Questions concerning the PIAA Pitching Restriction Rule:

1. If a pitcher is removed as pitcher before he reaches a hundred pitches, can he return to pitch in the same game?

2. If a pitcher throws less than 100 pitches in the first game of a double header, can he pitch in the second game?

Pat Gebhart, PIAA Assistant Executive Director:

Our pitching rule is set up for the calendar day, so both of these situations would permit the pitcher to return. This may be a question that umpires get at their mandatory meetings, but it is not something that we should get involved with on the field.

In addition, if a pitcher is going over the limit – umpires should also NOT get involved in that. That is not their charge.

3. We had another question brought up that is similar to basketball – if the pitch counter would be a student, should we appoint the visitor, if an adult, to be the pitch counter?

We should NOT get involved in this. That is for game management and the coaches to hash out.

Umpires should only rule if the pitch was a pitch, nothing more and then only if asked.

4. For the purpose of the PIAA Pitching Restriction Rule, what is the definition of a pitch?

RULE 28 ART. 2... A pitch is defined as A live ball delivered to the batter. The term implies a legally delivered ball. When a pitcher commits a balk and completes his delivery to the batter, or delivers an illegal pitch, it is NOT considered a pitch, because the ball became dead at the time of the infraction.

Interpretation: A pitch is a LIVE ball delivered to the batter resulting in a ball, strike, hit batsman, legally batted ball fair or foul or, an illegally batted ball.
The Strike Zone.

With the adoption of a pitch count restriction rules comes the added responsibility and demand for the umpire to call a more consistent and accurate strike zone.

The strike zone as defined by rule and as pictured below is that space over home plate, the top of which is halfway between the batter’s shoulders and the waistline and the bottom being the knees, when he assumes his normal batting stance.

The red lines indicate the upper and lower limits of the strike zone. Pitches in and between the blue shaded area should be called a strike. If we call any part of the ball touching any part of the strike zone we add 70% to the yellow width of the plate tight zone.

Now that we have a pitch count, the coaches are going to want more strikes called (when on defense), so we should give both teams the largest strike zone available by rule. "Any part of the ball touching any part of the strike zone” is a good rule of thumb, but that statement includes some pitches that might be a tiny bit too high or too low, but certainly hittable.

Above all else – Be consistent!

The Umpires Role in the Pitch Count Procedure:

The only involvement an umpire has in this process is to inform the pitch counters when a pitch does not count, such as but not limited to:

1. Time being called followed by a delivery.
2. A ball dropping or slipping out of the pitch's hand that does not cross a foul line.
3. An illegal pitch.
4. A pitch delivered after a balk.

"Umpires should only concern themselves with whether, when questioned, a pitch is considered a pitch that should be counted."

"Issues related to eligibility and incorrect pitch counts must be directed to game administration and MUST NOT be handled by umpires."

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