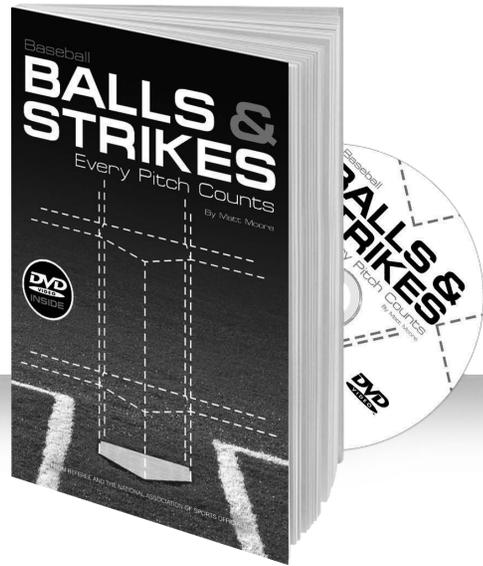


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2013 RULE CHANGES

For 2013, the NFHS reaffirmed the rules dealing with altering of bats and banned most all electronic devices from being used during a game.

During its annual meeting in Indianapolis, the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee voted to add language addressing the illegality of altering bats. That rule was one of several modified and approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The changes are presented in approximate order of importance. Always consult official NFHS publications for exact rule language.

Electronic devices (3-3-1f, 3-3-1i)

The committee changed two rules that deal with the use of electronic devices during a game.

The first was to change the word “television” to “video” in rule 3-3-1f, which deals with watching monitors or replay equipment during the course of a game for coaching purposes.

The change is the result of an increase in technology. Mobile devices, such as tablet computers and cell phones, can accurately record and play back different aspects of a game and provide an unfair advantage to a team by replaying it during a contest.

Play 1: Instead of a scorebook, a team has a tablet computer in the dugout and uses an app on that device for keeping score and doing overall statistics. The tablet has video capabilities. **Ruling 1:** The team may use the tablet computer for scoring in the dugout, but it may not use the tablet for the purposes of recording any part of the game.

Play 2: A team is using a tablet computer in the dugout for scoring purposes, but also records the game and reviews it during innings. **Ruling**

2: That is not permitted. Regardless of who is actually guilty, the head coach is ejected for the team’s use of video replay equipment in the dugout.

The second change was made in relation to the first and bans all electronic devices except a stopwatch from being in the possession of a coach in the coaching box. While a number of tablet computers have scorebook applications, the committee felt that there was too great a risk of the item being used to film or do things other than just keep score.

Therefore, the rule now reads that a coach or player occupying a coaching box may only have a stopwatch, a hard copy of the rule book and a scorebook with him.

Bat alteration (1-3-2 note)

The rules committee clarified and added additional emphasis to the rule dealing with altering of bats.

Specifically, the rule reads: “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.”

