

SRI Bulletin - 2010 Number 4

Question: Is a base coach with a cast, splint or brace required to have it wrapped and padded just like a player in the game? **RULING:** Yes.

Casts, Splints and Braces:

All casts, splints and braces must be padded with at least one-half inch closed cell foam, slow recovery rubber or other material of the same minimum thickness and having similar physical properties. No protective equipment shall have exposed metal or other hard material. Each state association may authorize the use of prostheses which in its opinion are no more dangerous to players than corresponding human body part(s) and do not place an opponent at a disadvantage (1-5-8). Umpires may wear casts, splints and braces, if padded. Umpires can wear prostheses and use mobility devices (10-1-7).

UNSPORTSMANLIKE ACTS

A coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not commit any unsportsmanlike act to include, but not limited to:

- Use of words or actions to incite or attempt to incite spectators demonstrations (3-3-1g1).
- Use of profanity, intimidation tactics, remarks reflecting unfavorably upon any person, or taunting or baiting. The NFHS disapproves of any form of taunting that is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under circumstances including race, religion, gender or national origin (3-3-1g2).
- Use of language intended to intimidate (3-3-1g3).
- Behavior in any manner not in accordance with the spirit of fair play(3-3-1g4).
- Be in live ball territory (excluding team's bullpen area) during the

opponent's infield practice prior to the start of the game (3-3-1g5).

- any member of the coaching staff who was not the head coach(or designee) in 3-2-4 leaves the vicinity of the dugout or coaching box to dispute a judgement call by an umpire (3-3-1g6).

A coach, player, substitute, attendant or other bench personnel shall not enter the area behind the catcher while the opposing pitcher and catcher are in their positions (3-3-1h), charge an umpire (3-3-1k), or leave their positions or bench area for the purpose of fighting or physical confrontation (3-3-1q).

The umpire-in-chief shall keep a written record of team warnings (10-2-3j).

Question: In a recent game, I had an umpire restrict a head coach to the bench. He informed the coach that he was restricted verbally and physically to the bench. When restricted is a coach not allowed to talk? Can we do that? **RULING:** No. When a coach is restricted to the bench, he is allowed to coach from the bench/dugout. He can communicate with his players and perform his coaching duties from the bench. Remember a coach can be restricted for improper uniform, not attending the plate conference and actions by his assistant coaches. Any coach restricted to the bench shall be ejected for further misconduct. A coach may leave the bench/dugout area to attend to a player who becomes ill or injured.

Rationale The rules committee, in 1989, instituted the rule that allows an umpire to restrict a coach to the dugout. Depending on the state association rules, if a coach was ejected and another school faculty member was not available to take over, the game would be forfeited. The committee felt that every attempt should be made to keep the game from being forfeited. Even with this rule, the umpire still has the authority to eject a coach at any time if the umpire feels the coach's actions warrant such a penalty.

Unsportsmanlike acts caseplays

3-3-1 SITUATION G: Team A is taking infield practice and Team B is lined up along the first base foul line making unsportsmanlike comments to Team A members. **RULING:** The umpire warns Team B to return to the dugout or its bullpen or he will enforce the unsportsmanlike penalty (3-3-1g). Note: The opposing team, Team B, shall be in their dugout or bull pen areas while Team A takes infield practice.

3-3-1 SITUATION O: With a base runner on first and following an attempted steal, Assistant Coach for Team A who is coaching first, steps toward the base umpire but remains in the vicinity of the coaching box and asks for clarification from the umpire about the play. The coach commits no other 3-3-1g violation. **RULING:** There is no penalty against the Assistant Coach for this act.

3-3-1 SITUATION S: At the end of the half inning, the first base coach leaves the coaching box to return to the third base dugout. In passing the umpire(s), the Assistant Coach asks for clarification on a play or stops for a quick discussion about a ruling. The coach commits no other 3-3-1g violation. **RULING:** There is no penalty against the Assistant Coach for this act as leaving the vicinity of the coaching box is required to go to the dugout between innings.

Pitching: Set Position

For the set position, the pitcher shall have the ball in either his glove hand or his pitching hand. His pitching hand shall be down at his side or behind his back. before starting his 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 the pitcher's plate. He shall go to the set position without interruption and in one continuous motion. 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. Natural preliminary motions such as only one stretch may be made. During these preliminary motions and during the set position until a delivery motion occurs, the pitcher may turn on his pivot foot or lift it in a jump turn to step with the non-pivot foot toward a base while throwing or feinting, or he may lift his pivot foot in a step backward off the pitcher's plate which must be in or partially within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate (6-1-3). A feint is a movement which simulates the start of a pitch or throw to a base and which is used in an attempt to deceive a runner (2-28-5). If there is a runner or runners, any feinting toward the batter or first base while the pitcher is touching the pitcher's plate is a balk (6-2-4a).

In order to change the wind-up position, he must first step clearly backward off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot first. After the pitcher has placed his pivot foot on the ground clearly behind the pitcher's plate, he then has the right to throw or feint to a base the same as that of any infielder (6-1-3).

Turning the shoulders to check the runners while in contact with the pitcher's plate in the set position is legal. Turning the shoulders after the hands are together during or after the stretch is a balk (6-1-1).

Rationale

Because runners were placed at a disadvantage by not being able to tell when a pitcher was committed to pitch, the rules committee eliminated the provision that a change of direction would be considered a stop in 1989. A stop must now be recognizable and observable and whether those conditions are met or not is left to umpire's judgement.

