inadvertently declared foul by an umpire that touches the ground (becomes dead).

Rationale: Additional coverage to the definition of a foul ball.

3-1-1: Revised Rule: ... For discovery of an illegal player (2-36-3) on offense by an umpire or either team, that player shall be called out and restricted to the bench/dugout for the duration of the game. An illegal player discovered on defense shall be restricted to the bench/dugout for the duration of the game.

Rationale: Correcting an omission from the rules book.

3-3-1a: Amend the current rule and renumber the remaining sub articles:

a. leave the dugout during a live ball for an unauthorized purpose;

Renumber in penalty (a) to (b)

Rationale: After numerous educational initiatives the occurrences of team members entering the live-ball area to congratulate a teammate have become a concern.

5-1-1g4: Amend the rule to read: Lodges in an umpire's, catcher's or offensive player's equipment or uniform and becomes dead.

Rationale: Clarifies the rule for an offensive player.

5-1-1h: Add to the current rule: h. the umpire handles a live ball or calls, "Time" for inspecting the ball or for any other reason, including items in Section 2 or gives the "Do Not Pitch Signal" or inadvertently announces "Foul" on a ball that touches the ground.

Rationale: To make the rule compatible with the definition of an uncaught ground ball that touches the ground is dead.

Dead Ball Table Add to the Current Rule:

Activity # 17 ...Umpire inadvertently declares "Foul" as in 2-16-1e

Rationale: Provides additional support to new rule change. Activity is consistent with rule for foul ball.

6-2-1h: Amend the current rule: h. wearing a glove/mitt that includes the colors white or gray.

Rationale: Additional rule support for the new glove/mitt rule.

8-3-2: Amend the current rule: When a runner is obstructed while advancing or returning to a base by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is attempting to make a play, or a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, if the runner achieves the base he was attempting to acquire then the obstruction is ignored.

Rationale: Clarifies the existing rule.

8-3-3f: New Rule: One base beyond the last legally acquired base, if in the umpire's judgment the runner was attempting to advance at the time the ball becomes lodged in an offensive player's uniform or equipment. If the lodged ball occurs during play when the batter-runner was attempting to reach first base, the batter-runner will be awarded first base. Preceding runners will be awarded bases needed to complete the award.

Rationale: Provides support and guidance of the new 5-1-1g4 rule.

MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-1: Re-title Rule 1-1 to Positions of Players.

1-3: Re-title Rule 1-3 to Bats, Balls and Gloves.

1-5: Re-title 1-5 to Player Equipment.

1-2-12, 1-3-7: Move the current rules 1-4-5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and rules 1-5-1, 1-5-2 (becomes 1-2-12) 3, 1-5-4 (becomes 1-3-7) 5, 6, 7 and 8 into the new Section 5.

Editorial Detail:

Rule(s) 1-4-5 becomes 1-5-1; 1-4-6 becomes 1-5-2; 1-4-7 becomes 1-5-3; 1-4-8 becomes 1-5-4; 1-4-9 becomes 1-5-5; 1-5-1 becomes 1-5-6; 1-5-3 becomes 1-5-7; 1-5-5 becomes 1-5-8; 1-5-6 becomes 1-5-9; 1-5-7 becomes 1-5-10; 1-5-8 becomes 1-5-11.

Rationale: Player equipment trends and requirements have evolved to a point that justifies the creation of its own section which creates additions to other sections.

2006 NFHS Baseball Interpretations

SITUATION 1: With two outs in the bottom of the sixth inning, and runners on second and third base, the batter hits a fair ball to the fence in right center field. The runner at second base, knowing he will score easily, removes his helmet as he rounds third base. Both runs score as the batter stops at second base. **RULING:** This is a delayed ball situation, and both runs will count. At the end of playing action, the umpire will issue a warning to the team on offense and a subsequent violation shall result in ejection. Had the team been issued a prior warning, the runner, whose run would score, would be ejected from the game at the end of playing action. (1-5-1 Penalty)

SITUATION 2: S1 comes in to pitch for the starting pitcher. As S1 begins his warm-up pitches, the opposing coach complains that his red and blue glove is illegal and must be removed. **RULING:** The glove is legal as long as it does not contain the colors white and/or gray. If the plate umpire determines that the glove is distracting, the pitcher would be required to change it. (1-3-6, 6-2-1h)

SITUATION 3: With a runner on third, the defensive coach waits until the substitute pitcher has delivered a pitch for ball one to complain that the pitcher's black and tan glove is illegal and wants a balk declared, thereby scoring his runner. The glove has a small amount of white thread in the manufacturer's logo. **RULING:** The glove is illegal, not because it is multi-colored, but because of the white contained in the manufacturer's logo. The pitcher must either replace the glove or darken the white threads in the logo with a dark pen that is not distracting. There is no additional penalty. (1-3-6, 6-2-1f,h Penalty)

SITUATION 4: As the umpires gather at home plate for the pre-game conference, the head coach of the visiting team is present, but the head coach of the home team refuses to attend, stating he is busy with last minute preparations. He sends his assistant coach and a team captain to represent his team at the conference. **RULING:** The pre-game conference will not take place until both head coaches are in attendance. Only if the head coach is absent or ill may the assistant coach attend on his behalf. Team captains, while not required, may attend the pre-game conference. (4-1-3)

SITUATION 5: With two outs and R1 on second base and R2 on first base, the pitcher delivers a wild pitch that goes to the backstop and rebounds quickly back toward home plate. The catcher scoops the ball into his glove using his mask held by his throwing hand. At the time the catcher scooped up the ball with his mask, R1 had rounded third, but R2 had not yet reached second base. **RULING:** This is a delayed dead ball. At the end of playing action, each runner will be awarded two bases from the base occupied at the time of the infraction; therefore, R1 will be awarded home and R2 will be awarded third base. (8-3-3c-1, 8-3-5a)

SITUATION 6: With runners on first and third and one out, the pitcher delivers a called strike that becomes lodged under the catcher's chest protector. **RULING:** The ball is immediately

dead. A strike is added to the batter's count. The runner on third is awarded home and the runner on first is awarded second base. (8-3-3d, 8-3-5b, 5-1-1g-4)

SITUATION 7: R1 is on second base with two outs. B4 is at bat with a 1-2 count. The pitch is a low curve that B4 attempts to check his swing, but the plate umpire properly declares, "Yes, he went." As the catcher picks up the blocked pitch, which rolled a few feet away from him, he sees R1 advancing to third base and throws there in time to retire R1 for the third out. Will B4 bat first in his team's next half-inning or will the player who follows him in the lineup be the one to bat? RULING: When the plate umpire declared the third strike, B4 became a batter-runner with the right to attempt to reach first base. The first batter in the team's next half-inning will be the player whose name follows that of B4, who completed his turn at bat in the preceding inning. (8-1-1b, 7-1-2)

SITUATION 8: The first batter of the game gets a single and ends up on first base. The next batter, B2, comes to bat and is wearing a different jersey number than the number listed on the lineup card. Following B2's single, and before the next pitch, the opposing team's coach appeals batting-out-of-order. RULING: While B2 is in technical violation of the rule that requires a player's name, shirt number and position to be on the lineup card, there is no penalty, since the batting-out-of-order rule requires that the name be in the proper order. The umpire should revise his lineup card accordingly and deny the batting-out-of-order appeal. (1-1-2, 7-1-1)

SITUATION 9: Following the first batter of the game, B2 comes to bat. After he singles to get on base, the opposing team's coach appeals batting-out-of-order, stating that while he has the correct jersey number as the lineup, it is not Smith who was listed, but a different player, Jones. RULING: The umpire-in-chief shall determine if B2 is Smith who was listed in the line-up or is indeed Jones as claimed by the opposing team's coach. If B2 is truly Jones, the batting-out-of-order appeal will be upheld and Smith will be declared out, with the next batter being the player who followed Smith in the lineup. Although the jersey number was correct, it was not the player listed by name, and hence there is batting-out-of-order. (7-1-1, 1-1-2)

SITUATION 10: Coach of Team A requests and is granted time for a defensive charged conference. As he goes to the mound to talk with his pitcher, he tosses a ball to his third baseman and tells him to begin warming up with his shortstop in case he is needed to pitch. The coach leaves the mound without removing the pitcher. RULING: This is not allowed. A charged conference permits a coach or his non-playing representative to confer with a defensive player or players but does not permit any warm-up pitches by a player who is not the pitcher. (3-4-1)

SITUATION 11: The batter, attempting to sacrifice a runner to second base, bunts the ball that subsequently strikes home plate and rolls out into fair territory. The batted ball, having a lot of backspin, then rolls back and comes to rest on top of home plate untouched. RULING: This is a fair ball as it settled or came to rest while upon fair territory. Home plate is located in fair territory. (2-5-1a, 1-2-6)

SITUATION 12: With R1 on third and R2 on second base and one out, B4 hits a line drive into the gap in right center field. R1 scores easily. R2 misses third base as he advances, but does touch home plate. B4 makes it to second base on an apparent double, but missed first base on his advance. After playing action is over, the defensive head coach is granted time and first appeals B4 missing first base and then appeals R2 missing third base. RULING: This is a legal appeal by the defense as the coach may verbally appeal a base running infraction when the ball is dead and may make multiple appeals. B4 would be declared out for the second out and R2 would be the third out. R1's run would count. (8-2-6c,f; 9-1-1)

SITUATION 13: With R1 on third and R2 on second base and one out, B4 hits a line drive into the gap in right center field. R1 scores easily. R2 misses third base as he advances, but does

touch home plate. B4 makes it to second base on an apparent double, but missed first base on his advance. After playing action is over, the defensive head coach is granted time and first appeals R2 missing third base and then appeals B4 missing first base. RULING: This is a legal appeal by the defense as the coach may verbally appeal a base running infraction when the ball is dead and may make multiple appeals. R2 would be declared out for out number two and B4 would be the third out. No runs would score as B4's out is out number three and was made before he touched first base. The order in which appeals are made can be important in determining if runs will score. (8-2-6c,f, 9-1-1a)

SITUATION 14: In the bottom of the seventh inning, the visiting team leads 6-4. With the bases loaded and two outs, the batter hits a grand slam home run over the left field fence. B6, in his excitement, passes R3, who started the play on first base. At the time B6 passed R3, only R1 had touched home plate. RULING: When a batter hits a home run, each runner on base is awarded four bases, or home. While B6 is out for passing an unobstructed preceding runner, his third out is not a force out since he had touched first base. Therefore, three runs will score and the home team will win, 7-6. (8-3-3a, 9-1-1)

SITUATION 15: With a runner on third attempting to steal home, the pitch bounces off the plate, hits the catcher's chest protector and rebounds back in front of the plate in a nice soft arc. The batter, seeing the ball back in front of the plate, hits the ball for a soft fly ball that falls over the second baseman. The defensive coach argues that this is batter interference while the offensive coach counters that since the ball was still technically a pitch, the batter has the right to hit it. RULING: This is batter interference. If the play started with one out, the runner from third would be declared out. If the play started with two outs, the batter would be declared out. The batter has the legal right to strike the pitch as it comes across the home plate area. He no longer has the right to bat the ball once it has passed home plate and subsequently bounces or caroms off someone or something. (7-3-5c Penalty)

SITUATION 16: R1 on first attempts to advance on a fly ball hit to right field by B2. Seeing F9 catch the fly ball, R1 attempts to return to first and is obstructed by F4 who is standing in the base path. RULING: This is obstruction by F4. The base umpire properly declares "That is obstruction," and signals a delayed dead ball. When making an obstruction award, two conditions must be met. First, the obstructed runner will be awarded the base or bases he would have made, in the umpire's judgment, had the obstruction not occurred. Secondly, the award must be a minimum of one base beyond his position on base when the obstruction occurred. Although R1 would have only acquired first base had the obstruction not occurred, that award does not meet the additional condition of a minimum of one base beyond the base occupied at the time of the obstruction. Since R1 occupied first base at the time of obstruction, he will be awarded second base. (8-3-2)

SITUATION 17: R1, moving from first base on a hit and run, is obstructed by F4 as he nears second base. The base umpire properly declares "That is obstruction," and signals a delayed dead ball. He judges at that moment that R1 would have made third base had the obstruction not occurred. R1, despite the obstruction, makes third and attempts to score where he is thrown out at home. The third base coach argues that because of the obstruction, R1 should be allowed to go back to third and have his out nullified. RULING: Obstruction of a runner is ignored if the obstructed runner acquires the base he would have made had the obstruction not occurred and that award satisfies the condition of a minimum of one base beyond his position on base at the time of the obstruction. Since R1 did acquire third base, the base the umpire judged he would have made had there been no obstruction, and that award satisfies the one base minimum requirement, the obstruction is ignored. R1's out at home stands. (8-3-2)

