INTRODUCTION

In competitive athletic contests, the game official represents the ultimate in integrity for any competition. By their very nature, officials are neutral and are responsible to keep the contests played on equal terms. Through actions on and off the field, officials must earn the respect and confidence of players, coaches, and spectators. This confidence and respect is not earned by words, but by unquestioned honesty, demonstrated ability, obvious devotion to, and full understanding of the game.

The rules of competitive athletics are, for the most part, complex. They are difficult to read, understand, and interpret. Mere book knowledge of the rules does not make an official. To an official, knowledge of the rules is basic. To achieve excellence, an official must combine knowledge with good officiating techniques. To assist in this goal, we have provided the following meeting guides. Hopefully, these guides will assist in having each play considered with consistent judgment, intelligence, understanding, courage, and without intimidation.

Athletic officiating is a vigorous avocation and it demands that an official be in excellent physical condition, able to give the very best, on every play, in every contest. To that end, the American Medical Association has stated that before one attempts any vigorous physical activity they should first visit their family physician for a check-up. It is part of good personal health maintenance to have an annual physical exam and participate in an exercise program. This type of exercise program should be minimally three days per week and include cardiovascular conditioning, strength training, flexibility, and muscle endurance. These components, along with proper nutrition, will assist in developing one's optimum body composition.

The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) Sports Medicine Committee recommends that each registered sports official have an annual physical examination and practice good health habits. Being physically fit and conveying an appropriate, positive image through proper health and nutrition habits will greatly assist all officials in keeping up with the game. After all, the game, the schools, players, coaches, spectators, and fellow officials deserve no less. As importantly, officials owe good health habits to themselves and their families if for nothing more, than the health of it.

Rule changes and / or additions to the 2019 Baseball Chapter Meeting Guide are shown in BLUE and/or RED print.
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MEETING 1:

2019 PIAA Major Issues:

1. 2019 PITCH COUNT ADOPTIONS:

An OFFICIAL PITCH COUNTER will be required for District and Inter-District Play-Off Games.

For District and Inter-District Play-Off games only:

The top pitch count threshold, per game, has been amended to 105 pitches and the weekly limit to 210 pitches.

These Pitch Count Thresholds are for PLAY-OFF GAMES ONLY.

2. Cheek/Jaw Protectors:

A face mask/guard specifically designed for a particular helmet model may be attached after manufacture.

There is no NOCSAE performance standard for cheek and jaw protectors. The NFHS has confirmed that current manufactured batting helmets meet the NOCSAE performance standard with predrilled holes and without pre-drilled holes. Many of the larger helmet manufacturers have developed their own brand specific cheek and jaw protector and also accommodate third party cheek and jaw protectors to be attached to their helmets as well.

Please note: It is the NFHS and PIAA position that 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.

3. CASE BOOK PLAY 2.9.1 SITUATION D:

B1 hits a two hopper back to the pitcher. F1 gloves the batted ball, but cannot get the ball out of his glove. He quickly removes his glove with the ball securely stuck inside the webbing of the glove and shovels the glove to the first baseman who is in contact with first base. The first baseman catches the glove with the ball in it just before B1 touches first base.

RULING: B1 is out because F3 had secure possession of the glove and ball.
We are instructed by the NFHS to rule this play as an out and to keep the ball in play.

2020 NFHS Rule Changes:

Effective January 1, 2020. The ball shall meet the current NOCSAE standard for baseballs in addition to the NFHS Standard.

We are looking for both marks in the 2020 season.

Some manufacturers are stamping their baseballs with the letters NFHS and NOCSAE. These baseballs are legal.

If game balls do not have both marks, replace them with those that do, using any means possible within a reasonable amount of time.

DO NOT PLAY THE GAME WITH ILLEGAL BASEBALLS

Catcher's chest protector Rule 1-5-3

The catcher's chest protector shall meet the NOCSAE standard (effective Jan. 1, 2020). A performance standard based on the pertinent requirements of projectile testing.

ALL OF THESE PROTECTORS ARE LEGAL IF THEY ARE NOCSAE APPROVED

If a protector being worn by the catcher, does not meet the NOCSAE standard. The equipment is to be replaced with one that meets the standard.
Rule 3-1-4. The DH RULE.

The DH rule now has two options:

1. The option we have had for many years in which the Designated Hitter may be a tenth starter hitting for any one of the nine starting defensive players.

