The PIAA has **APPROVED** the EASTON LOCK & LOAD Z CORE non-wood bat for play in high school VARSITY baseball competition.

Due to the fact that the NCAA does not allow the bat to be used by their member institutions, the “BBCOR.50” certification might not be present on the barrel of the bat.

Any bat with the BBCOR.50 stamp is legal on all levels of play in high school. If a Lock & Load bat is BBCOR.50 Certified, it can be used on all levels. If a Lock & Load bat is not BBCOR.50 Certified, it can only be used on the **varsity** level.
1. Jones is the starting pitcher for team A. Their coach makes two charged visits. One in the first inning and one in the third inning. In the 4th inning, he visits the mound again. Jones is removed and replaced by Smith. During the 5th inning, the coach has another conference with Smith. Does he have to remove Smith in the 5th inning?

   1st inning – Team A is charged for a defensive conference 1.
   3rd inning - Team A is charged for a defensive conference 2.
   4th inning – Team A is not charged for a defensive conference, because the pitcher was removed.
   5th inning – Team A is charged for a defensive conference 3.

   **Ruling:** The charged conference rule (3-4-1 page 30) states "not MORE than three charged conferences during a seven inning game", which means pitchers don't have to be removed until the fourth charged visit and every visit after that, during the first 7 innings. Since pitcher Jones was removed, during the visit in the 4th inning, that visit was not a charged conference. Substitute pitcher Smith would NOT have to be replaced.

**Interesting facts about the NFHS rule:**
   A. The 3 allowed visits can be taken any time during the 1st seven innings. Even all in one inning and even all during one at bat!!
   B. Starting with the 1st extra (eighth) inning, the rule changes and becomes the same as MLB where the pitcher shall be removed for any charged conference in excess of one in each extra inning.

2. Is a verbal warning recorded on the line-up card?

   NO. Even though the Verbal Warning Slide, in the NFHS Rules Presentation, shows an umpire writing on his line-up card, a verbal warning is NOT recorded. If the warning is verbal the coach is not restricted to the bench.

If a warning is written, the coach must be restricted to the bench.

3. Coaches Attire:

   We have become a little lax in the past few years in allowing coaches, not in the uniform of their team, to come on the field and coach for JV games (never in varsity games). Does PIAA "demand" that coaches at all levels wear the uniform of their team, if they are going to be on the field for JV and Jr. High games?

   Don't make a major issue of it on the JV OR MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL, but it is an issue. There are many reasons why coaches under the varsity level do not wear the proper attire. Usually it means that the coach has to wear a uniform that could have been given to an additional player. Just make sure those not able to wear the proper uniform, ON THE SUB-VARSITY LEVEL, ARE NEAT AND PRESENTABLE (preferably in school colors) TO COACH BASEBALL. This means NO JEANS, T SHIRTS or SANDALS! If an umpire runs into a SUB VARSITY coach that abuses the PRIVILEGE, don't make a major issue of it. Report the violation to the PIAA Chapter President and have the Chapter President report the inadequate attire to the school's Athletic Director. The AD will take care of the problem.
2017 NFHS BASEBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS

✦ Umpires Interference:

1. On the first pitch of the at-bat, the runner on first base attempts to steal second base. The catcher brings his arm back to throw and makes contact with the plate umpire. The catcher (a) continues his throw but because of the contact throws the ball into center field, or (b) makes no throw because of the contact. The runner arrives safely at second base.

**RULING:** In both instances, this is umpire interference. The runner will be returned to first base. (8-3-6)

2. With runners on 1st and 3rd base, the runner on 1st tries to steal 2nd. The catcher’s hand hits the plate umpire’s face mask and results in a soft throw caught by the shortstop in front of 2nd base. There is no play on the runner at 2nd base. The runner on 3rd base attempts to score. (A) The runner from 3rd base is thrown out by the shortstop. (B) The runner from 3rd base is safe at the plate.

**RULING:** In both A and B all runners return to the bases occupied at the time of the interference. If an out is not made at the end of the initial throw, all runners return.

3. The pitch bounces off the catcher and rolls back and away from home plate. The plate umpire, trying to get out of the way of the catcher, moves into the catcher’s path as he attempts to retrieve the pitched ball. The contact causes the catcher to lose enough time so that he cannot make a play on the runner advancing.

**RULING:** This is not umpire interference. The play stands. (8-3-6)

✦ Runner over-slides home plate:

4. With runners on second and third, the third-base runner is taking his lead-off base well in foul territory to the side of third base. The batter hits a ground ball to the second baseman, who fields the ball and throws home in an attempt to put out the runner advancing from third. The runner from third base, still in the base path he established when he first attempted to advance home, slides over home plate and into the catcher. The catcher was knocked down by the contact from the runner from third base and is unable to make a play on the batter-runner advancing to second base.

**RULING:** Since the runner from third base slides in a straight line in his established base path, and there are no other aspects of the slide present that would make the slide illegal, the run counts and play continues. There is no penalty on the play. (2-32-2c)

✦ Pitch Count Rule:

5. The home team believes the visiting team’s pitcher has violated the state’s pitch-count policy by exceeding the maximum number of pitches (100) as his team leads in the sixth inning, 8-0. The home team asks the plate umpire to forfeit the game or, at a minimum, have the pitcher removed as a pitcher.

**NFHS RULING:** Each state association will set its own regulations and protocols for violation of Rule 6-1-6.

**PIAA RULING:** The plate umpire should suggest the home team report the violation to the Athletic Director of the Visiting team. The game is to be completed. The pitcher may continue under jeopardy of violation.