SITUATION 18: With a runner on first and the pitcher struggling in the top of the fifth inning, S1 comes to the mound and begins to throw his warm-up pitches. His coach announces to the plate umpire the change, who marks it on his lineup card and announces to the home

scorekeeper. After only four warm-up pitches, the defensive coach decides he wants a different player to pitch. The visiting coach argues that since the ball had not yet been made live, the substitution had not been made and he can change his mind. RULING: Once the umpire-in-chief has accepted the change, marked it on his lineup and announced the change, the substitution is in effect. The substitute pitcher must pitch until the batter then at bat, or any substitute for that batter, is put out or reaches first base, or until a third out has been made. Therefore, the coach cannot change his substitute pitcher until the pitching conditions have been met. The only exception to this requirement would be if the substitute pitcher became incapacitated or guilty of flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct. If there had been no announcement of the substitution, the unreported substitution would be considered to have been made when the pitcher took his place on the pitcher's plate and the ball was made live. (3-1-1, 3-1-2)

SITUATION 19: R1 is on first base with no outs. B2 smashes a one-hopper to F6, who flips the ball to F4 to quickly retire R1. F4 then relays the ball to first in an attempt for a double play, but the ball strikes R1, who is in the baseline and less than halfway to second. The ball ricochets into short right field and B2 reaches first safely. RULING: The play stands. This is not a violation of the force-play slide rule by R1. Unless R1 intentionally made a move to interfere with the thrown ball, the ball stays live and in play. (8-4-2b, 8-4-2g)

SITUATION 20: With a comfortable lead in the fifth inning, the home coach takes his starting pitcher out of the game and rests him. In the seventh inning, with the game now on the line, the coach wants to bring the starting pitcher back into the game to pitch. The visiting coach argues that, while the player may re-enter the game, he cannot come back to pitch since he has been removed as a pitcher. RULING: Any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered once. As long as the starting pitcher faced one batter, was not removed because his team had more than three defensive charged conferences, and his replacement did not take more than eight warm-up pitches, he may return as a pitcher. (3-1-2 Note, 3-1-3)

2005 NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions

1-3-4: Clarified the diameter of a wood bat.

1-3-5: Deleted rule due to its duplication in Rule 1-3-2.

1-4-6: Added the new NOCSAE standard requirement to face mask/guard products.

3-1-1: Clarifies a player is ejected per the substitution rule.

3-2-1: Clarifies when a coach is restricted to the bench/dugout area because of an improper uniform.

6-1-1: Modifies the balk rule with allowing the "turning of the shoulders" under certain situations.

Suggested Speed-Up Rules, Courtesy Runners

Clarifies the intent and ensures that the rule is consistently applied.

Minor Editorial Revisions

Diagram 2: Provided the correct dimensions of the diagonal sides of home plate.

1-4-4: Added the point that a manufacturer's logo should be visible.

4-4-3: Corrected a minor grammatical error.

Dead Ball And Delayed Dead Ball Table: Corrected a minor grammatical error.

7-3-2 through 6: Repositioned the Penalty section behind each of the articles.

8-1-1 Exc.: Added the rule reference for clarity.

10-2-3: Added that the player may also be restricted to the bench under certain circumstances.

2005 NFHS Baseball Rule Interpretations

SITUATION 1: Smith is the pitcher and Jones is the catcher for the home team. In the second inning, Smith walks and CR1 (Evans) legally enters as a courtesy runner for Smith. In the fourth inning, with Smith struggling, the home coach has Smith and Jones trade positions. Smith is now the catcher and Jones is now the pitcher. In the fifth inning, Jones comes to bat and walks. The home coach puts CR1 (Evans) in to be a courtesy runner for Jones. **RULING:** A courtesy runner may run for either the catcher or the pitcher but not both. Evans, having been a courtesy runner for Smith when he was the pitcher, may only be a courtesy runner for any pitcher of the home team. Once a player is a courtesy runner for a position, he can only continue to courtesy run for that particular position. Evans, at this point in the game, is eligible to be a courtesy runner for Jones, but not for Smith. (Speed-Up Rules)

SITUATION 2: In the home half of the third inning, Team A's catcher is legally pinch-hit for by S1. S1 draws a walk, and the coach legally re-enters the catcher. Now, with the catcher on first base, the home team's coach requests and uses a courtesy runner for the catcher. **RULING:** This is a legal use of the courtesy runner. (Speed-Up Rules)

SITUATION 3: With one out and a 1-1 count, the batter hits a high fly ball in left field near the foul line. The umpire declares "Foul Ball" as the fly ball is subsequently caught by the left fielder. **RULING:** Once the umpire verbally declares "Foul Ball," the ball is dead and treated as foul ball. The batter will return to bat with a 1-2 count and still one out. (5-1-1h)

SITUATION 4: With the bases empty, the batter hits a long fly ball down the left-field line that easily goes over the outfield fence. With the sun in his eyes, the plate umpire initially declares "Foul Ball," but then realizes he made a mistake, that the ball did indeed go over the fence in flight in fair territory. **RULING:** The umpire may reverse his call and declare a home run. The ball is dead because it left the field by going over the fence in flight, not because the umpire declared, "Foul Ball." (10-2-1l, 5-1-1f-4, 8-3-3a)

SITUATION 5: While in the set position, F1 has his pitching hand down in front of his body, swinging slowly as he gets the sign from the catcher. **RULING:** The use of this "gorilla" stance in the set position is illegal. A pitcher, for the set position, shall have his pitching hand down at his side or behind his back. (6-1-3)

SITUATION 6: B1 hits a slow roller down the first-base line. F1 rushes over to field the ball, but cannot get the ball out of his glove. He quickly removes his glove with the ball still in it, and shovels the glove to the first baseman, who is in contact with the base. The first baseman catches the glove with the ball in it just before B1 touches the base. **RULING:** When F1 removes his glove with the ball lodged in it and shoveled it to the first baseman, the umpire should declare "Time," and award all runners, including the batter-runner, two bases. This is a ball that is lodged in a player's equipment. (2-9-1, 8-3-3c, 5-1-1f-5)

SITUATION 7: B1 hits a sharp ground ball to F1, who gloves the ball from the mound. As B1 nears first base, F1 has trouble pulling the ball from the webbing of his glove. B1 touches first base and F1 is able to eventually pull the ball from his glove. RULING: The play stands. This is not a lodged ball as the pitcher was able to extract the ball from his glove. Since he did not toss his glove with the ball lodged in it to F3, the ball stays live, the play stands, and there is no award of bases. (2-9-1)

SITUATION 8: With one out and R2 at first base stealing on the pitch, B3 interferes with the catcher's throw to second base. R2 is easily safe since he had a great jump on the pitch and would have had the base stolen without the batter's interference. The offensive team's coach argues that R2 should be allowed to stay on second base since he clearly had it stolen. RULING: B3 is out for his interference and R2 must return to first base. When the batter interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw out a runner stealing second base, and the attempt is unsuccessful, the ball is dead, the batter is out and all runners must return to bases occupied at the time of the pitch. (7-3-5 Penalty)

SITUATION 9: With one out, B2 hits a ground ball to F6, deep in the hole. F6's throw to F3 is wide and pulls F3 off first base. F3 recovers and attempts to tag B2 as he nears first base. B2, seeing F3 attempting to tag him, slaps the ball from F3's glove and it rolls a few feet away. RULING: This is interference and B2 is declared out. (8-4-2r, 5-1-1e)

SITUATION 10: With the bases loaded and no outs, B4 hits a fly ball between home and third base. The plate umpire declares "Infield fly, if fair." The pitcher and the catcher fail to communicate properly with each other, and the ball hits in foul territory between home and third and then, untouched, rolls and stops on the foul line. RULING: This is a fair ball and an infield fly. B4 is out and the ball remains live. (2-19-1, 2-5-1a, 1-2-6)

SITUATION 11: F1 throws a fastball that tails down the middle of the batter's box. The pitch freezes B1, who subsequently is hit by the pitch. RULING: The ball is dead. It will be umpire judgment as to whether B1 permitted the pitch to hit him. If, in the judgment of the plate umpire, B1 could not react to the pitch, he will be awarded first base. If the plate umpire judges that B1 allowed the pitch to hit him, a ball will be awarded to B2's count and he will remain at bat. (7-3-4, 5-1-1a, 8-1-1d Exception)

SITUATION 12: Having taken one previous defensive charged conference, the visiting team's coach requests time and goes to the mound to talk with his pitcher. After a brief conversation, the coach motions to the bullpen and brings in a relief pitcher. Following a few instructions to the new pitcher, the coach heads to his dugout and crosses the foul line. After several more steps, the coach stops and starts to return to the infield to discuss strategy with the third baseman. RULING: The defensive charged conference concludes when the coach crosses the foul line. The charged conference with his pitcher is not charged since the pitcher was removed as a pitcher. While the coach, with the relief pitcher still taking his warm-up pitches, may provide instruction to his players once he crosses the foul line, if he returns across the foul line to talk with another player, a second team conference will be charged. (3-4-3)

SITUATION 13: The visiting team's pitcher is in the wind-up position. His pivot foot is on the pitcher's plate. His non-pivot foot is to the side, and not in contact with the pitcher's plate, but is positioned to be on a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate. The home team's coach complains to the plate umpire that this is an illegal position. RULING: This is a legal stance when the pitcher is in the wind-up position. The pitcher's non-pivot foot shall be in any position on or behind a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate. (6-1-2)

SITUATION 14: S1 comes in as a relief pitcher. With the ball live, and before he throws a pitch, S1 attempts to pick off R2 on first base. The offensive team's coach complains that S1 has now exceeded the number of innings a pitcher may pitch per the state association pitching

restrictions and requests U1 to forfeit the game to his team. RULING: The forfeit is not honored. S1 did not exceed the state association pitching restrictions as his pickoff is not considered to be a pitch and, as a result, does not count as an inning pitched. Even though S1 has not met the substitution requirements for a relief pitcher, the defensive team is allowed to replace him with an eligible pitcher. (6-1-6, 3-1-2)

SITUATION 15: S1 comes in as a relief pitcher. As he takes his warm-up pitches, the opposing coach argues that he has now exceeded the maximum number of innings a pitcher is allowed by the state association restrictions. RULING: Since S1 never threw a pitch, he has not exceeded his state association restrictions. The defensive team is allowed to replace him with an eligible relief pitcher. (6-1-6)

SITUATION 16: With R1 on third base, R2 takes a position about three feet in the grass behind first base. The pitcher, in a pick-off attempt, throws to first base and R2 runs directly from his position to second base. The defensive coach argues that this is an unfair tactic and that R2 should be declared out. RULING: While a runner may not position himself behind a base to get a running start, there are no other restrictions as to where a runner must be when taking his lead from a base. From wherever he positions himself, his baseline is established from that point directly to the base toward which he is attempting. As long as he does not run more than three feet away from that direct line to avoid being tagged when a play is being made on him, his action is legal. (8-2, 8-4-2a Note, 8-4-2o)

SITUATION 17: While in the set position, the pitcher has not yet come set. With his pitching hand at his side and his glove hand in front of his chest, he quickly turns his shoulder to check the runner at first base. RULING: This is a legal move. (6-1-1)

SITUATION 18: While in the wind-up position, the pitcher slowly turns his shoulders to check the runner taking his lead from third base. RULING: This is a balk. The runner at third base will be awarded home. A pitcher may not turn his shoulders to check a runner in the wind-up position. (6-1-1)

SITUATION 19: F1 is in the set position. Having taken his sign from the catcher, he brings his hands together and moves to become set. As he is still in the process of becoming set with his hands together, he turns his shoulders to check the runner at first base. RULING: This is a balk. The ball is dead and the runner on first will be awarded second base. Turning the shoulders in the set position after bringing the hands together during or after the stretch is a balk. (6-1-1)

SITUATION 20: Brown, the starting shortstop, comes in to pitch in the second inning. At the start of the fourth inning, S1 relieves Brown and Brown returns to play shortstop. S1 retires the first two batters but walks the next two. The defensive coach calls time and has Brown and S1 switch positions. As Brown goes to the mound to pitch, the offensive team's coach argues that once Brown left the mound, he cannot return to pitch. RULING: A player may be removed as pitcher and returned as pitcher only once per inning. Providing Brown's return does not violate either the pitching, substitution or charged conference rule, it will be allowed. Had S1 taken more than his allowed warm-up pitches, Brown could not return to pitch for the remainder of the game. (3-1-2 Note)

Balk Rule Revised for HS Baseball

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (June 22, 2004) — At its annual meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, on June 18-19, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee defined what is a balk and what is not for a high school baseball pitcher.