2. The starting DH may be any one of the starting defensive players not just the pitcher. Thus, giving us a Defensive Player / Designated Hitter.

This starts out as a nine player line up with the possibility of adding a tenth player later in the game.

OPTION 1: (Old Rule)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>LF</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Cosslett</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Meyers</td>
<td>SS</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Hansen</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hoover</td>
<td>3B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substitutes

31  Applegate
19  Finney

A hitter may be (not mandatory) designated for any of the starting players not just the pitcher. The DH should have his own place on the lineup card and that space is to be immediately after the player he is designated to hit for. The DH and the player he is hitting for should be connected as shown on the example lineup card.

Substitutes are to be listed on the lineup card.

If the Designated Hitter is used in this manner, the role of the DH is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

1. Anyone the DH was batting for enters the game on offense.

2. The DH enters the game as a defensive player.
Option 2: (The new addition). The starting DH may be anyone of the starting defensive players.

<table>
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Used in this manner, the starting defensive player has two positions: He is the Defensive Player AND the Designated Hitter.

The role of the Defensive Player may be substituted for by any legal substitute.

This means we may have to add an additional defensive player in the lineup at a point later in the game.

If the Defensive Player has been substituted for, the original DP / DH may re-enter one time.

When we begin the game with a DP/DH (Defensive Player/Designated Hitter) the role of the DH is terminated when:

1. There is a Pinch Runner for the DP/DH.
2. There is a Pinch Runner for the DP/DH.
3. The DP/DH leaves the game on defense twice.
4. The head coach verbally declares he no longer wants a DH.

3 and 4 are rulings by the NFHS that are not in the rule book or case book.

So, if a team uses a DP/DH, the only player who can ever be the DH (Designated Hitter) IS THE STARTING DEFENSIVE PLAYER)!

Coaches should be aware that this option is not as flexible as OPTION 1 and would probably only be used to designate the Pitcher as the DP/DH.

NOTICE THE EMPTY SLOT ON THE LINE-UP CARD.

If a coach decides to use the Defensive Player / Designated Hitter Option, It is recommended the line-up card he uses has a blank space under the DP / DH spot in the starting line-up. The umpire will then place the name of the new defensive player in the blank space at the time the starting DP/Dh becomes the DH and the new Defensive player enters the game.
**SITUATION 1:**

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HANSEN starts as P/DH. He is listed in spot number four in the batting order.

In the 5th inning Finney enters the game as the pitcher.

**RULING:**
FINNEY is now the pitcher and HANSEN is the DH for FINNEY.

**SITUATION 1 Continued:**

Finney moves to 1B.
Cosslett moves to pitcher.

**RULING:**
This is legal, as long as we do not alter the batting line-up. Hansen will still be the DH for Finney.

**SITUATION 1 Continued:**

Finney bats for Hansen

**RULING:**
This is legal, but the role of DH is TERMINATED because the original DP/DH has been substituted for on offense.

Situation 1 Continued:
Hansen re-enters as a replacement for Finney at first base.

**RULING:**

This is legal. Hansen is an original starter and may re-enter one time. Hansen will bat in the 4 spot in place of Finney. Hansen is the first baseman not the DH.

However, Hansen must stay in the number 4 slot in place of Finney. Hansen CAN NOT return as DH.

We now have a 9 player lineup card that cannot go back to 10.
NOTE: When dealing with Option 1 (original DH rule) or Option 2 (new DP/DH rule) it is important to make sure:

1. All players are locked into their original spot on the lineup card and can never be moved through a series of substitutions.

2. The position of DH (unlike all other positions) is locked into the original spot on the lineup card and can never move to a different place in the batting order.

PIAA
2020 UMPIRE UNIFORM CHANGE

SHOES:
Solid black or black with WHITE ACCENTS with black laces.
White soles around the shoe are not considered an accent mark and are NOT permitted.

Points of Emphasis

GAME ENDING PROCEDURES.

The PIAA has adopted this game ending procedure:

Once the game has started (PLAY BALL), if play is halted because of weather, darkness, or light failure, and the game cannot continue. We have a suspended game to be continued from the point of interruption at a later date.

Exception: If at least 4 1/2 innings have been completed and a winner can be determined, the game is over.
**SITUATION A:**
The game is halted before the 5th inning and: (a) The game is tied, (b) The visitors are ahead, (c) The home team is ahead.

