




Interpretations

2019 NFHS Rules



Pitcher 'crow hop' motion

- ▶ SITUATION 1: The pitcher, in his delivery motion, comes off the pitching plate and replants his pivot foot in the dirt in front of the pitching plate prior to releasing the ball. His coach says this "crowhop" is legal.
- ▶ RULING: This is an **illegal pitch**. The pitcher cannot replant his pivot foot during the delivery. (6-1-1, 6-1-2, 6-1-3)



Batting Helmet with 'jaw and cheek' protector

- ▶ SITUATION 2: The batter comes to bat wearing a helmet with a "jaw and cheek protector" attached to the helmet. His coach states that the combination is legal while the opposing coach maintains that the helmet is now illegal and cannot be worn.
- ▶ RULING: With all the possible combinations of products on the market, it is not feasible for an individual umpire to know what is legal and what is not. It is the responsibility of the head coach to know if helmets with the "jaw and cheek protector" attached are compliant. (2-10-2, 4-1-3b)
- ▶ Addition info from BE Hopkins: Please note: It is the NFHS' position once the head baseball coach verifies that his team is legally and properly equipped, and all other criteria to start a game have been met, then we will begin play. **It is not our role to determine the legitimacy of a cheek and jaw protector that has been attached to a batting helmet.** Obviously, if the umpire notices that the cheek and jaw protector is hanging off the batting helmet and swinging loosely, he should enforce the rule regarding defective equipment. (NFHS Rule 1-5-6)



Ball in Glove in Hand

- ▶ SITUATION 4: The batter hits a hard one-hop ground ball back to the pitcher. The pitcher makes a great stab on the ball, gloving it in the webbing of the glove. With the batter-runner fast approaching first base, the pitcher is unable to quickly pull the ball out of the glove's webbing. The pitcher takes a few fast steps toward first base and takes his glove, with the ball in the webbing, and shovels it to the first baseman who catches the glove with the ball prior to the arrival of the batter- runner.
- ▶ RULING: The batter-runner is out. The first baseman had secure possession of the ball and glove before the batter-runner touched first base. (2- 9-1, CB 2.9.1 SITUATION D)



Pivot Foot Partially in Contact with Pitcher's Plate

- ▶ SITUATION 5: The pitcher assumes the **set position** with his non-pivot foot entirely in front of the front edge of the pitching plate, and the pivot foot parallel to the pitching plate, but with only the toe of his pivot foot in contact with the pitching plate.
- ▶ RULING: This is legal. The **entire pivot foot** no longer needs to be touching the pitching plate. As long as **some part of the pivot foot** is in contact with or directly in front of the pitcher's plate and is **parallel to it**, it is a legal set position. (6-1-3)



Pivot Foot Partially in Contact with Pitcher's Plate

- ▶ SITUATION 6: The pitcher is in the **set position** with the heel of the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and the rest of the pivot foot is (a) on an angle toward home plate, or (b) parallel to the pitcher's plate.
- ▶ RULING: **Only part of the pivot foot** is required to be touching the pitcher's plate with **the pivot foot being parallel** to the pitcher's plate. The position in (a) is illegal, and in (b) legal. (6-1-3)



Bat with Embedded Sensor

- SITUATION 12: The batter enters the batter's box with a bat that has a bat knob sensor embedded in the knob of the bat.
- RULING: Sensor technology embedded in the bat is legal for practice but is illegal for competition. Therefore, **the bat is an illegal bat**. The ball is dead, the batter is declared out and the head coach is restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game. (4-1-3b PENALTY, 5-1-1c, 7-4-1a)
- Marucci Smart Bat is illegal



Quarterback-style Wristband

- ▶ SITUATION 17: 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)
- ▶ JG comment: For the pitcher, a lighter color, such as white or grey would make it illegal



Manager/Coach Restricted to Dugout

- Situation #7 (from 2016 interpretations)
- 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)



Manager/Coach Restricted to Dugout

- Situation #4 (from 2017 interpretation)
- After a close play at second base on an attempted steal where the base umpire judged the runner out, the player addresses the umpire with his thoughts on the umpire's decision.

RULING: Since the statements by the player are such that they cannot be ignored, the player is ejected. Players, except for illegal substitution, cannot be restricted to the bench for misconduct. (3-3-1, 3-3-1 f2 Penalty)



Slides at Home Plate

- ▶ Situation #7 (from 2017 interpretation)
- ▶ With the bases loaded and no outs, the batter hits a slow ground ball to the shortstop, who fields the ball and throws home. The runner from 3rd base slides in a direct line between 3rd base and home plate and arrives at home before the ball arrives. The runner's slide carries the runner over (past) home plate and into the catcher, who is now unable to make a play on another runner because of the contact by the runner. There was nothing malicious in the nature of the slide.

RULING: Because the runner slides in a direct line between the two bases, it is permissible for his momentum to carry him through the plate in the baseline extended. With the slide being legal, merely sliding past home plate and into a fielder does not constitute an illegal act. The runner is safe and there is no resulting penalty. (2-32-2c)



Slides at Home Plate

- Situation #9 (amended to a force play; from 2017 interpretation)
- Bases loaded, no outs: The runner from 3rd base slides past home plate, out of his established base path. He then contacts the catcher, preventing him from making a play on the runner at 2nd base. The contact was not judged to be malicious.

RULING: Because the runner slides out of his base path, this is now force-play slide interference. The ball is immediately dead, the run will not count, and the runner plus the batter-runner will be declared out. (2-32-2c, 8-4-2b Penalty)



Coach Physically Assists Runner

- ▶ Situation #14 (2017 Interpretation)
- ▶ With runners on 2nd and 3rd and no outs, a fly ball is hit to deep right field. The 3rd base coach grabs the 3rd base runner's shirt to force him to tag properly. The runner from 2nd base legally tags as the ball is caught. Both runners, during the course of the play, score.

RULING: The runner at 3rd base is called out immediately when the coach physically assisted him in tagging properly. Play continues and the run scored by the 2nd base runner will count. (3-2-2 Penalty, 8-4-2s)

JG Comment: this is no longer treated as interference; the ball remains live

ALSO: which umpire is watching for the coach assist?



Compression sleeves



- ▶ SITUATION 9: The visiting team arrives for the game with all fielders wearing camo sleeves. The pitcher has black compression sleeves. The home team's coach complains that this is not legal as all players must be dressed the same.
- ▶ RULING: Camo sleeves worn by a pitcher are not allowed [if they extend below the elbow]. Other players on the team may wear camo compression sleeves provided they are approximately the same length and are not ragged, frayed or slit. (1-4-2)
- ▶ JG addition: the pitcher may wear black compression sleeve(s).



Compression sleeves

- ▶ SITUATION 10: A pitcher has a black compression sleeve that comes to his elbow on his non-pitching arm and a dark-colored compression sleeve that comes to his wrist on his pitching arm.
- ▶ RULING: This is legal. (1-4-2)



Compression Sleeves

- Situation #9 (2016 interpretation)
- 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 [because it does not extend below his elbow]. (1-4-2)



Compression Sleeves

- Situation #10 (2016 interpretation)
- 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)



Compression Sleeves

- Situation #11 (2016 interpretation)
- 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)



Compression Sleeves

- Situation #12 (2016 interpretation)
- 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)



Compression Sleeves

- ▶ Must they be uniform (i.e. all the same)?
- ▶ There is no explicit rule in the book that requires them to be all the same for a team.
- ▶ The rulebook treats them much like equipment (e.g. gloves).
- ▶ Treat compression sleeves like optional equipment (i.e. compression sleeves do not have to match among the players).