Rule 6-1-1 was revised to specify when a baseball pitcher can turn his shoulders toward base runners while on the mound. It is now legal for a pitcher to turn his shoulders to check a runner if he is in the set position and in contact with the pitcher's plate. However, if the pitcher turns his shoulders in the windup position to check a runner, it is a balk. Turning the shoulders after bringing the hands together during or after the stretch is also a balk.

"The use of the shoulder turn while in the set position does not afford the pitcher an advantage," said B. Elliot Hopkins, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee. "The prohibition of such actually creates a disadvantage."

In other changes, Rule 1-4-6 states that players now have the option of wearing batting helmets equipped with attached facemasks or guards. Regardless of whether the mask is produced with the helmet or attached after the helmet is manufactured, all attached facemasks or guards must meet NOCSAE standards at the time of the mask's attachment.

"NOCSAE recently developed a standard for facemasks and guards, and the committee felt it would be prudent to incorporate that new standard into our existing rule," said NFHS Baseball Rules Committee Chairman Greg Brewer.

The committee also modified rules pertaining to coaches uniforms. Rule 3-2-1 was changed to state that a coach who is not in his or her team's uniform shall be restricted to the bench or dugout and cannot enter the field unless one of his or her players is ill or injured. Along the same lines, any coach occupying the coach's box must be dressed in his or her team's uniform.

Also, Rule 3-1-1 was clarified so that if an illegal player on either offense or defense is discovered by an umpire, that player shall be restricted to the bench or dugout for the rest of the game. If an illegal offensive player re-enters the game, he will be called out immediately and ejected; an illegal defensive player will simply be ejected.

Baseball is the fourth-most popular sport among boys at the high school level with 453,792 participants during the 2002-03 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It also ranks third in school sponsorship with 14,988 schools offering the sport.

2004 NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions

1-4-4 (old rule) Add to the rule...Loose equipment such as gloves, bats, helmets or catcher's equipment may not be on or near the field.

3-1-1 For discovery of an illegal player (2-36-3) by an umpire or either team, that player shall be restricted to the dugout for the duration of the game.

3-3-1g5 Add to the rule...be in live ball territory (excluding team's bullpen area) during the opponent's infield practice prior to the start of the game.

3-3-1i Add to the rule: "have any object in his possession in the coach's box other than a stop watch, rule book, scorebook, a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or comparable electronic score-recording device which shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only.

5-1-1h Change "h" to read:...the umpire handles a live ball or calls "time" for inspecting the ball or for any other reason, including items in Section 2 or gives the "Do Not Pitch Signal" or verbally announces "Foul Ball."

8-4-2j Add to the end of the rule: There shall be no accidental appeals on a force play.

Signal Chart: Add the proper mechanic for signaling the batter's ball-strike count. Extended fingers above the head, in front of the body with the left hand indicating the number of balls that have been pitched and the right hand indicating the number of strikes that have been pitched.

Major Editorial Revisions

Rule 1: Rule 1 was entirely rewritten to improve the ease of finding pertinent sections and articles and to make the baseball rules book easier to use.

Minor Editorial Revisions

6-1-2 6-1-2 Add ...During delivery, he may lift his non-pivot foot in a step forward, a step sideways, or in a step backward and a step forward, but he shall not otherwise lift either foot... to the rule.

10-2-3 Add (9-2-2) after the phrase "official scorer" in the rule.

Index Correct "2-28-5" feint reference instead of 2-8-5.

Index Correct "2-24-2" force out reference instead of 2-41-1.

2004 NFHS Baseball Rule Interpretations

SITUATION 1: With R1 on first base, B2 singles to right field. As R1 touches second base, B2 touches first and moves one-third of the way to second. F9 picks up the ball and throws it back to first as F3 obstructs B2 returning to first. The ball gets away from F3, and R1 attempts to get to third while B2 stays at first. F2, backing up the play, gets the ball and throws out R1 at third. RULING: At the end of playing action, B2 will be awarded second base because of F3's obstruction. R1's out will stand. Non-obstructed runners may advance at their own risk. (2-22-1, 8-3-2)

SITUATION 2: As U1 inspects the home team's bats and helmets prior to the start of the game, he notices that several of the batting helmets' NOCSAE stamps are not legible and cannot be read. RULING: The helmets are not legal. Each batting helmet must display a legible NOCSAE stamp and the exterior warning statement. If the helmet had been reconditioned to meet the NOCSAE standard, an approved legible NOCSAE sticker should be applied to the helmet if the embossed stamp is not legible. (1-4-5)

SITUATION 3: During the pre-game inspection of the visiting team's bats, U2 notices that a composite bat is present and has no "BESR certified" statement embossed, stickered, labeled or decaled on the bat. The coach states that the BESR certification mark is not required on a composite bat. RULING: A composite bat is a non-wood bat and must meet all non-wood bat specifications and requirements. Since the bat does not have a BESR certification, it is not legal and may not be used. (1-3-2, 1-3-5)

SITUATION 4: After delivering a pitch, the offensive team's coach notices the pitcher has a band-aid on the index finger of his throwing hand. He complains to U1 that a balk should be called. RULING: F1 may not wear a bandage, tape or other foreign material on the fingers or palm of his pitching hand that comes in contact with the ball. U1 will instruct F1 to remove the bandage. There is no additional penalty. (6-2-1g Penalty)

SITUATION 5: The pitcher is using a fielding glove that is light brown outside and dark brown inside on the pocket of the glove. RULING: This is legal. Only if in U1's judgment that this is distracting to the batter would F1 not be allowed to play with the glove. (1-3-7, 6-2-1h)

SITUATION 6: The pitcher is using a black fielding glove that has white lettering on it. RULING: If the umpire judges the white lettering on the glove to be distracting, he would instruct the pitcher to replace the glove. (1-3-7, 6-2-1h)

SITUATION 7: The pitcher is using a dark glove that has a white imprint of a baseball on the outside of the glove. RULING: This glove is illegal for use by a pitcher. (1-3-7, 6-2-1h)

SITUATION 8: With R1 at first, B2 singles to right field. R1 misses second base as he advances safely to third. The throw from the outfield goes to F4, who catches the ball and stumbles on second base, not aware that R1 did not touch the bag. RULING: Until the defense makes a proper intentional appeal, R1 would not be out. Accidental appeals by the defense are not valid. (8-4-2j)

SITUATION 9: The starting pitcher has been wearing a batting glove under his fielding glove. In the fifth inning, the offensive coach complains that this is not legal and the pitcher must remove the batting glove. RULING: If U1 feels that the batting glove is distracting, he would instruct F1 to remove it. If U1 feels it is not distracting, F1 would continue to be able to wear it. The umpire has sole authority to judge whether or not an item is distracting. (6-2-1f Penalty)

SITUATION 10: With 1 out and R1 on first and a count of 2-1, B2 hits a bouncing ball along the first base foul line. U1 mistakenly declares "Foul!" as F1 picks up the ball in fair territory. RULING: The ball is dead immediately. R1 returns to first. B2 continues at bat with a count of 2-2. (5-1-1h)

SITUATION 11: Is a player who is not in the game allowed to warm up an outfielder between innings without wearing a batting helmet? RULING: While the ball is dead, the player is allowed to warm up an outfielder without wearing a batting helmet. By definition, the player is not considered to be a non-adult ball/bat shagger. However, a state association may mandate that any non-adult must wear a helmet while warming up a teammate. (1-4-5, 1-4-6 Penalty)

SITUATION 12: With R1 on third, B2 hits a fly ball to the outfield. As the runner on third tags, the defensive coach (in the third-base dugout) yells, "Go, go, go," to the runner tagging. R1, as a consequence, leaves the base before the catch and must return to tag the base. RULING: This is verbal obstruction. At the end of playing action, U1 will award R1 home due to the obstruction. U1 will also warn the coach that his actions are not in accordance with fair play. (2-22-1, 3-3-1g-4, 8-3-2)

SITUATION 13: R1, who is on second base with no outs, is running on the pitch. As B2 flies out to left field, R1 continues running, touches third base and advances home. The throw goes to the third baseman, who steps on third to append the infraction. RULING: This is not a valid appeal concerning R1 leaving second base too soon. (8-2-5 Penalty)

SITUATION 14: With R1 on first and one out, B2 hits a fly ball down the third-base line. U1 errs and announces "Foul ball," but F5 catches the ball several feet in fair territory. RULING: B2 is out. R1 may tag and advance at his own risk. (Rule 5-1-1h does not apply on a caught fly ball.)

SITUATION 15: With the bases empty, B1 hits a home run over the fence. While running the bases, he misses second base. RULING: Unless the defense properly appeals the missed base, the run will count. If the defense makes a proper appeal, B1 is declared out and the run will not count. (8-2-5 Penalty)

SITUATION 16: With R1 on third and R2 on second and one out, B4 hits a fly ball to right field. While R1 legally tags, R2 leaves second base early. After both runners advance, the defense properly appeals. RULING: R2 is declared out for the third out of the half-inning. R1's run will count. (8-2-5 Penalty, Appeal Guideline #8)

SITUATION 17: With one out and R2 at third, B3 hits a sharp line drive into the gap. As R2 breaks for home, the third-base coach grabs R2's arm and tells him to tag up. The ball is (a) caught or (b) not caught. RULING: This is interference by the third-base coach and the ball is a delayed dead ball, remaining live until playing action is over. In (a) both R2 and B3 are out. In (b) R2 is out and B3 is awarded first or returns to the base occupied at the time of the infraction. (3-2-2, 5-1-2f)

SITUATION 18: With two outs, R3 on third and a full count on B4, F1 delivers from the wind-up position. R3 steals on the pitch and safely touches home before F2 catches the pitch for the third strike. RULING: The run does not count. In order to score, R3 would need to touch home before the time of the pitch. (2-28-3, 9-1-1 Exception a)

SITUATION 19: B1 bunts and F2 fields the ball in fair territory in front of home plate. B1 is running in foul territory when F2, in fair territory, throws errantly and hits B1 in the back. B1 continues running and touches first base. RULING: The play stands. F2 made an errant throw. Although B1 was not in the running lane, his position did not interfere with F2's throw. (8-4-1g Exception)

SITUATION 20: As B1 bunts, F2 fields the ball in front of home plate in fair ground. B1 is running in fair ground as he nears first base. F2 realizes he does not have a line of sight to F3 and tries to lob the ball over B1. F3 leaps but cannot catch the ball. RULING: B1 is out for interference. Although F2 made an errant throw, B1 is guilty of interference by being out of the 3-foot running lane. (8-4-1g)

SITUATION 21: With the home team leading 7-5, the game enters the top of the sixth inning. As the visiting team scores on a grand slam home run to take the lead, 9-7, the game is delayed and later called due to inclement weather. RULING: Unless the state association has adopted specific game-ending procedures, the score will revert to the score at the end of the fifth inning since the teams have not had an equal number of complete turns at bat. Home team wins the game. (4-2-3)

Baseball Rules Committee Focuses on Clarification of Bat Standards and Sportsmanship During Pre-Game Practice

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (June 25, 2003) — Clarification of bat standards was at the top of the agenda during the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee meeting June 20-22 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

In Rule 1-3-5, the Baseball Rules Committee addressed the altering of bats and incorporated the Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) performance standard language into the body of the rule. The requirement of the BESR certification mark on all non-wood bats, which originally was approved by the committee in 2001, took effect in high school baseball January 1, 2003. The BESR mark denotes that non-wood bats have a maximum exit speed of 97 miles per hour (under a set of laboratory conditions) and they have met moment-of-inertia requirements, as well as a maximum diameter of the bat and a minus-3 differential between the length and weight of the bat. The rule now states that bats may either be wood or non-wood, rather than listing various compositions of non-wood bats.

Although the rule requires non-wood bats to be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark, in some cases manufacturers have used a label, sticker or decal to denote BESR certification. However, effective January 1, 2006, no BESR label, sticker or decal will be permitted on any non-wood bat.

The committee also addressed altering of bats and added language to state that no foreign substance may be inserted into the bat.

Rule 5-1-1h was changed to state that if an umpire inadvertently calls a foul ball, the ball is ruled a dead ball. The previous rule specified that, if a foul was inadvertently called, it was left to the discretion of the umpire whether the batter-runner could or could not have been thrown out before reaching first base or other base runners could have advanced on the bases.

Rule 1-4-4 currently specifies that loose equipment, such as gloves and bats, may not be on or near the field. This rule change adds helmets and catcher's equipment to the list of loose equipment not allowed on or near the field. This equipment was added to reduce the risk of injury to players or coaches.