**RULING:**
In (a), (b), and (c) the game is suspended and is to be continued from the point of interruption at a later date.

**SITUATION B:**
During the top of the 5th inning: (a) the visitors are ahead or (b) the home team is ahead, and the game is halted because of weather and cannot be continued.

**RULING:**
In (a) and (b) the game is suspended to be completed at a later date.

**SITUATION C:**
At the end of 5 innings of play the home team leads 4 - 3. In the top of the 6th inning the visitors go ahead 8 – 4 and the game is halted.

**RULING:**
The game reverts back to the 5th inning. The home team wins 4-3.

**Weather** – Error on the side of caution when dealing with inclement weather conditions. If you see lightning or hear thunder, get the teams off the field into safe shelter and wait the prescribed amount of time before resuming (30 minutes from the last sign of thunder or lightning).

If a **Lightning Detection System** indicates bad weather in the area, get the teams off of the field.

If a **Lightning Detection Phone Application or Radar System** indicates bad weather in the area, get the teams off of the field.

Once the teams are off of the field, for any of the reasons listed above, begin the 30 minute lightning/thunder procedure:

1. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last boom is heard, flash is seen, or bad weather is indicated by a warning system.

2. Any subsequent thunder, lightning, or warning sounds will reset the clock and another 30 minute count should begin.

**SITUATION:** In the 3rd inning, a lightning warning siren is heard and the teams are removed from the field. After 15 minutes, the Warning System indicates it is safe to resume play.

**RULING:** The NFHS and PIAA have not yet determined a procedure to be followed when using a Weather Warning System. Keep the teams off of the field for 30 minutes after the last boom, flash, or WARNING SIGNAL.

**When dealing with inclement weather conditions, error on the side of caution and safety!**
PROPER PITCHING POSITIONS

The Wind-Up Position
In a wind up position the pitcher’s pivot foot must be somewhere on the pitching rubber and the NON-PIVOT FOOT MUST BE ON, TOUCHING, OR BEHIND A LINE EXTENDING THROUGH THE FRONT EDGE OF THE RUBBER. When in this position the TOES WILL BE POINTED TOWARDS HOME PLATE OR SLIGHTLY SLANTED. **Under no conditions is the non pivot foot to be entirely in front of and NOT TOUCHING the front edge line.**

![Diagram showing proper pitching positions](image)

THE HYBRID PITCHING POSITION

The pitching stance shown in the diagram is called the Hybrid Position and is **ILLEGAL** in High School Baseball.

**THE SET POSITION:**

In the set position the pitcher must have his pivot foot in contact with or in front of and in contact with A LINE EXTENDING THROUGH THE FRONT EDGE OF THE RUBBER and PARALLEL TO the rubber.

![Set position diagram](image)

The **non-pivot foot** must be ENTIRELY anywhere in front of the line (extended in both directions) that determines the front edge of the pitching rubber.
FORCE PLAY SLIDE RULE

Interference shall be called on a force play, where a runner does not legally slide in a direct line between the bases, or in a line away from the fielder.

**PENALTY:**
The runner is out and the batter-runner is declared out. All other runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

2. Bench Decorum –

Coaches, players, and other team personnel shall not be outside of the dugout for any unauthorized purpose. Coaches or team personnel **MAY NOT SIT OUTSIDE THE DUGOUT** on buckets or stools.

3. Bench Jockeying:

Actions meant to demean opposing contestants, teams, spectators, and officials are not in the highest ideals of interscholastic education and **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

Orchestrated Chants, intentional distractions and loud noises directed at the opponent’s pitcher prior to his pitching, the batter getting ready to hit, or a fielder getting ready to make a play do not represent good sportsmanship and are **NOT PERMITTED!**

With this being said, let’s remember one of the reasons we play baseball is to encourage enthusiasm for the sport.

**Loud enthusiasm is not always an unsportsmanlike action.**
PACE OF PLAY

Tips to assist with pace of play

1. Have players hustle in and out between innings. The rules book allows one minute from the time of the first warm up throw, in some cases, and one minute from the third out in other cases. Teams that get it done in a minute practice it.

2. Have courtesy runners ready to go when the pitcher or catcher get on base.

3. Enforce the batter’s box rule. The batter must keep one foot in the box between pitches, unless one of the exceptions listed in Rule 7-3-1 a-h occurs.