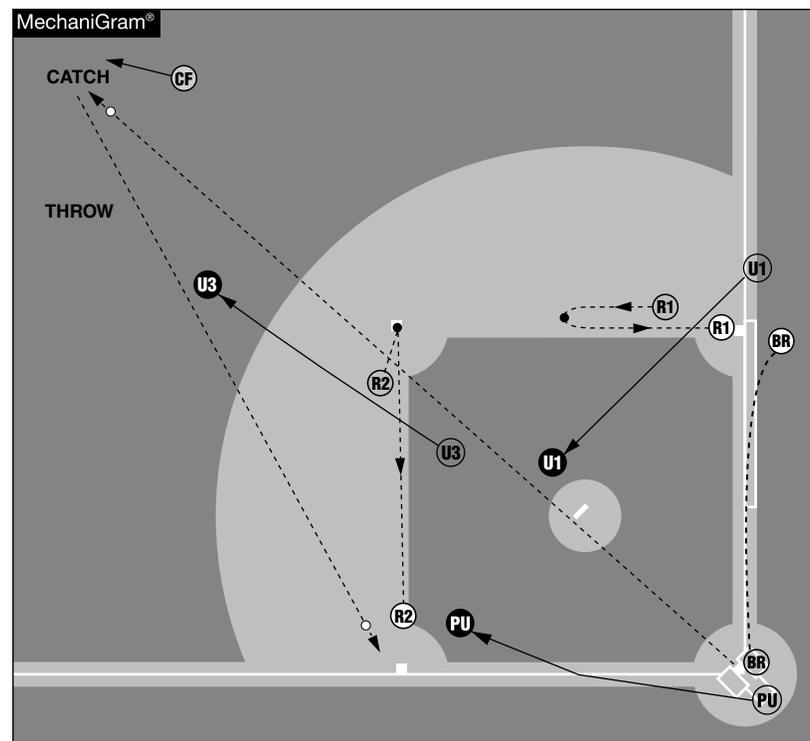
Bat alteration has been a major issue in baseball and softball for a number of years and, while the rule doesn’t change anything that happens on the field, it does give teeth for manufacturers and others who want to protect their bats from being altered and used during games.

Warmup pitches (6-2-2c exception)

An addition was made to when pitchers may be afforded extra warmup pitches between innings.

The rule now permits a pitcher to have extra warmup pitches when he

PLATE UMPIRE ROTATIONS TO THIRD BASE



Action on the field: Any rotation situation for PU moving to third base.

2013 change: When PU rotates to third, PU must move into fair territory and take plays from at or near the third-base cutout. Taking the play in foul territory is not permitted.

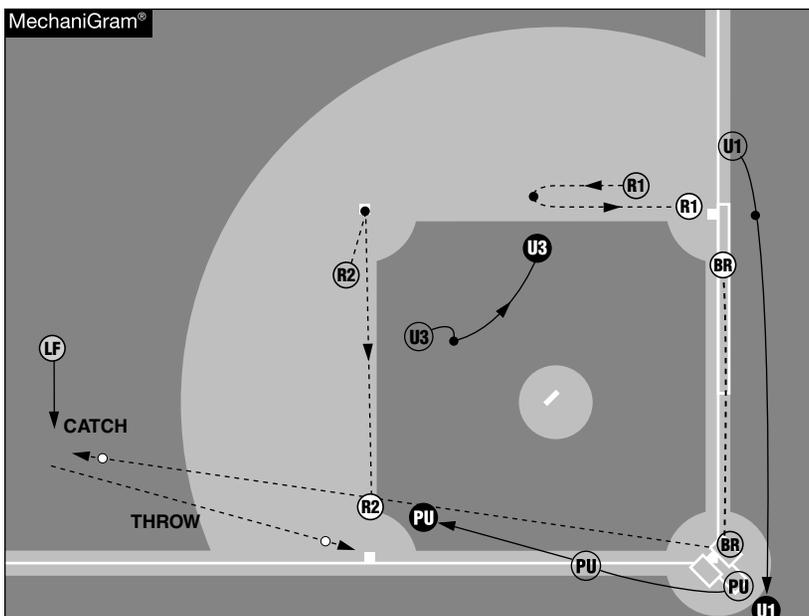
Affected umpire responsibilities:

PU: When rotating to third base, PU should advance toward third in foul territory or near the foul line. When the ball and runner are coming together for a potential play, PU moves into fair territory and takes any potential play at or near the third-base cutout.

Pages affected: This change affects text and diagrams on pages 151, 154, 155, 156, 157 and 163.

Reason for change: Consistency as well as for better coverage if there is a subsequent play at another base.

CLARIFICATION: FLY BALL DOWN LEFT-FIELD LINE: CATCH



Action on the field: Fly ball caught by the left fielder; R2 tags up and advances toward third base, drawing a throw; R1 retreats toward first base

2013 change: Clarification only.

Affected umpire responsibilities:

PU: Stays on the line to view the fair/foul and catch/no catch. When the ball is caught, PU moves into position for a play on R2 advancing on a tag-up and going into third base.