Rule 3-3-1g5 was changed to state that during a team's infield practice prior to the start of a game, the opposing team may not be in live-ball territory. This has become a more common practice, as teams are using such techniques as glaring and making inappropriate remarks to opponents as a form of intimidation. If this occurs, the team at fault may be charged with unsporting conduct.

"This rule will keep non-players off the field, and deals with players and coaches before the game," Hopkins said.

Rule 1-1-6 leaves it to the discretion of individual state associations to authorize the use of prostheses which, in the respective state association's opinion, are no more dangerous to players than the corresponding human body part(s) and do not place an opponent at a disadvantage. The rule currently states that all casts, splints and braces must be padded with at least a half-inch of closed-cell, slow-recovery rubber or other material of the same minimum thickness and having similar physical properties.

Rule 3-1-1 was revised to lessen the penalty for accidental illegal substitution to restriction to the dugout. When an illegal player is discovered by an umpire or either team, that player will be restricted to the dugout for the duration of the game. An illegal player on offense, whether as a batter or runner, must be called out immediately and restricted to the dugout for the duration of the game, rather than being immediately ejected from the game. Ejection remains the penalty for an intentional illegal substitution.

Other rules changes include:

- Rule 3-3-1i adds a stopwatch to the list of objects a coach may possess in the coach's box, to allow flexibility in coaching strategy.
- With regard to base running, Rule 8-4-2j is an extension of Rule 8-4-2. This rule change stipulates that there shall not be any accidental appeals on a force play, in order to be definitive in all aspects of the appeal process.
- A signal change was added to define the proper mechanics for signaling the batter's ball-strike count. There is not currently a recommended mechanic for signaling the count, and, according to Hopkins, this has caused confusion for players and coaches.

Editorial changes made by the rules committee include the reorganization of Rule 1.

An editorial change to Rule 6-1-2 clarifies the delivery of a pitch by a pitcher. This change states that, during delivery, a pitcher may lift his non-pivot foot in a step forward, a step sideways, or in a step backward and a step forward, but he shall not otherwise lift either foot.

Baseball is the fourth-most popular sport for boys at the high school level with 451,674 participants during the 2001-02 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It also ranks third in school sponsorship with 14,924 schools offering the sport.

2003 NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions

1-2-5 (new)	It is recommended that when the dugout area is extended, for any reason, it shall be extended toward the outfield on a line parallel to the foul line. The extension of the dugout area shall be equally applied for both teams. Rationale: Dugout areas are being extended closer to the foul lines and home plate causing concern over liability issues. Also, this is providing greater opportunities for unsportsmanlike actions to occur.
2-29-6 (new)	A defensive appeal of a runner failing to touch a base or tag up is not a play. Rationale: To make the distinction that an appeal is not a play.
3-1-1i	Add to the rule: have any object in his possession in the coach's box other than a rule book, scorebook, a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or comparable electronic score-recording device which shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only; Rationale: To allow a coach the flexibility to use a traditional scorebook or a comparable electronic device.
3-3-2	Revise last line: He may return when requested by an umpire to attend to an ill or injured player. Rationale: The committee felt it was not appropriate for an ejected coach to arbitrarily return to the playing area unless specifically requested by an umpire.
5-2-2b	Exception Change rule to: A runner who is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball became dead, or advances and touches a succeeding base after the ball became dead, may not return and shall be called out upon proper and successful appeal. Rationale: Brings this ruling in alignment with appeal rule instituted in 2001.
8-2-5	Add to the rule: If a runner who misses any base (including home plate) or leaves a base too early, desires to return to touch the base, he must do so immediately. If the ball becomes dead and the runner is on or beyond a succeeding base, he cannot return to the missed base and, therefore, is subject to being declared out upon proper and successful appeal. Rationale: Recommended in order to clean up affected rules from last year's rule change.

<p>8-2 Penalty (Art. 1-5)</p>	<p>For failure to touch a base (advancing and returning), or failure to tag up as soon as the ball is touched on a caught fly ball, the runner may be called out if an appeal is made by the defensive team. The defense may appeal during a live ball immediately following the play and before a pitch (legal or illegal), granting an intentional base on balls, or before the next play or attempted play. If the offensive team initiates a play before the next pitch, the defensive team does not lose the right to appeal. A live ball appeal may be made by a defensive player with the ball in his possession by tagging the runner or touching the base that was missed or left too early. A dead ball appeal may be made by a coach or any defensive player with or without the ball by verbally stating that the runner missed the base or left the base too early. Appeals must be made (1) before the next legal or illegal pitch, (2) at the end of an inning, before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory, (3) before an intentional base on balls is granted, or (4) on the last play of the game, an appeal can be made until the umpires leave the field of play. NOTE: When a play by its very nature is imminent and is obvious to the offense, defense and umpire(s), no verbal appeal is necessary, e.g. runner attempting to retouch a base that was missed, or a failure to tag up and a throw has been made to that base or plate while a play is in progress. Rationale: Prevents the defense from intentionally walking batters it does not want to face and then appealing a missed base. Preventing the defense from making pick-off plays and then appealing a missed base. Will allow defense to appeal if offense initiates a play (i.e. stealing a base). A defensive coach shall verbally appeal only during a dead ball situation.</p>
<p>8-4-2i</p>	<p>Add to the end of the rule: does not retouch his base before a fielder tags him out or holds the ball while touching such base after any situation (8-2-1,2,3 and 4). Umpire may also call him out at end of playing action upon proper and successful appeal. Also, it is not necessary for runner to retouch his base after a foul tip (2-16-2); Rationale: Recommended in order to clean up affected rules from last year's rule change.</p>
<p>8-4-2q</p>	<p>Add to the end of the rule: ...is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball is declared dead (5-2-2b exception) after having left a base too soon on a caught fly ball, or he failed to touch a preceding base, or he continues and touches a succeeding base after the ball has become dead, and the defense initiates a proper and successful appeal. Rationale: Clarification that the runner is not automatically out at the end of all playing action unless defense makes proper appeal.</p>
<p>Major Editorial Revisions</p>	
<p>8-4-2f</p>	<p>...as a runner or retired runner, fails to execute a legal slide, or does not attempt to avoid the fielder or the play on a force play at any base; Rationale: This is an editorial change in order to correct a previously omitted phrase.</p>
<p>Minor Editorial Revisions</p>	

2-19-1	Add to the rule: ...(rule does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to attempt to make the catch)... Rationale: This is an editorial change to discern the outfielder's ability to attempt to make a catch.
3-1-2 Note	Delete "c" from rule reference 6-2-2c.Rationale: There is no 6-2-2c exception.

2003 NFHS Baseball Rule Interpretations

SITUATION 1: With the bases loaded, B4 hits a home run. Before B4 reaches home plate, the catcher shows the umpire that the bat does not have any BESR certification markings on the bat. The Team B coach argues that the sticker came off during the hit and that the runs should count. RULING: The umpire(s) inspected all the bats prior to the start of the game. All four runs are permitted, but the bat is no longer permitted to be used in the game because it is not properly identified as meeting the BESR standard. (1-3-5)

SITUATION 2: B1's batting stance places his lead foot outside the front of the batter's box. He swings and foul tips the ball and the catcher catches the ball. RULING: The umpire immediately calls the ball dead and B1 is out. (5-1-1a, 7-3-2)

SITUATION 3: During a time-out, with runners on first and second bases, R2 switches places with R1 because he is faster and plans on stealing third base when the game resumes. RULING: When detected, the umpire will award two outs to the defense, warn the coach and eject R2 and R1. One out is assessed for passing a runner and another out is for running the bases in reverse order. This infraction may be corrected during a dead ball when detected by the umpire, defensive team or offensive team. (3-3-1g, 8-4-2m, n)

SITUATION 4: With one out and runners on first and second bases, on a fair hit to short right field, R1 scores from second base and R2 misses second base, and the batter-runner overruns and misses first base. The defense calls time and appeals R2 missing second base first and the batter-runner missing first base. The umpire honors the appeals which results in the third out. Does R1's run count? RULING: No, R1's run would not count because the first appeal at second base and the latter appeal at first base is the third out. Due to the force at first base, the run cannot count. (9-1-1a)

SITUATION 5: First and third bases are occupied with one out. The umpire-in-chief interferes with the catcher attempting to throw out the runner stealing second base, and the shortstop cuts off the throw and attempts to throw out the runner at the plate. Do the runners get sent back to their respective bases due to the umpire's interference? RULING: Since the shortstop cut off the throw, the umpire immediately makes the ball dead. The runners are sent back to their respective bases at the time of the pitch. (2-21-2, 5-1-2c,)

SITUATION 6: With a runner at second base and two outs, the batter hits a single to right field. The runner misses third base and scores. The defense does not immediately appeal, and the ball is made live. With a right-handed pitcher on the mound, in contact with the pitcher's plate, the pitcher illegally turns his shoulders to check the runner. A balk is called, and the runner is awarded second base. With the ball being dead, the defensive coach asks for an appeal of the runner missing third base. Is the defense allowed to appeal? RULING: No, the pitcher's balk constitutes an illegal pitch and the defense loses the right to appeal the base runner's error. (2-3-1, 8-2-5 Penalty)

SITUATION 7: With a runner on first base, the pitcher legally steps back off the pitching plate and walks toward the runner, driving him back to the base. The pitcher then is granted "Time" and verbally appeals that another runner, currently standing on third base, missed second base

as he advanced to third. RULING: The appeal is not a legal appeal. The act of driving the runner at first base back to his base constitutes a play. The defense may not appeal a base-running error following a play not initiated by the offense. (8-2-5 penalty)

SITUATION 8: With a runner (R1) on first base, B2 hits a ball into left center field. The shortstop accidentally collides with R1, who is rounding second base. R1 sustains a bloody nose and falls to the ground between second and third. The umpire calls obstruction and determines that R1 would have reached home safely. While the center fielder is still retrieving the ball, B2 rounds second and stops because R1 is on the ground. When the ball is relayed to the infield, B2 retreats to second base. What bases should each runner have acquired? RULING: At the end of playing action, the player who is bleeding shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If it can be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual would not have to leave the game. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it shall be changed before he can resume playing, after which the umpire awards R1 home and B2 third base. (2-22-1, 3-1-6, 5-1-3, 8-3-2)

SITUATION 9: A runner is on second base. Both the shortstop and second baseman are playing back and in a position to make a play. A line drive is hit back up the middle and before it can be caught, the ball hits the runner who is standing on the bag. It has only passed the pitcher and not any other fielder. Is the runner out or safe? How many bases is the batter-runner awarded? RULING: The ball becomes dead immediately, the runner is out and the batter-runner is awarded first base. (5-1-1f, 6-1-5, 8-2-7, 8-4-2g and k)

SITUATION 10: With a runner on second base, the pitcher legally steps off the pitching plate and feints a throw to occupied second base. He then throws the ball to third base, appealing that the runner who just scored missed third on his advance. RULING: The appeal is not a legal appeal. Once the pitcher made a play (feinted a throw), the defense may no longer appeal a base-running infraction. (8-2-5 penalty)

SITUATION 11: With a runner on first base, the pitcher legally steps off the pitching plate with his pivot foot and turns abruptly to first as if he is making a throw to first base. Following this action at first base, the defense appeals a runner leaving another base earlier on a caught fly ball. RULING: The appeal is not legal. The action by the pitcher is a play and therefore the defense cannot make an appeal once a play or attempted play has occurred. (8-2-5 penalty)

SITUATION 12: The runner on first takes his lead almost halfway to second base. The pitcher attempts to pick off the runner. Following this action, the defense appeals another runner's base-running infraction. RULING: This would be a legal appeal. Taking such an inordinate lead constitutes an attempt by the offense to force the defense to make a play. Since this is an offense-initiated play, the defense may make multiple appeals. (8-2-5 penalty)

SITUATION 13: The batter hits a hard, low line drive that hits the front edge of the pitching plate, and without touching any defensive player, rebounds back towards home, hitting the batter who is still in the batter's box. RULING: This is a foul ball. To be fair, the ball must either contact a player on or over fair ground or contact fair ground on or beyond an imaginary line between first and third bases. (2-5-1b, f)

SITUATION 14: The pitcher is wearing a red, white and blue fielding glove. In the second inning, the batter hits a line drive that is caught by the pitcher. RULING: This is an illegal glove for the pitcher to use. The out is canceled and the batter is awarded third base. Had the pitcher been told prior to the catch, all he would have needed to do is replace the glove with a legal one. (1-3-5, 1-4-3, 6-2-1-h penalty, 8-3-3b)