4. Speed up the conferences.

5. Practice good ball rotation skills by getting a new ball to the pitcher while:
   a. On deck batters shag balls.
   b. Each dugout chases fouls on their side of the field, instead of the left and right fielders.
   c. Getting foul balls back to the dugout instead of to the base umpire.

6. Call every inch of the strike zone.

PIAA UMPIRES MANUAL

The PIAA Umpires Manual not to be confused with the PIAA Chapter Meeting Guide was discontinued in 2018.

RATIONAL: The PIAA Umpires Manual was very similar to, but not as extensive as the NFHS Umpires Manual.

The PIAA purchases and provides every Chapter Interpreter with The NFHS Umpires Manual. This manual is published every two years.

Chapter Interpreters are encouraged to refer to the series of PowerPoint Presentations available on the PIAA Baseball Page:

The 2-man System  Working the Plate  Working the Bases
The 4-Man System  Handling Special Situations

MEETING 2: UMPIRE MECHANICS.
Working the Plate

A. Review Plate Mechanics by presenting the PowerPoint “Working the Plate” available in the document section of the PIAA baseball page or on the CD sent to your chapter by the PIAA.

B. Use the information and diagrams available in the PIAA Baseball Umpires Manual and/or the NFHS Umpires Manual.

Working the Bases.

A. Review Base Umpire Mechanics by presenting the PowerPoint “Working the Bases” available in the document section of the PIAA baseball page or on the CD sent to your chapter by the PIAA.

B. Use the information and diagrams available in the PIAA Baseball Umpires Manual and/or the NFHS Umpires Manual.

Special Situations.

A. View and discuss the PowerPoint “Special Situations” available in the document section of the PIAA baseball page or on the CD sent to your chapter by the PIAA.
MEETING 3: 2018 PIAA RULINGS and ADOPTIONS


Pursuant to NFHS Rule 6-1-6, the PIAA has adopted the following Baseball Pitching Restriction Procedure:

- 0 - 25 pitches - no rest.
- 26 to 50  - 1 day rest.
- 51 to 75  - 2 days rest.
- 76 to 100 - 3 days rest.

1. If a pitcher reaches 100 during a time at bat, he may continue pitching until the batter is retired or the inning ends, whichever occurs first, and the pitch count will revert back to 100 pitches.

2. The PIAA pitching restriction rule has been amended to permit a pitcher reaching the maximum pitch count for any level of rest during an at bat, to continue to pitch to that batter, or any substitute for that batter, until such batter is put out or reaches first base, or until a third out has been made prior to the end of that at bat. The pitcher will be credited with the maximum number of pitches for that level.

Example:

Pitcher Jones’s pitch count reaches 25 during Smith’s time at bat.

Ruling: Jones will be permitted to continuing pitching to Smith until the time at bat is completed or the inning ends, during that time at bat. Jones will be credited with a pitch count of 25.

3. A pitcher cannot pitch on more than 2 consecutive days.

4. A pitcher is limited to 200 pitches in a calendar week.
5. A pitch is defined as a live ball delivered to the batter that results in a strike, ball, or batted ball fair or foul.

6. Each team will designate a pitch counter, with the home team being the official counter. The pitch counters are to confer with each other frequently. If there is a discrepancy, the HOME BOOK is to be used.

7. The pitching restriction rule has been amended to provide that the pitch counts need to be entered no later than 12:00 pm (noon) the day following a competition.

8. 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, time being called followed by a delivery, a ball slipping out of the hand that does not cross the foul line, an illegal pitch, or a pitch delivered after a balk.

9. Umpires are not to get involved in the enforcement of the PIAA Baseball Pitching Restriction Rule. 
   **Example:** Umpire Smith had the plate on a game in which Pitcher Jones threw 50 pitches. Umpire Smith has the same team the next day. Pitcher Jones tries to enter the game in the 5th inning, as a relief pitcher. Umpire Smith informs the coach that Jones cannot enter the game or they will forfeit.

   **Ruling:** Umpire Smith’s actions are incorrect. He should say nothing and accept the substitution.

10. The PIAA pitching restriction rule has been amended for PLAY-OFF games only:
    1. An OFFICIAL PITCH COUNTER will be required for Play-Off Games.
    2. The top pitch count threshold, per game, has been amended (PLAY-OFF GAMES ONLY) to 105 pitches and the weekly limit to 210 pitches.