Set Position Caseplays

6-1-1 SITUATION D: F1 takes his sign in the set position. R1 at third attempts to steal home. F1 steps forward off the pitcher's plate and throws to F2. **RULING:** This is a balk.

COMMENT: After assuming a set position stance on the pitcher's plate, the pitcher must step backward off the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot in order to play on R1 at home plate (6-1-2, 6-1-3).

6-1-1 SITUATION I: When is a pitcher permitted to step backward off the pitcher's plate in the set position? **RULING:** While in the set position stance, he may step backward off the pitcher's plate prior to the start of the pitch (2-28-3).

6-1-3 SITUATION A: F1 takes the set position with his pivot foot entirely in front of and in contact with the pitcher's plate. F1's non-pivot foot is entirely in front of his pivot foot (toward home plate) but is not within the plane of each end of the pitcher's plate. **RULING:** This is legal, since only the pivot foot is required to be entirely in front of the pitcher's plate, within the plane of each end of the pitcher's plate, and in contact with it. The non-pivot foot is required to be entirely in front of the front plane of the pitcher's plate but does not have to be within the plane of each end of the pitcher's plate.

6-1-3 SITUATION B: Left handed F1 assumes a set position with R1 on first. F1 steps back off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot and throws to first base without stepping to the base. **RULING:** This is legal, provided F1's pivot foot touches the ground prior to separating his hands.

6-1-3 SITUATION D: With R1 on first. F1, in a set position stance with

the ball in his gloved hand and his pitching hand at his side, takes his sign. He removes the ball from his glove and goes to a set position. **RULING:** This is a balk.

6-1-3 SITUATION E: With R1 on first, F1, receives the ball from F2 and with his feet in set position stance and in contact with the pitcher's plate (a) nervously tosses the ball in his glove two or three times, or (b) removes the ball from his glove. **RULING:** This is a balk in (a) and (b). Restrictions on F1's movements begin when he intentionally contacts the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot.

6-1-3 SITUATION N: With R1 at third and R2 at first, F1 comes to a complete stop with his glove partially above his chin. Is this legal?
RULING: This is legal.

6-1-3 SITUATION P: With a runner on first, Team A right handed pitcher is in the set position, bent at the waist and his pitching arm naturally hangs down in front or to the side away from his body. As he looks to the catcher for a signal, (a) the pitcher's arm is stationary or (b) the pitching arm rocks slightly from side to side. **RULING:** In (a) the position of the arm is natural and can be considered by his side in meeting the rule. Any movement of the arm is considered the start of the pitching motion and a pitch must be delivered to the plate so this motion results in a balk.

Pitching: Wind-up Position

For the wind-up position, the pitcher is not restricted as to how he shall hold the ball. A pitcher assumes the wind-up position when his hands are: (a) together in front of his body; (b) both hands are at his side; (c) either

hand is in front of the body and the other hand is at his side. The pitcher's non-pivot foot shall be in any position on or behind the pitcher's plate. He is limited to not more than two pumps or rotations. After he starts his movement to pitch, he must continue the motion without interruption or alteration. With his feet in the wind-up position, the pitcher may only deliver a pitch or step backward off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot first. After the pitcher has placed his pivot foot clearly behind the pitcher's plate, he has the right to change to a set position or throw or feint to a base the same as that of any infielder. 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, a step forward, but shall not otherwise lift either foot (6-1-2).

Wind-up Position Caseplays

6-1-1 SITUATION A: F1 pitches with the toe of this pivot foot (right foot for right-handed pitcher) in contact with the pitcher's plate but his heel is outside a line through the end edge of the plate. He pitches from the windup position. **RULING:** Legal

6-1-1 SITUATION D: F1 takes his sign in the wind-up position, R1 at third attempts to steal home. F1 steps forward off the pitcher's plate and throws to F2. **RULING:** This is a balk.

COMMENT: After assuming a wind-up position stance on the plate, the pitcher must step clearly backward off the plate with the pivot foot in order to play on R1 at the plate (6-1-2, 6-1-3).

6-1-1 SITUATION G: The bases are loaded. F1, while on the pitcher's plate, fakes a throw to first while in the wind-up position. **RULING:** This is a balk.

6-1-2 SITUATION B: What is meant by a pump or rotation? **RULING:**

A pump or rotation is a movement of the arms, by a pitcher when in the wind-up position, immediately prior to delivering the pitch to the batter. The pump is a alternate downward and upward motion of the arms generally terminated by placing both hands together. A rotation is a circular movement of the pitching arm immediately prior to delivery to the batter during the wind-up position. The rules limit a pitcher to not more than two pumps or rotations when using the wind-up position.

6-1-2 SITUATION D: F1, while on the pitcher's plate in either 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) through (c), these are legal actions if these movements of the arms and legs are not associated with the pitch.

6-1-2 SITUATION F: With R1 on third base, F1 steps on the pitcher's plate in the wind-up position and his hands already together in front of his body. F1 then drops his pitching hand to his side and stops. **RULING:** This is a balk and R1 is awarded home. F1 separated his hands without delivering the pitch.

6-1-2 SITUATION G: From the windup position, F1 steps onto the pitcher's plate with both hands together. As he moves his non-pivot leg behind the pitcher's plate, he completely stops his motion. **RULING:** This would be a balk if there were any runners on base.

6-1-2 SITUATION H: F1, with both arms at his side in the wind-up position, first moves his glove to a position in front of his chest, stops his momentum, and then moves his pitching hand into the glove. **RULING:** This is legal.