SITUATION 15: The home plate umpire, during his pre-game equipment inspection, notices that one of the bats is a minus 5, length to weight differential, but does have a "BESR" sticker

permanently attached. RULING: This is an illegal bat. All bats must meet size, length and weight specifications as well as the BESR performance standard. (1-3-5)

SITUATION 16: As the pitcher delivers his pitch, the batter squares to bunt, placing the bat in the strike zone. The pitch is high and the batter does not make any movement with the bat. RULING: This is a ball. In bunting, any movement of the bat toward the ball when the ball is over or near the plate area, is a strike. The mere holding of the bat in the strike zone is not an attempt to bunt. (7-2-1b, 10-1-4)

SITUATION 17: With the bases loaded and the runner on third breaking for home, the batter swings at a pitch, hitting it high in the air between the pitching mound and home plate. As the plate umpire declares "infield fly if fair," the ball lands on the ground and rolls back toward home. As the runner from third is sliding to the plate, the ball contacts him in fair ground. RULING: The ball is immediately declared dead. The batter is out for the infield fly and the runner is out as well. (2-19-1, 5-1-1-f1, 8-4-2-k note)

SITUATION 18: The batter-runner, while running to first base, contacts the first baseman in the three-foot running lane, as the first baseman is attempting to field the batted ball and make a throw to home to retire the runner from third. RULING: The batter is out for the interference and the ball is declared dead. If the umpire believes that the defense could have made a play on the runner at home, a double play could be declared. (8-1-1note, 8-4-2g)

SITUATION 19: With runners on first and second, the pitch rebounds off the catcher's shin guard and goes to the on-deck circle. An on-deck batter, not thinking, picks up the ball and throws it to the pitcher. The runners (a) were not moving at the time or (b) attempting to advance to the next base. RULING: In (a) the ball is declared dead. In (b) the ball is declared dead and the runner that the umpire believes a play would have been made on is declared out. If the umpire is uncertain, the runner nearest home would be called out. (2-21-1a, 8-4-2g)

SITUATION 20: F1 is an ambidextrous pitcher with an ambidextrous glove. After a runner reaches first base, the field umpire moves to the B position. The pitcher standing just behind the pitcher's plate, assumes a windup position and with his hands up and in front of his body. He then slides his left hand into the glove while bringing his right hand into the glove to grip the ball completing the switch from a left-handed thrower to right-handed thrower to face a right-handed batter. The pitcher then engages the pitcher's plate. The umpire in the B position did not see the pitcher switch throwing hands. The pitcher, in the wind-up position as a right-handed pitcher, steps off the pitcher's plate with the pivot (right) foot first and then throws to first base in an attempt to pick off a runner. The umpire in B calls a balk because he thought the pitcher was left-handed. Is this a balk? How obvious does the pitcher have to be in making the switch from left to right? RULING: This is a balk. An ambidextrous pitcher must face a batter either as a left-handed or right-handed pitcher but not both. He may change to the other hand to pitch on the next batter, but he must begin and complete his pitching responsibility to an individual batter with the same hand through his turn at bat. This is deceptive and not in the spirit of fair play. (2-28-3, 3-3-1g, 6-1-1 note, 6-2-5)

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Baseball Rules Committee Focuses on Base Running and the Appeal Process at its Annual Meeting

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 9, 2002) — Most of the rules changes made at the National Federation of State High School Associations Baseball Rules Committee meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, on June 23-24 dealt with base running and the use of proper appeals.

The most important change was made to Rule 8-2 Penalty Articles 1-5, which explains when a coach or player can make an appeal on a missed base. In addition to the set rules on appeals, the rule change added that an appeal must be made before an intentional base is granted.

According to Elliot Hopkins, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee, this rule was added to prevent the defense from intentionally walking batters it does not want to face and then appealing a missed base. The rule change also prevents the defense from attempting a pick-off play and then appealing a missed base, as well as allowing the defense to appeal if the offense initiates a play, such as stealing a base. The rule also stipulates that a defensive coach can appeal only during a dead-ball situation.

"This change keeps the coaches from disrupting the umpires during a live ball," Hopkins said. "The umpires need to be intent on live-ball situations."

Another important rule change is an addition to Rule 3-1-1i. The change states that coaches may have in their possession in the coach's box, a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or comparable electronic score-recording device, which shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only, in addition to a rules book and scorebook.

"The coaches now can keep track of how well their players and their opponents are doing, all in the palm of their hand," Hopkins said.

Two new rules were also added during the meeting. Rule 1-2-5 recommends that when the dugout area is extended, for any reason, it should be extended toward the outfield on a line parallel to the foul line. The extension of the dugout area shall be equally applied for both teams. This rule was added because dugout areas were being extended closer to the foul lines and home plate, causing liability concerns, and a competitive advantage for one team over the other.

The second new rule was Rule 2-29-6, which states that a defensive appeal of a runner failing to touch a base or tag up is not considered a play. This rule was added to clarify that an appeal does not constitute a play.

Five other rules changes were made, including:

- The last line of Rule 3-3-2 was revised to state that a coach who has been ejected can return to the playing area only if specifically requested to by an umpire.

- Rule 5-2-2b Exception was changed to explain that if a runner is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball becomes dead, or advances and touches a succeeding base, he cannot return and will be called out upon a proper and successful appeal.

- Rule 8-2-5 was amended to state that if a runner who misses any base or leaves a base too early desires to return to touch the base, he must do so immediately. If the ball becomes dead, he cannot return to the missed base, and therefore is subject to being declared out upon a proper and successful appeal.

- The following was added to the end of Rule 8-4-2i: "... does not retouch his base before a fielder tags him out or holds the ball while touching such base after any situation. Umpire may also call him out at the end of playing action upon proper and successful appeal. Also, it is not necessary for runner to retouch his base after a foul tip."

- "... is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball is declared dead after having left a base too soon on a caught fly ball, or he failed to touch a preceding base, or he continues and touches a succeeding base after the ball has become dead, and the defense initiates a proper and successful appeal," was added to the end of Rule 8-4-2q.

Three editorial changes were also made, with Rule 8-4-2f having the only major editorial changes. The committee added the words "does not" to correct a previously-omitted phrase. The rule now states: "... as a runner or retired runner, fails to execute a legal slide, or does not attempt to avoid the fielder or the play on a force play at any base."

The minor editorial changes dealt with Rule 2-19-1, which added the words "attempt to" to discern the outfielder's ability to attempt to make a catch, and the deletion of "c" from rule reference 6-2-2c, because there is no 6-2-2c exception.

"This was not a year of significant changes," Hopkins said. "We just did some cleaning up and some clarifying of the rules."

Baseball is the fourth-most popular sport for boys at the high school level with 450,513 participants during the 2000-01 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It also ranks third in school sponsorship with 14,791 schools offering the sport.

2002 NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions

The major revision for 2002 is the revision of the appeals rule to once again after 18 years compels the defense to see and appeal the infraction (8-2). Both live and dead ball appeals will be permitted.

1-1-6 Note	Catcher's helmet must have flaps on both sides.
1-3-5	Effective 1/1/03 all non-wood bats must meet the Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) performance standard. This allows a maximum exit speed of 97 mph. Rationale: Ensure that bat performance mirrors the performance of wood bats to reduce the risk of injury.
1-3-5 Note	Umpire may remove at his discretion and with no penalty, any bat that continually discolors the game ball. Rationale: Previous penalty of declaring the batter out felt to be too severe.
1-1-6	All casts, splints and braces on coaches and players must be padded with a minimum of 1/2 inch of closed cell, slow recovery rubber or other similar material with similar properties.
1-1-6 Note	Umpire has the power to rule that any equipment judged to be unreasonably dangerous is illegal.
3-2-1, 10-1-7	Coaches and umpires may now wear prostheses and use mobility devices. Rationale: Conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
4-4-2	10-run rule is once again optional. Note added to state the if an over-the-fence homerun produces the winning runs, all runs score before the game is over.
8-2	Penalty portion now compels the defense to see and appeal the infraction. must be requested immediately following the play and prior to the next legal or illegal pitch, at the end of an inning, before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory or before the umpires leave the field at the conclusion of the game. May be a live or dead ball request.
Points of emphasis	Dugout decorum - Reminder that only the batter, runners, on-deck batter, coaches or defensive players should be in live-ball territory when ball is live.

	<p>Substitutions - Reported to umpire-in-chief by coach or player for purposes of courtesy and good sportsmanship. No new penalty.</p> <p>Pregame conference - Meeting should take place with players off the field in the dugout or bullpen.</p> <p>Restriction to dugout - Umpires encouraged to utilize dugout restriction instead of ejection where warranted.</p> <p>Checking bats & helmets - Recommended to be done 10 minutes before game time.</p>
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2002 NFHS Baseball Rule Interpretations

Clarification Of NFHS Baseball 8-2 Appeal Rule Play Situations

The following play situations listed in the 2002 NFHS Baseball Casebook should be clarified and interpreted to read "upon proper appeal", Situations 8.2.1 A-E and 8.2.6 Situations C-D. In addition, Situation 8.2.2 B the play should contain the verbiage, "the defensive coach verbally states that the runner on second left too early or a defensive player with the ball in his possession touches the player or the missed bag". In Situation 8.2.2 D (c) the play should read, "the defensive coach verbally states that the runner missed second base".

SITUATION 1: With the bases loaded and one out, the batter hits a high pop fly that is properly declared to be an infield fly by the base umpire. The ball glances off the first baseman's glove over fair territory, and bounces into the first-base dugout. RULING: The ball is dead and the batter is declared out. The runners from third base and second base are awarded home, and the runner from first base is awarded third base. (2-5-1f, 2-19-1, 5-1-1f, 8-3-3c, 8-4-1j)

SITUATION 2: The right fielder has recently had his ear pierced. So that the piercing does not close, the player's doctor has provided written medical permission for the player to participate with a band-aid covering the earring. RULING: A player while participating in the game shall not wear jewelry. The earring must be removed. (1-16 note, 3-3-1c)

SITUATION 3: With the runner on first base stealing on the pitch, the batter steps back in the batter's box as the pitch is released. His action interferes with the catcher's ability to receive the pitch and prevents him from attempting to throw the runner out at second base. RULING: This is batter's interference. The batter is declared out and the runner must return to first base. (7-3-5c)

SITUATION 4: With a runner on first base, the batter hits a pitch that bounces fair in the outfield and hits the left-field foul pole above the fence and bounces back into the outfield. As the left fielder chases the ball, the batter reaches third and heads for home. RULING: This is a ground-rule double. The ball is dead when it contacted the foul pole above the fence. The runner from first base is awarded third base and the batter is awarded second base. (2-5-1d, 5-1-1f, 8-3-3c)

SITUATION 5: With a runner on first base, the batter hits a deep fly to center field. The runner from first touches second and is halfway to third base when the center fielder makes a leaping catch. As the runner attempts to return to first base, he misses second base. He safely arrives at first base. RULING: The batter is out. At the end of playing action, and before the next legal or illegal pitch, the shortstop with the ball in his hand touches second base and informs the umpire that he is appealing the runner missing second base. Upon proper appeal the umpire declares the runner out. (8-2-2, 8-2-5 penalty)

SITUATION 6: At the pre-game conference, the home team coach is covering ground rules. He points out that in right field the light pole is a few feet in front of the fence. He mentions that a black tape is around the light pole, about 12 feet above the ground. He states that it is a home run if a fly ball hits the light pole above the tape since the ball would have easily cleared the fence if the light pole were not there. RULING: A ground rule cannot supersede the rules book. A fly ball hitting the light pole above the tape will remain in play and will not be ruled a home run. The batted fair ball must go over a fence in flight before a home run can be awarded. (4-1-2, 8-3-3a)

SITUATION 7: The scoreboard is flush with the fence and extends more than 60 feet above the ground in left center field. About two-thirds the way up the scoreboard, a horizontal line has been drawn the length of the scoreboard. The home team coach states that it is their ground rule that any fair batted ball that hits the scoreboard above the line is a home run. RULING: A ground rule cannot supersede the rules book. A fly ball hitting the scoreboard above the tape will remain in play and will not be ruled a home run. The batted fair ball must go over a fence in flight before a home run can be awarded. (4-1-2, 8-3-3a)

SITUATION 8: The center fielder returns to his team's dugout and sits on the bench. He replaces his earring and stays in the dugout. As the half-inning ends, he removes his earring and returns to center field. RULING: This is acceptable. While he remains in the dugout, he is not considered to be participating and, therefore, would not place his team or himself in jeopardy for a warning or a subsequent ejection, if a team warning had previously been given. (1-1-6 note, 3-3-1c)