U1: Watches R1's potential tag-up at first base. If R2 advances toward third base, U1 moves to the point of the plate for any play there.

U3: Watches R2's potential tag-up at second base. If R2 advances toward third base, U3 moves to the left side of the infield and has any play on R2 returning to second base or R1 at first or second base.

Pages affected: This diagram replaces page 163.

Reason for change: This play caused confusion in the 2012 manual since it described what happened with a catch and a no-catch, even though the page header and umpire actions in the MechaniGram were for a catch.

replaces a pitcher who was ejected. Previously, the rule only included exceptions for a replacement due to injury or inclement weather.

Play 3: Pitcher F1 is upset with the strike zone and gets ejected with two outs in the fourth inning. **Ruling 3:** The new pitcher, whether he is a substitute or is brought in from another position, will be afforded a reasonable amount of time to get ready. He is not limited to eight warmup throws.

Points of Emphasis

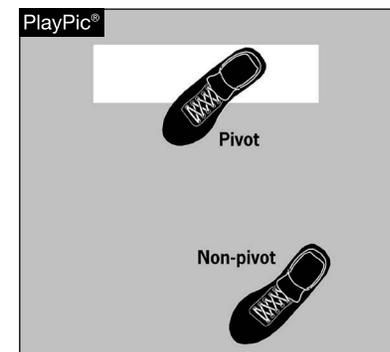
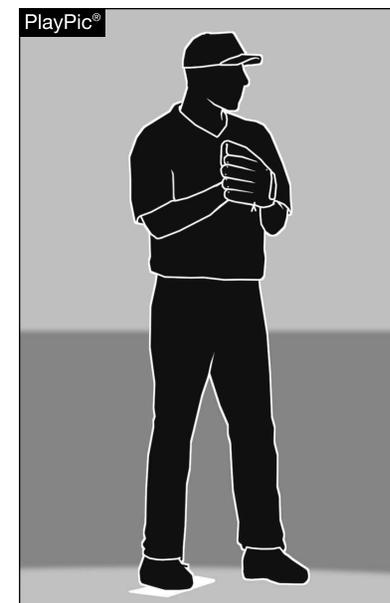
Each year, the rules committee highlights areas that it believes need attention, without making changes to the rules at that meeting. This year, the committee raised the following as points of emphasis:

Pitcher's stance

The pitcher may only begin in one of two positions: the windup or the set. Over recent seasons, pitchers have been moving into a hybrid stance in which their feet are at an angle and it is difficult to discern which stance the pitcher is in (see PlayPics). Because the rules for pickoffs and pitching motions are different for each one, it is imperative that a pitcher be clearly in the windup or set at the start of each pitch. The starting position of the non-pivot foot determines whether the pitcher is going to pitch from the windup or set position.

Pitchers in the windup position are required to have their non-pivot foot in any position on or behind a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate. If a pitcher's non-pivot foot is in front of that line and he attempts to pitch from the windup, he has made an illegal pitch or committed a balk.

In the set position, 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 delay and in one continuous motion; he shall come to a complete and discernible stop, which does not include a change of direction with both hands in front of his body and his glove at or below his chin.

Pace of play

The committee is not concerned with the time of the games being played. Instead, it was the lack of enforcement

of the rules in place that cover down time during a game. In no particular order, the following issues should be given closer attention in the 2013 season: reducing the length and amount of times a catcher goes to the mound; the batter's box rule; the length of offensive and defensive conferences and speeding up the time between innings by diligently counting the number of warmup pitches.

Play 4: The pitcher and catcher are having trouble agreeing on which pitch should be thrown. The catcher requests time to talk to the pitcher. **Ruling 4:** As long as it is not abused, the catcher and pitcher are permitted to request time and confer with each other. The umpire is not required to grant a request for timeout and should not do so if he or she feels the request is unnecessary or abusing the privilege.

