Wearable Technology and Smart Bats/Baseballs

More and more companies are coming forward with electronic wearables, smart technology, and Blue Tooth devices to attach to a bat, a baseball, a glove and even a catcher’s helmet. Sensors may be attached on the end of the knob of the bat, “tattoo” technology, where small and not noticeable sensors are placed on game implements or the uniform, etc. Issues are safety, equipment alteration, and privacy. These items will relay signals to the catcher, measure swing speed, time to contact, swing direction, running speed, etc. This will not go away and more will be coming.

As of now, what is used in practice is up to the coach, BUT:

NONE OF THESE DEVICES ARE APPROVED BY THE NFHS NOR PIAA. REVIEW RULE 1-5-11 THEY ARE NOT PERMITTED.
Arm Bands

There appear to be some issues with what may and may not be WORN.

Players are permitted to wear the armband signal placards, as they were designed to be worn—ON THE ARM OR WRIST, or placed (without exposure) in a pocket. They MAY NOT be worn on the belt. This has been the ruling of the NFHS and PIAA for several years and has not changed. If a player is wearing a play list on the belt, professionally ask him to wear it on his arm/wrist or put it in his pocket. If he does not comply, ask the coach to instruct the player. While we do have a rule that says failure by a player to wear proper equipment after being so ordered by the umpire, shall be ejected (1-5-4 penalty). The situation, if possible, should be handled without an ejection.

Pitchers are not permitted to wear them. They are a distraction.

Interesting Plays

PLAY: Bases loaded, with two outs. The batter hits a home run, but R1 (on first base) can’t find the ball off the bat. The B/R runs hard out of the box, touches first base, and then passes R1 who is still standing near first base. Everyone agrees that the B/R passing R1 constitutes the third out of the inning. Furthermore, everyone agrees that this is not a force out, nor an out against the B/R before he reached first base. Here is the issue: Some people argue that the other runners (R1, R2, R3) are allowed to score under the theory that the home run is a dead ball award. Others argue that this is a “timing play” with regard to determining if the run scores or not. Which is it?

RULING: The NFHS is currently in the process of reviewing the play, but by all current rules, 3 runs score (every runner except the batter):

1. 2018 NFHS Baseball Rule 9-1-1 (a through e).
2. 2018 NFHS Case Book Play 9.1.1 Situation K.
4. NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations 2006
The Braves’ first base runner, off of Pirate’s pitcher Harvey Haddix, came in the top of the 13th, when Felix Mantilla reached on an error by Pirate’s third baseman Don Hoak. Eddie Matthews then sacrificed Mantilla to second. One out. Harvey Haddix then intentionally walked Henry Aaron (1st and 2nd, 1 out) to set up a double play. A good strategy, of course, but baseball is often cruel. And cruel it was.

The Braves next batter, Joe Adcock, clubbed a homer to center field to give the Braves a 3-0 win and ruin Haddix’s nearly perfect night. Well, not exactly.

After touching second, Aaron, not realizing the ball had gone out and thinking it had landed in the outfield, abandoned the bases and left the field after he saw Mantilla cross the plate, knowing the game was over. Two out. Adcock passed Aaron between second and third, and both men were ruled out. Three out. Adcock was credited with a double, and after a conference the umpires decided the Braves won 2-0. The next day Major League Baseball reviewed the play and decided the Braves won 1-0.

Under NFHS Rules, which is it?

A. 3-0
B. 2-0
C. 1-0

RULING 1: (B). It is highly likely Aaron abandoned his effort to touch 3rd base, before Adcock ran from 2nd to 3rd. Two runs would score. Mantilla and Adcock. Adcock is not called out for passing a runner who has been called out. Rule 8-4-2-m.

RULING 2: (C). If Aaron did not abandon his effort to touch 3rd base until after Adcock passed him, Adcock is ruled out (credited with a double) and Mantilla is the only run to score.
This play is in the current Referee Magazine (April 2018) Baseball Test Yourself concerning the DH.

Team A’s DH B10 (Hoover) is batting for the pitcher (Bevac). In the 3rd inning the coach decides to have the pitcher (Bevac) bat for himself. In the 5th inning, the coach decides to have the original DH (Hoover) bat for the pitcher (Bevac). The choices are Hoover is a legal batter or Hoover is an illegal batter.

Their answer:

Hoover is legal and site Rule 3-1-3 and 3-1-4. This is CORRECT BUT NOT COMPLETE.

3-1-3 states, any starting player may be withdrawn and re-entered once, including the DH. Rule 3-1-4 states, the role of the DH is terminated when the defensive player, in this case the pitcher (Bevac), bats for the DH (Hoover).

To clarify the answer we must add:

If the pitcher is in the 9 spot of the line up and the DH in the 10 spot (FIG. A), when the pitcher hits for his DH, the DH is terminated. (FIG. B).

We now have a nine player line up (FIG.B) because the 9 and 10 spots are considered 1 place in the line up. That is why we connect them with a >.

Mentzer would be hitting after Bevac.

The original DH (Hoover) may re-enter the game, but not as a DH. He would be entering as a pinch hitter or substitute for Bevac in the (9-10) spot.

After Bevac leaves the game, because he is replaced by Hoover, Bevac could also re-enter, eliminating Hoover for the rest of the game!