SITUATION 9: With runners on first and third bases, the pitcher is in the set position. The pitcher then attempts the third-to-first pick-off move by stepping towards third base, and turning around and throwing to first. The third-base coach claims this is a balk since the pitcher, in his feint to third, only stepped toward third with no arm movement. RULING: This pick-off move is legal. A feint is a movement that simulates the start of a pitch or a throw to a base. Arm movement by a pitcher during a feint is not mandatory. (2-28-5)

SITUATION 10: A home-team booster sits behind home plate with a radar gun recording the speed of pitches of the opposing team. In the fifth inning, players from the home team get the information from the booster and provide it to the coach. RULING: This is not allowed. While the booster may have a radar gun in the stands, this information cannot be provided to a team for coaching purposes. Following a warning to the coach, continued behavior would result in an ejection. (3-3-1e, 3-3-1g4, 10-2-3g)

SITUATION 11: With a ball bunted in front of home plate, the batter-runner is running inside of the foul line to first base. With the batter-runner outside of the running lane, the catcher is not able to make a throw to first base. RULING: Although the batter-runner is outside of the three-foot running lane, the catcher must attempt a throw for interference to be called. If a throw were made, the batter-runner could be called out by the plate umpire, and other runners would be returned to their base occupied at the time of the interference. (8-4-1g)

SITUATION 12: With a runner on first base, the batter hits a high pop up in the infield. Hoping to create a double play, the first baseman allows the ball to drop untouched. The ball lands behind a line between first and second and spins untouched in front of first base, where it crosses the foul line. RULING: This is a fair ball and the ball remains live. The batter-runner is not out since the first baseman allowed the ball to drop untouched. (2-5-1b, 8-4-1c)

SITUATION 13: With the shortstop playing behind second base and in a position to make a catch, the runner standing on second base is hit by a line drive. RULING: The ball is dead and the runner on second base is declared out. The batter-runner is awarded first base. If no

infielder had been in a position to make a play, the ball would remain live, provided the runner did not intentionally allow himself to be hit by the batted ball. (5-1-1f1, 8-4-2k, 6-1-5)

SITUATION 14: With a runner on first base, the right-handed pitcher is in the set position. The pitcher legally steps behind the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot but then steps toward home as if he is delivering a pitch. He then pivots and throws to first base, picking off the runner. RULING: This is a balk. The ball is dead and the runner is awarded second base. The pitcher, while off the pitcher's plate, is prohibited from making any movement naturally associated with his pitch. (2-3-1, 5-1-1k, 6-2-5)

SITUATION 15: With the winning run on third base, the defensive head coach instructs the umpire to award an intentional walk to the next two batters. The first batter goes directly to second base without touching first base. Before the next batter enters the batter's box, the pitcher verbally appeals the runner on second missing first base. RULING: This is a proper appeal. The runner on second base will be declared out. (2-4-3, 5-1-3, 8-2-5 penalty, 8-2-8)

SITUATION 16: With one out and a runner on first base, the defense brings in a substitute pitcher. After one pitch to the batter, the pitcher successfully picks off the runner at first base. The coach now wants to make another pitching change. RULING: The home-plate umpire will not allow this pitching change. The substitute pitcher must pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute for that batter, until such batter is out or reaches first base, or until a third out has been made. (3-1-2)

SITUATION 17: May a pitcher be removed and return to pitch in the same inning? RULING: If a pitcher is removed from the game, his re-entry is governed by the substitution rule. A player may be removed as pitcher and return as pitcher once per inning, provided the return as pitcher does not violate either the pitching, substitution or charged-conference rule. If the starting pitcher and the first baseman switch defensive positions, the starting pitcher may return to pitch in the same inning provided the batter the first baseman faced is put out or reaches first base and also provided the first baseman did not require more than eight warm-up pitches. The original starting pitcher could then face the next batter until that batter is out or reaches first base and then again trade places with the first baseman. At that point, the starting pitcher could not return to pitch again until the next inning. If the first baseman were removed as a pitcher the second time in the inning, he could not return to pitch until the next inning as well. (3-1-1, 3-1-2, 3-1-2 note)

SITUATION 18: The batter doubles but misses first base. With the runner standing on second base, the defensive team throws the ball to first to make a live-ball appeal, but throws the ball into the dugout. Now, the defense verbally appeals the missed base while the ball is dead. Is this legal? RULING: This is a legal appeal. The batter will be declared out for missing first base. (8-2-5 penalty)

SITUATION 19: With a runner on first base, the batter doubles to left center. As the runner from first advances, he misses second base. With the ball still live, the third baseman tags the runner standing on third base, not knowing the runner missed second base. RULING: Since the missed base was a forced base for the runner, the runner will be declared out on a force play even though the defense did not knowingly appeal the missed base. (2-24-1, 2-29-3, 8-2-7)

SITUATION 20: While attempting to steal second base, the runner from first never touches second base and advances to third base when the catcher's throw sails into center field. Not aware that the runner failed to touch second base, the third baseman takes the throw from center field and tags the runner while he is standing on third. RULING: Since this is not an intentional appeal, nor a force play, the runner is not declared out. If the defense were to subsequently legally appeal, an out then could be declared. (8-2-5 penalty).

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<p>1-1-5 (Add)</p>	<p>To add to the end of the rule: ... And have full ear protection (dual ear flaps). Rationale: Require a catcher to wear head protection with double ear flaps. In order to qualify for the NOCSAE standard the testing procedures entails side of head impact test.</p>
<p>1-1-6 (New)</p>	<p>Replace first sentence with: All casts, splints and braces on coaches and players must be padded with at least ½" of closed cell, slow recovery rubber or other material of the same minimum thickness and having similar physical properties. Rationale: Being more specific in regards to casts, splints and braces.</p>
<p>1-1-6 Note (New)</p>	<p>Replace first sentence with: Any player equipment judged by the umpire to be unreasonably dangerous is illegal. Rationale: Being more specific in regards to player's equipment.</p>
<p>1-3-5 (Add)</p>	<p>Add to end of the rule and before Note 1: All non-wood bats shall meet the Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) performance standard and such bats shall be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark. Effective January 1, 2003. Rationale: The baseball bat manufacturers have begun to promote new bats that, although they meet our current standards, may have enhanced performance values.</p>
<p>1-3-5 Note 1 (New)</p>	<p>Bats that are altered or that do not meet the rule specification are illegal (See 7-4-1a). Bats that are broken, cracked, dented or deface the ball (i.e. tear the ball) shall be removed without penalty. A bat that continually discolors the ball may be removed from the game with no penalty at the discretion of the umpire. Rationale: The committee felt that the prior penalty was too severe and wanted to provide the umpire the ability to use his discretion in removal of the bat.</p>
<p>3-2-1 (New)</p>	<p>Add to end of the rule: Coaches may wear prostheses and use mobility devices. Rationale: These rule changes are recommended to require that baseball rules conform to ADA requirements and assist in limiting umpires liability as well as that of the schools, coaches, players, state associations and NFHS.</p>
<p>4-2-2 (Add)</p>	<p>Add to the front of the rule: By state association adoption . . . Rationale: To allow states that have concerns to either use the "10 run Mercy Rule" or not.</p>
<p>8-2 Penalty (New)</p>	<p>Replace rule with: . . .For failure to touch a base (advancing or returning), or failure to tag up as soon as the ball is touched on a caught fly ball, the runner may be called out if an appeal is made by the defensive team. The defense may appeal during a live ball immediately following the play and before a pitch, legal or illegal. A live ball appeal may be made by a coach or any defensive player with the ball in his possession by tagging the runner or touching the base that was missed or left too early. A dead ball appeal may be made by a coach or any defensive player with or without the ball by verbally stating that the runner missed the base or left the base too soon. Appeals must be made (1) before the next legal or illegal pitch, (2) at the end of an inning, before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory, or (3) on the last play of the game, an appeal can be made until the umpires leave the field of play. NOTE: When a play, by its very nature is imminent and is obvious to the offense, defense, and umpire(s), no verbal appeal is necessary (e.g. runner attempting to retouch a base that was missed, or a failure to tag up and a throw has been made to that base or plate while a play is in progress). APPEAL PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES 1. Types a. Missing a base b. Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is first touched.</p>

	<p>2. Live Ball. In all games an appeal may be made during a live ball by any fielder in possession of the ball touching the base missed or left too soon on a caught fly ball, or by tagging the runner committing the violation if he is still on the playing field.</p> <p>3. Dead Ball. The dead ball appeal may be made: 1) Once all runners have completed their advancement and time has been called, a coach or any defensive player, with or without the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball. The administering umpire should then make a decision on the play. 2) If the ball has gone out of play, runners must be given the opportunity to complete their base running responsibilities before the dead ball appeal can be made.</p> <p>4. May Not Return. A runner may not return to touch a missed base or one left too soon on a caught fly ball if:</p> <p>a) he has reached a base beyond the base missed or left too soon and the ball becomes dead,</p> <p>b) he has left the field of play, or</p> <p>c) a following runner has scored.</p> <p>5. Advance. Runners may advance during a live ball appeal play. If a time out is requested for an appeal, the umpire should grant it, and runners may not advance until the ball becomes live again.</p> <p>6. More Than One Appeal. Multiple appeals are permitted as long as they do not become a travesty of the game.</p> <p>7. Awards. An appeal must be honored even if the base missed was before or after an award.</p> <p>8. Tag-Ups. If a runner leaves a base too soon on a caught fly ball and returns in an attempt to retag, this is considered a time play and not a force out. If the appeal is the third out, all runs scored by runners in advance of the appealed runner and scored ahead of the legal appeal would count.</p> <p>9. Fourth Out Appeal. An appeal may be made after the third out as long as it is made properly and the resulting appeal is an apparent 4th out.</p> <p>10. End of Game. If any situation arises which could lead to an appeal by the defense on the last play of the game, the appeal must be made while an umpire is still on the field of play. Rationale: The appeal play is a traditional play in baseball and has remained so in other rule codes.</p>
10-1-7 (New)	<p>Add to the end of the rule: Umpires may wear prostheses and use mobility devices.</p> <p>Rationale: To make the rule consistent for the officials, as well as the coaches.</p>
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1-2-4	<p>Add to the end of the rule: (2-23-1).</p> <p>Rationale: To make proper reference to the other affected rule.</p>
5-1-1L	<p>Change #26 in Dead Ball Table to read the same as 5-1-1L</p> <p>Rationale: To assist in consistency within the rule book and the dead ball table.</p>

Pitching Clarifications & New Rules for 2001

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 31, 2000) — Several clarifications in pitching motions were approved by the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee at its meeting here July 15-17.

The committee defined the “time of the pitch” in the windup position as occurring when the pitcher (a) first starts any movement of his arm(s) or leg(s) after stepping onto the pitcher’s

plate with his hands already together in front of his body; (b) with both arms at his side, first starts any movement with both arms or leg(s) prior to the pitch; (c) with either hand in front of the body and the other hand at his side, after bringing his hands together, first starts any movement of his arm(s) or leg(s) prior to the pitch.

In the set position, the "time of the pitch" occurs the instant the pitcher, after coming to a complete and discernible stop, starts any movement with arm(s) and/or leg(s) that commits him to pitch.

In addition, the committee clarified Rule 6-1-4 regarding the position of the pitcher's glove in the set position as follows: "He shall come to a complete and discernible stop (a change of direction is not considered an acceptable stop) with the ball in both hands in front of the body and his glove at or below his chin."

Elliot Hopkins, director of educational services for the NFHS and staff liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee, said there was confusion as to how these rules were being applied. He said the change in language was meant to clarify the intent of these pitching rules.

Although the NFHS Board of Directors already had approved a new bat rule, which will take effect January 1, 2001, the Baseball Rules Committee approved this change as a part of its official rules changes for the 2001 season.

The new bat rule in effect for the 2001 season will state that the diameter at the thickest part of the bat should be no greater than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches, and the bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than three ounces less than the length of the bat. For example, a 33-inch-long bat cannot weigh less than 30 ounces. Previously, the maximum diameter was $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the unit differential was five.

Regarding bats, the committee noted that bats that are altered, that deface the ball or that do not meet the rule specifications are illegal. Bats that are broken, cracked or dented shall be removed upon discovery without penalty.

In Rule 1-1-5, the committee agreed to delay the implementation of the catcher's helmet and mask combination meeting the NOCSAE standard from January 1, 2001, to January 1, 2003. Also, in Rule 1-1-5 the committee voted to give state high school associations the flexibility to allow commemorative or memorial patches (not to exceed $2\frac{1}{4}$ square inches) on jerseys in an appropriate and dignified manner without compromising the integrity of the uniform.