Play 5: A pitcher requests extra pitches between innings because his team had a long offensive half of the inning. **Ruling 5:** That is not a reason to grant extra throws. The pitcher could have gone to his team's bullpen and thrown during the inning.

Compliant bats

Bats continue to be on the forefront of the committee's mind. Umpires need to be on the watch for altered bats, in particular noticing if the end cap has been removed. Once an end cap comes off a bat (even if it was not intentional), the bat is no longer legal for play. The end cap cannot be replaced. The use of legal equipment is a risk minimization issue; it is in the best interest of the principles of fair play and sportsmanship; and it is a playing rule.

Risk minimization

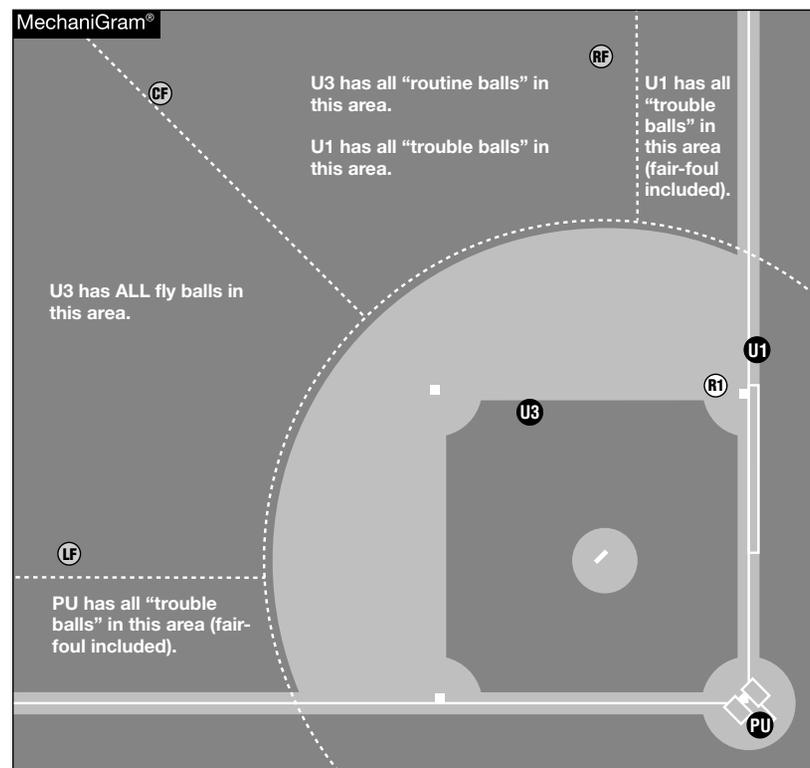
Baseball has reported fewer injury incidents than many of the other NFHS sports. A lot of the credit goes to the committed adults who tirelessly teach, train and officiate interscholastic baseball contests. In order to continue

enjoying low incident rates, we must be ever vigilant to identify potential risk areas and address them immediately. Attention should be given to loose equipment, under-sized dugout/bench areas, field conditions. One area that is of concern is the "protector" — the non-player who is allowed on the field to keep foul balls from striking players warming up in the bullpens. In Oregon, that person is required to have a glove and wear a legal batting helmet that meets the NOCSAE standard.

Good sporting behavior

Umpires and coaches need to work together. Each contest is another opportunity for coaches and umpires to not only teach baseball, but also model good sporting behavior.

INITIAL POSITIONS AND OUTFIELD COVERAGE



Action on the field: No action

2013 change: With a runner on first base only, U3 starts in the Deep B position. The 2012 manual showed U3 starting in the Deep C position.

Pages affected: This change affects text and diagrams in Chapter 12, pages 146 through 157

Reason for change: Starting in the Deep B position gives U3 the same look at stolen base plays as when working the two-umpire system. Keep in mind that U3 still has all fly balls in left and left-center field, as shown in the diagram above.