

Memorandum

DATE: January 5, 2009
TO: CIF Baseball Coaches
CIF Umpires
COPY: Roger Bake, Ron Nocetti
FROM : Ken Allan, State Baseball Rules Interpreter
RE: 2009 Rule Interpretations

The following information is provided to coaches and umpires in an effort to provide consistency in rule enforcement and game management. Any questions should be directed to Ken Allan at: kensport101@earthlink.net.

These are the significant rule changes and interpretations for the 2009 season. Please be sure your lower division coaches have a copy.

1-2-2 All non-permanent lines on the playing field shall be marked white with a material non 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 the batter.

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

7-3-4

Penalty Clarification: Add or ball four. "The batter remains at bat (pitch is a ball or strike) unless the pitch was a third strike or ball four."

NFHS POINTS OF EMPHASIS

BATTER HIT BY PITCH: The committee remains concerned that batters are still attempting to "take one for the team." The batter has to make every attempt to avoid being hit. In some cases it is the batter who causes contact with the pitch.

COACH'S PROFESSIONALISM: The coaching staff sets the entire tone of a contest and season. That is why so much emphasis has been placed on the coach in the rule book. Please be aware of the position of trust you have to exhibit good sportsmanship and leadership qualities.

TEAM PERSONNEL LOCATION: CIF coaches are doing a much better job of understanding they cannot put buckets outside the dugout or illegally extending the dugout toward home plate. Please continue the good work.

CIF POINTS OF EMPAHSIS

(3-3-1-a Pen)

PLAYERS LEAVING DUGOUT TO CONGRATULATE SCORING RUNNERS: If the ball is hit out of the park, there is no problem because the ball is dead. However, please remind your players that they are to remain in the dugout if a run scores and the ball is still in play. Remember, that after a team warning, the penalty is that violators will be remanded to the dugout for the remainder of the game.

For the past three years this has been a point of emphasis. While most teams are making an effort to comply with this rule, it appears that some teams are not being consistent. **Therefore, CIF umpires are being asked to strictly enforce this rule beginning with the 2009 season.**

Please take a moment to review this with your teams and remind them that the penalty following a team warning is the removal from the game of subsequent offenders

THE SET POSITION: Some pitchers are placing their non pivot foot very close to the front edge of the pitcher's plate in an effort to illegally deceive the runner as to whether they are in a windup or set position. By rule, if the non pivot foot is in front of the rubber, the pitcher is considered to be in the set position and thereby is required to come to a complete and discernable stop prior to delivering a pitch.

THE "GORILLA" PITCHING POSITION: The so called "Gorilla" pitching position, whereby the pitcher dangles his pitching hand in front of him prior to going to a set position, is NOT legal in high school baseball. By rule, the pitcher shall have the ball in either his gloved hand or his pitching hand down at his side or behind his back.

PITCHING LIMITATION RULE: The CIF defines an appearance as pitcher pitching at least one pitch. It also interprets a pitcher being removed as pitcher, then returned to the mound in the same game as a second appearance.

GAME MANAGEMENT: Some fields are still not being marked with a three-foot runner's lane. In accordance with rule 1-2-5, please be sure the three-foot running lane is properly marked.

PREGAME EQUIPMENT/BAT INSPECTION: Coaches continue to do a good job in making sure bats and helmets are out of the equipment bags for pre game inspection by the umpires. Please continue doing this as it makes it much easier for umpires not to have to go on a "treasure hunt" to find bats and helmets for inspection.

COACH'S UNIFORMS: As per rule 3-2-1, coaches must be in the uniform of their team. As a guideline, the following is acceptable: Baseball shoes, baseball pants, a jersey top similar to what the team is wearing, either a tee shirt with a team logo, wind shirt with a team logo, a jacket and a baseball cap. The following is NOT acceptable at ANY level: Coaches who are wearing shorts, or other non-baseball attire such as, but not limited to, sweatpants, jeans, tennis shoes or sandals. These items are not permissible. This rule has been in effect for the past few years. The penalty for non-compliance is that the coach is restricted to the dugout.

CREW CONFERENCE

In order to eliminate further delay by a coach after a crew conference, the following continues to be in effect. It began with the 2008 season and appears to have been well received by both coaches and umpires.

Umpires are not required to hold a conference if the calling umpire is sure he got the play right. However, if, at the request of a **defensive** coach, the crew gathers to discuss a call, the coach must return to the dugout before the crew discusses the call. The coach must also remain in the dugout if the decision has been upheld .

If the conference is made at the request of the **offensive** coach, he must return either to the coaching box or the dugout as provided above.

A requesting coach returning to the field to continue the discussion after a decision has been upheld is subject to being remanded to the dugout for delaying the game, or if behavior warrants, ejection from the game.

If the call is changed, the opposing coach is permitted on the field only for the purpose of getting an explanation of the reversed call.

LOWER LEVEL COACHES

1) Please remember that many of the umpires assigned to lower level games are fairly new and that mistakes will be made both in the application of rules and game management. Tolerance toward umpires in this respect would be greatly appreciated. However umpires, regardless of their level of experience, are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and CIF-SS umpires are held accountable for their actions. If you have or hear of any problems regarding umpire professionalism, please advise your local liaison or assigner.

2) Please review the item above concerning coach's uniforms. Most of the violations seem to occur in lower level games.

Finally, I would like to thank all coaches for their cooperation and good luck for the 2009 season.