As is being done with rules in other high school sports, the Baseball Rules Committee adopted language in Rule 4-2-3a to address sportsmanship. The umpire-in-chief is to receive verification from both coaches that all participants are properly equipped and emphasize to the coaches and captains that all participants are expected to exhibit good sporting behavior throughout the game(s).

Baseball is the fourth-most popular sport for boys at the high school level with 455,305 participants during the 1998-99 season, according to the athletics participation survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations. In terms of school sponsorship it ranks third with 14,486 schools nationwide offering the sport. In addition, there are 1,331 girls in 136 schools across the country who participated in baseball during the 1998-99 season.

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SITUATION 1: The home team has an enclosed batting cage behind its dugout. During the game, batters will take batting practice before batting in the game. The visiting coach

complains to the plate umpire and wants the plate umpire to either allow his team to hit before its at-bats, or not allow anyone to use the batting cage during the game. RULING: The umpire has no jurisdiction over the use of equipment or facilities outside the confines of the field. This is a matter that must be settled between the coaches or their league. However, if batting practice is taken during the game and the sound of the metal bats becomes distracting, the umpire can prohibit further use of the batting cage. (10-2-3; Approved Ruling 1990)

SITUATION 2: The batter receives ball four and trots down to first base. He overruns first base slightly and is tagged by the first baseman, who has the ball. RULING: The batter-runner is out. A batter-runner who reaches first base safely may immediately return without liability of being put out, provided he does not attempt or feint an advance to second base. A player who is awarded first base does not have that protection. (2-25-1; 8-2-6; Approved Ruling 1981)

SITUATION 3: The pitcher delivers a pitch, which strikes the ground in front of the batter. The plate umpire calls out "Ball," but the batter swings and hits the ball over the outfield fence in fair territory. RULING: This is a home run. Proper umpire mechanics and timing by the plate umpire in calling balls and strikes will prevent this from occurring. (8-3-3a)

SITUATION 4: The batter hits a long fly ball to the outfield. The right fielder goes back to the fence, jumps and catches the ball, and then falls over the fence. RULING: As long as the fielder completed the act of catching the ball, the batter is out. The ball is dead and any runners on base would be awarded one base from the base occupied at the time of the pitch. The continuing action of the catch must be completed by the right fielder when he falls over the fence for the catch to be declared. (8-3-3d; 8-3-5b; 5-1-1i; 2-9-1)

SITUATION 5: The catcher singles to right field. Courtesy Runner 1 (CR1) runs for the catcher. CR1 is injured sliding back to first base, requiring him to leave the game. CR2 replaces CR1. RULING: This is legal. CR2 may replace CR1 as a courtesy runner. Both players retain their eligibility to enter the game as a substitute. (Speed-Up rules, CR3)

SITUATION 6: With CR1 on second base, running for the catcher, the pitcher singles, scoring CR1. The team has only 10 players and wants CR1 to now courtesy run for the pitcher. RULING: This is not legal. CR1 cannot courtesy run for both the pitcher and the catcher in the game. If this were to happen, CR1 would be considered an illegal substitute. (Speed- Up rules, CR1, CR5)

SITUATION 7: The pitcher reaches first base safely and CR2 courtesy runs for him, even though CR1 had been the courtesy runner earlier in the same inning. RULING: As long as CR2 has not courtesy run for the catcher during the game, both players may courtesy run for the pitcher interchangeably. (Speed-Up rules)

SITUATION 8: As the batter-runner is running to first base, the first baseman is pulled off first base by an errant throw. Attempting to catch the throw, he is pulled into the running lane and inadvertently knocks down the batter-runner who is subsequently tagged out. RULING: The batter-runner is out. There is no interference or obstruction. Both players were in legal positions for the play. (2-21-1; 2-22-1)

SITUATION 9: As a runner is coming home from third base, the catcher is waiting two feet up the line from home plate in the base path. The thrown ball and the runner reach the catcher simultaneously, and the catcher tags the runner out. RULING: This is legal. The runner is out. A fielder is allowed to be in the base path as long as he has the ball or the receipt of the throw is "imminent." (8-3-2)

SITUATION 10: With the bases loaded and one out, B5 hits a high, fair fly ball to the shortstop. The base umpire declares "infield fly," but the shortstop does not catch the ball. Although the

batter is out, the other runners attempt to advance. The shortstop picks up the ball and throws home to the catcher, who is in contact with the plate. The runner from third, thinking he is forced out, veers off before touching the plate and enters the dugout. RULING: B5 is out on the infield fly. The runner from third is declared out for abandoning his effort to advance to the next base. (2-19-1, 8-4-1j, 8-4-2p note)

SITUATION 11: With a runner on first base, the batter bunts toward first base. Both the pitcher and the first baseman prepare to make a play on the bunted ball, but thinking it might go foul hesitate in picking it up. As the runner touches second base, the batter collides with the first baseman who is in the baseline walking backwards toward first base watching the bunted ball. RULING: This is obstruction and a delayed dead ball. If the ball remains fair, the batter would be awarded first base. The runner may remain at second base or attempt to advance at his own risk. (2-22-1; 5-1-2b)

SITUATION 12: With R1 on second base, R2 on first base and two outs, B5 gets a base hit to center field. R1 touches third base and advances to home as the throw from F8 comes to the plate. R2 has touched second base and third base when he collides with the third-base coach who is in the baseline watching the possible play at home plate. Before R1 touches home plate, the throw is cut off and thrown to third base where R2 slides back safely. RULING: The play stands with R1 scoring, R2 at third base and B5 at second base. This is not interference by the third-base coach. If he were to assist R2 in getting up, this would then be interference by the coach. (2-21-1c)

SITUATION 13: Runners are on first and second with no outs. The batter hits a bloop to short right field. The right fielder slides on his seat, juggling the ball. The ball pops out and hits the ground. Both runners have stayed on their base expecting the ball to be caught. The right fielder then picks up the ball and throws it to the shortstop, who tags the runner at second, who has stayed at second base. He then tags the runner advancing from first base. RULING: Both runners are out. R1 lost his right to stay on second base when the fly ball was not caught. (2-9-1, 2-24-1, 2-24-4)

SITUATION 14: With runners on first and second and one out, the batter hits a ground ball to the shortstop. The second baseman calls "I got it" and acts as if it is a pop-up. The runners stay at their respective bases and a double play is made, second to first. RULING: This is verbal obstruction. Runners will be awarded third and second. There are two outs since the out on the batter-runner will stand. (2-22-1; 8-3-2)

SITUATION 15: Prior to the start of the game, the plate umpire inspects the bats for Team B. He notices that one bat has a crack in the barrel. He informs the coach that this bat may not be used and so marks the bat. In the sixth inning, a Team B batter hits a home run. As the plate umpire picks up the bat, he notices that this bat is the cracked bat he discovered prior to the start of the game. RULING: This is an illegal bat since the plate umpire discovered it prior to the start of the game and informed the team it could not be used. The batter is declared out and the runners return to their respective bases. (1-3-5; 5-1-1c; 7-4-1)

SITUATION 16: Team A's pitcher engages the pitching plate with both hands together in front of his body. R1, on third base, breaks for home. The pitcher steps off the pitching plate sideways with his pivot foot. The pitcher then throws to the third baseman, who throws to the catcher for the tag on the runner. RULING: This is a balk since the pitcher did not properly disengage the pitching plate with his pivot foot. The ball is dead; R1 is awarded home. (5-1-1k; 6-1-2; 8-3-1a)

SITUATION 17: Team A's pitcher engages the pitching plate with both hands at his side. He then brings his non-pitching hand up in front of his body, pauses and brings his pitching hand into the glove. R1, on first base, breaks for second when he sees the pitcher bring his pitching

hand up to his non-pitching hand. The pitcher properly disengages from the pitching plate and throws the ball wildly over the head of the first baseman, but the ball remains in live-ball territory. R1 scores before the defense can get the ball. RULING: The result of the play stands. The actions by the pitcher were legal and not a balk. He properly disengaged from the pitching plate and became a fielder. (6-1-2; 2-28-3)

SITUATION 18: R1 is leading off first base. F3 takes a position with one foot in foul territory and the other foot in fair territory. F1 throws to F3 in an attempt to pick off R1. F3 tags R1 as he was blocked from first base by F3's foot. RULING: This is not obstruction. The first baseman is allowed to take this position. He may legally block the base with a play being imminent. The runner is out. (1-1-3; 8-3-2)

SITUATION 19: R1 is on third base with no outs. With a possible suicide squeeze, the batter squares to bunt. The catcher moves in front of home plate and attempts to catch the pitch to put out R1. The pitched ball bounces off his glove and strikes the bat of the batter. RULING: This is obstruction by the catcher on the batter. The batter is awarded first base and R1 is awarded home. (8-1-1e, note 1)

SITUATION 20: With R1 on first base and no outs, B5 is scheduled to bat, but B2 bats and hits into a double play. Before the next pitch, the defense appeals batting out of order. RULING: B5 is declared out for batting out of order. The out on R1 stands. Two outs and the bases are empty. The next batter is B6. (7-1-2)

SITUATION 21: To protect R1 stealing second base from first base, B2 swings after the catcher has caught the pitch. The catcher (a) makes no attempt to throw to second, or (b) throws the ball in an unsuccessful attempt to put out the runner. RULING: Batter interference in (b). The batter is out, and R1 is returned to first base. In (a), since the catcher did not attempt to throw, there is no batter interference. (7-3-5c)

2000 NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions

1-1-5	A manufacturer's logo/trademark shall not exceed 2 ¼ square inches with no dimension exceeding 2 ¼ inches. Rationale: To coincide with the NCAA provision, which lessens the concern for manufacturers having to comply with two rules codes when making uniforms.
1-3-4	Beginning in 2000, the coefficient of restitution (COR) of baseballs shall not exceed .555. Rationale: To help ensure consistency concerning ball liveliness.
1-3-4	Beginning in 2000, baseballs shall have the NFHS authenticating mark. Rationale: To help ensure that balls meet NFHS specifications.
1-3-5	Baseballs shall have the NFHS authenticating mark.
1-3-5 Note 2	The NFHS Baseball Rules Committee intends to adopt a rule that will limit bat performance. The rule will be effective as of January 1, 2000. Beginning in 2000, bats shall be approved by the NFHS. Rationale: The standard to be adopted will establish a maximum bat performance based on, and not greatly in excess of maximum wood bat performance. By regulating bat performance, the rule will help preserve the sound tradition of the sport, maintain balance between defense and offense, and help minimize risk of injury. Approving bats will help ensure that only those bats that meet the standard are allowed.
2-28-	Time of the pitch in the windup position has been revised.

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6-1-2	A pitcher may assume the windup position with his hands apart and then bring them together before taking his signal. After bringing his hands together, the time of the pitch would then be the moment he makes any motion with his arms or legs prior to delivering the pitch.
7-3-1	If the batter leaves the batter's box, delays the game, and none of the exceptions to the batter's box rule applies, the plate umpire shall charge a strike to the batter. Only if batters begin to delay the game and take advantage of the spirit of the rule will enforcement be necessary.
10-1-9	By state association adoption, umpires shall wear the approved NFHS navy pullover style shirt. Rationale: The committee believes that the navy umpire's pullover looks more professional. The collar and sleeve trim shall be red, white and blue.

2000 NFHS Baseball Rule Interpretations

SITUATION 1: The batter steps into the batter's box. The catcher tells the plate umpire that the bat is cracked. Upon examination, the bat is determined to indeed be cracked. RULING: The umpire shall instruct the batter to obtain another bat. (1-3-5, note 1)

SITUATION 2: The batter steps into the batter's box. The catcher asks the plate umpire to check the bat. Upon examination, it is determined that the bat has been cracked, and that an attempt has been made to disguise the crack. RULING: The batter is declared out. (1-3-5, note 1)

SITUATION 3: The batter hits a home run. The catcher picks up the bat and hands it to the plate umpire, claiming it is cracked. Upon examination, the bat is determined to be cracked. RULING: The home run counts. The bat shall be replaced and the batter's coach informed. (1-3-5, note 1)

SITUATION 4: F1, with R1 on second base, does a spin move on the pitcher's plate toward second. The runner breaks for third base and the pitcher walks off the pitcher's plate and runs toward R1. RULING: This is legal.(6-2-4)

SITUATION 5: Team A has a courtesy runner on third base running for F1. F6, sliding into second base, twists his ankle and cannot continue to run. Team A's coach wants to bring F1 back into run and then substitute the courtesy runner as a pinch runner for F6. RULING: The plate umpire will not allow this substitution to be made. Since the courtesy runner is still on base, he is not eligible to be replaced by the pitcher and become a pinch runner for the F6. The most recent batter not on base for Team A will be allowed to run for F6. (Speed-Up Rules, Courtesy Runner 3)

SITUATION 6: With R1 on first base, the left-handed F1 steps onto the pitcher's plate. He moves the leg of his pivot foot in the same manner as he would move the leg of the non-pivot foot in coming to the set position. He then quickly steps back off the pitcher's plate and throws to first base in an attempt to pick off R1. RULING: This is a balk.(6-1-3)

SITUATION 7: Team A has a courtesy runner on second base running for F1. As he slides into third base on a wild pitch, he twists his ankle and is not able to continue in the game. With no other substitutes available to pinch run, Team A's coach wants to replace the injured courtesy

runner with the courtesy runner who has run for the catcher. RULING: This is legal. (Speed-Up Rules, Courtesy Runner 3)

SITUATION 8: F1, while on the pitcher's plate, brings the fingers of his throwing hand to his mouth and licks his fingers. He then wipes them off and looks to F2 for a sign. RULING: This is a balk. Once F1 has intentionally engaged the pitcher's plate, he must comply with the pitching regulations. Had he licked his fingers and then wiped them off before he touched the pitcher's plate, he would not have committed a violation.(6-1-1)

SITUATION 9: With the bases loaded and one out, B5 hits a ground ball to F4. F4's throw to home pulls F2 off the plate. As F2 is preparing to throw to F3, R1 crosses the plate and maliciously collides with F2. RULING: The ball is declared dead immediately. Both R1 and B5 are out. No runs score. R2 and R3 return to their respective bases at the time of the pitch. R1 is ejected. (8-4-2b penalty, 3-3-1n penalty)

SITUATION 10: With R1 on second base attempting to steal third, the left-handed B2 swings to protect R1. The plate umpire does not see the batter swing. The next pitch is a called strike, and the plate umpire announces the count as 1-1. The coach of the defensive team wants the count corrected to 0-2. RULING: Since a pitch has been taken on the disputed ball/strike call, the count is 1-1. (10-2-3i note)

SITUATION 11: R1, on first base, is moving on the pitch. B2 hits to F6, who tries for the out at second base. F6 cleanly throws to first base, after which R1 pops up on the base and jostles F6, having no effect on the play. RULING: R1 committed an illegal slide when he did a pop-up slide into F6. Since he committed an illegal slide and made contact with F6 during a force-play situation, the ball is declared dead, and both R1 and B2 are declared out.(8-4-2b penalty, 2-32-2a)

SITUATION 12: R1 attempts to steal second base. F2, seeing he has no chance to throw out R1, does not attempt a throw. F4, who is standing behind second base to cover in case of a throw, is contacted by R1, who slid over the bag and contacts F4. RULING: R1 committed an illegal slide when he slid past the back edge of the base. Because he contacted a player during an illegal slide, he is called out. (8-4-2b penalty, 2-32-2c)

SITUATION 13: With R1 on third base, F1 steps onto the pitcher's plate in the windup position with both hands at his side. He moves both arms to bring the hands together as R1 attempts to steal home. F1 stops as his hands come together, steps off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot and throws home for the out. RULING: This is a balk. R1 is awarded home.(6-1-2, 2-28-2)

SITUATION 14: F1, with R1 at third base, is in the windup position. With his glove hand in front of his body, and his pitching hand at his side, F1 moves his non-pivot foot behind the pitching plate as he brings his pitching hand to his glove hand and delivers a pitch in a continuous motion. RULING: This is a legal pitching move. (6-1-2)

SITUATION 15: F1, with both hands at his side in the windup position, is on the pitcher's plate. He moves his glove hand to a position in front of his body and stops. He then moves his pitching hand to his glove hand, stops to re-grip the baseball and then delivers a pitch. RULING: This is legal.(6-1-2, 2-28-2)

SITUATION 16: The courtesy runner, running for F2, scores and sits down on the bench. F7, on the next play, twists his ankle and cannot continue in the game. With no other eligible substitutes available to pinch-run, the coach of the team at bat wants to substitute the courtesy runner as a pinch runner for F7. RULING: This is a legal substitution. (Speed-Up Rules, Courtesy Runner, exception)

SITUATION 17: With R1 on second base, B2 hits a deep fly ball to center field. R1 leaves on the crack of the bat, touches third and is headed for home. R1, looking back at F8, bumps into F5 who is standing in the base path. The ball is caught for the first out. R1 stops and retreats to third. F8 throws the ball back to a) second base or b) to F6 who then throws the ball to F1. RULING: a) R1 is out as he never retagged second base once the ball was touched on a caught fly. b) Obstruction would be called. R1 would be awarded home if he returned to touch second base. If he did not return to touch second base, he would be declared out. (8-3-2, 8-2-4, 2-22-1)

SITUATION 18: B1 steps into the batter's box with a bat that is 33 inches long and weighs 26 ounces. F2 asks the plate umpire to check the bat. RULING: B1 is declared out for the illegal bat. (7-4-1a, 1-3-5)

SITUATION 19: With R1 on third base, R2 takes a lead off of first base and positions himself at the grass towards right center field. The coach of the defensive team complains to the base umpire that R2's position is illegal. RULING: R2's lead-off position is legal. (8-2)

SITUATION 20: With R1 on third base, R2 takes a lead off of first base and positions himself at the grass behind first base down the right field line. F1 throws to F3 in an attempt to pick off B2. R2 runs down the right field foul line toward the outfield fence. RULING: While R2's position is legal, he is declared out when he ran toward the outfield fence when a play was attempted. In running down the foul line, he was out of the baseline he had between his position at the time of the pick off and second base.(8-4-2a)

1999 NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions

Change in manufacturer's logo rule

Beginning in 2000, all balls shall have NFHS authentication marks

Beginning in 2000, all balls and bats will be subject to performance limitations

New standards for umpire's uniform

Editorial Revisions for 1999

10 run rule clarified

Media area must be designated before game if it is to be used

Warnings and ejections do not take effect until the end of all play

Courtesy runners used improperly are illegal substitutes

Play or attempted play by defense negates batting-out-of-order appeal

Umpire-in-chief to record all reported substitutes

Clarification of when awards on throws by an infielder are from time of throw or time of pit

A manufacturer's logo/trademark shall not exceed 2-1/4 square inches with no dimension exceeding 2-1/4 inches. (1-1-5)

Comments: None. This rule change is less restrictive than the previous rule and is incumbent upon the manufacturers for compliance.

Implications for Coaches: None. *Implications for Umpires:* None Beginning in the year 2000, ball manufacturers shall put the NFHS authenticating mark on all balls that will be used in high school competition (1-3-4).

Comments: This is part of an effort by the Federation to assure that only balls that are in compliance with Fed standards are used in high school competition.

Implications for Coaches: Non-authenticated balls should be used by the end of the 1999 season. Plans should be made for incorporating in the purchase of authenticated balls after this season. Responsibility lies with coaches to maintain appropriate equipment. *Implications for*

Umpires: It will be your responsibility to inspect balls provided to you prior to and during the course of a game to assure NFHS authentication. If a school does not provide you with authenticated balls and has none in supply, the game may be played with non-authenticated baseballs. The situation does, however, need to be reported to your Assignor for further action. Beginning with the 2000 season, the Coefficient of Restitution (COR) of a baseball shall not exceed .555. (1-3-4) The NFHS Baseball Rules Committee intends to adopt a rule that will limit bat performance. The rule will be effective as of January 1, 2000. Beginning in 2000, bats shall be approved by the NFHS. (1-3-5)

Comments: One of the strengths of baseball lie in the balance between offense and defense. The significant increases in offensive performance over the past few years have removed some of that balance, and many of these increases may be attributed to increases in the performance capabilities of bats and balls. Not only does this issue impact the balance of the game; it becomes a safety issue as pitchers have been subject to incredible velocities of balls off of the bats of the hitters. The rules are designed to, in concert: help restore some of the balance to the game, thereby reducing the wear on pitchers and length of the game; and reduce the risk of injury, especially to pitchers, from higher velocity batted balls. *Implications for Coaches:* It will not be necessary for you to determine ball COR when you purchase baseballs. The NFHS authentication mark will be sufficient to ensure that any ball purchased meets this standard, as no ball manufactured with a COR higher than .555 will be allowed the mark. The issue of bats is much trickier in that the actual standards have not yet been defined. It is suggested that schools resist purchasing a large number of higher performance bats going into the 1999 season. As an additional note - NCAA and many other youth organizations are also following this direction. The move is toward reducing the performance of bats to within no more than a percent or two above that of wood. Once this rule takes effect, you will be responsible for assuring the legality of your bats along with all other player equipment.

Implications to Umpires: With respect to balls, the implications are the same as those stated above. With respect to bats, this is now going to increase the responsibility of confirming with both coaches that all personal **and game** equipment, including bats, are legal. Umpires shall wear heather gray slacks, and by state adoption, the NFHS approved navy blue pullover shirt. (Collar and sleeve trim shall be red, white, and navy)

Comments: These uniforms have become the professional standards for umpires. The Federation is responding to the changes in these standards while at the same time giving states the flexibility to determine which shirt style they wish to officially adopt.

Implications to Coaches: None. *Implications to Umpires:* Adhering to uniform standards is a matter of professionalism. Coaches know the umpires uniform as well as you. Failing to wear the proper uniform compromises your credibility before you step on the field.

Editorial Revisions and Clarifications

The games shall end when the losing team is behind 10 or more runs after five innings and teams have had an equal number of turns at bat. (Note: Two seven inning games shall constitute a doubleheader) (4-2-2)

Reason for clarification: The matter of both teams having had an equal number of turns at bat before the 10 run rule takes place was implied, but not stated, in the rules change of 1998. This clarification is intended to indicate that if a team takes a 10 run lead in the top of the sixth inning, for instance, that the game is not ended at that point. The implications of Article 1 still apply that if a team needs none or only a fraction of its half of the fifth or subsequent inning in which it takes a 10 or more run lead in the bottom half, the game is ended immediately. The purpose of the note is to state that only seven-inning scheduled games are legal under Federation rule, and that 5-inning doubleheaders are not official games. If a designated media area is to be used, it shall be established before the game begins (1-2-3)

Reason for clarification: In the past there have been occasional problems of media individuals -- especially newspaper photographers-- being on the field of play. Their presence has caused problems both with impacting the game by being in strategic locations during live ball and by creating ruling problems for umpires as a result of their effect on play. The designated media area should be located in a position that has a minimal likelihood of impacting play. If the umpire deems the location as unsuitable, he may order it changed or removed altogether. Media personnel who go onto the field must stay within the designated area. The warning or ejection [for violations of bench or field conduct] shall be made at the end of playing action. (3-3-1 penalty)

Reason for clarification: A number of conduct issues call for a warning for the first offense, followed by an ejection for a second offense. This is primarily to allow the coach an opportunity to take corrective action after the first offense, thereby preventing a repeat. If any of these circumstances occurs twice within one live ball period, such that the warning for the first and the ejection for the second occur nearly simultaneously, there is no chance for correction by the coach. Multiple violations during play will result in one blanket warning, and any subsequent violations will result in ejection. A second issue is that of the status of an ejected player during live ball. If the ejection doesn't "take" until play ends, then all players remain players throughout the live ball period. A player who violates the courtesy runner rule is an illegal substitute. (2-36-3e)

Reason for clarification: The rules regarding courtesy runners had always long that a runner may not run for both the pitcher and the catcher, nor may a player who has already been in the game (other than as a courtesy runner) act as a courtesy runner. There has never been, however, a definition as to what the consequences of this activity are. It has been an unwritten rule that any person violating the courtesy runner rule is an illegal substitute. (Paraphrased) Any play or attempted play by the defense is treated the same as a legal or illegal pitch in removing the defense's right to appeal batting out of order. (7-1-2b)

Reason for clarification: This now draws the Federation closer to the NCAA and OBR (Pro) rules in terms of recognizing that an attempted play negates the appeal. The umpire-in-chief shall record any or all reported substitutions on the lineup card and then announce immediately any changes to the opposing team. (3-1-1)

Reason for clarification: The word "reported" was added to denote that, in any of the four unannounced substitutions scenarios listed at the end of 3-1-1, the umpire does not carry the responsibility of either recording or announcing such a substitution, although it is still a legal substitution. For any subsequent play by an infielder or for any throw by an outfielder and ball goes out of play or lodges in or under fence, all base runners are awarded two bases from base occupied at the time of the throw. (8-3 base running awards table)

Reason for clarification: There was some confusion surrounding the phrase "first throw by an infielder", in terms of whether to award from the time of the pitch or the time of the throw. Some were confused as to whether a ball thrown by an outfielder to an infielder then thrown out of play by the infielder constituted a "first throw by an infielder". This additional situation intends to clarify that circumstance.