    **Adopt suggested speed-up rule Courtesy Runner only.**

    **Adopt Rule 1-2-9 NOTE,** permitting the optional use of the Double First Base.

    **Adopt the suggested Double First Base Rules, as set forth in the NFHS Baseball Rules Book.**

    **Modify Rule 3-1-5 (Concussion Rule),** to clarify that “an appropriate health-care professional” is a licensed physician of medicine or osteopathic medicine (MD or DO).
Adopt Rule 4-2-2. TEN RUN RULE. The game shall end when the visiting team is behind 10 or more runs after 4 ½ innings. If the visiting team goes ahead by 10 or more in the top half of the 5th inning, or any inning after the 5th, the home team is entitled to its time at bat in the bottom half of that inning.

Modify Rule 4-2-2. FIFTEEN RUN RULE. The game shall end when the visiting team is behind 15 or more runs after 2 ½ innings. If the visiting team goes ahead by 15 or more in the top half of the 3rd inning, the home team is entitled to its time at bat in the bottom half of that inning.

Modify Rule 4-2-2 to permit a time limit for those contests played in community/public parks that prohibits a new inning from starting after a predetermined time, at all levels (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition.

Modify Rule 4-2-2b, Sub-varsity level (junior varsity, junior high, and middle school) participating member schools, by mutual agreement prior to the start of a doubleheader, may limit the number of innings played, in each game of that doubleheader, to five (5).

Adopt Rule 4-2-4, relative to suspended games:

The PIAA has adopted game ending procedures as addressed in the Points of Emphasis for 2020.

DISQUALIFICATION RULE
Any coach ejected from baseball contest by any state association registered official for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct shall leave the vicinity of the playing area (out of sight and sound) immediately and is prohibited from further contact, direct or indirect, with the team for the remainder of the day and for the next contest or next play day at the same level (Rule 3-3-2). He may return when requested to attend to an ill or injured player.

Any player ejected from baseball contest by any state association registered official for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct shall be disqualified from participating in the remainder of the day on all levels and in the next contest, after the day of the incident, at the same level.

Other than filing a report with the PIAA office ON-LINE WITHIN 24 HOURS, officials ARE NOT to get involved in the enforcement of the disqualification rule.

The PIAA has adopted a format pertaining to Team Warnings for second time team offenders. These same Team Warnings under NFHS rules would be ejections. Since these Team Warnings are not “unsportsmanlike acts” and since an ejection causes a player or a coach a one game suspension, this provision has been adopted:

Second time team offenders shall be restricted to the bench, without ejection, for the remainder of the game. There will be no ejection report filed and no additional disqualification penalties. These are some examples of situations that require restriction to the bench (after a warning) without an ejection:

<p>| Using a heating device on bats (natural or artificial) | Carelessly throwing bat |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Violation</th>
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<td>Deliberately removing helmet (live ball)</td>
<td>Player’s wearing bandana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jewelry</td>
<td>On-Deck circle violation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving dugout/bench area during a live ball</td>
<td>Fake tags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unauthorized items in coach’s box</td>
<td>Players loosening up to bat on the wrong side of the field.</td>
</tr>
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**PIAA APPROVED UMPIRES’ UNIFORM.**

**Shirt**

One of the following shirts is to be worn: (1) Navy blue pullover with red and white stripe trim on sleeves and collar. (2) Light blue pullover with navy blue and white stripe trim on the sleeves and collar with the standard buttons (no zipper style shirts permitted). The silk/shiny dazzle type material is not approved. **Long-sleeve shirt is now approved, but is not to be worn under a short sleeved jacket.**

**Patch**

The **ONLY** patch that is permitted to be worn is the PIAA patch which **MUST** be worn on the left sleeve of the shirt 3” down from the shoulder seam. If you are wearing a jacket or sweater while umpiring, you are **NOT** required to have a PIAA patch on your jacket or sweater. Jackets or sweaters must be navy blue only. The jacket may have your PIAA umpires’ chapter identification on the left breast area or left sleeve **ONLY**. Jackets or sweaters with identification other than PIAA are **NOT** permitted to be worn while umpiring.

**Undershirt**

Navy blue - All umpires must wear the same color undershirt during the game. **Shorts** are **NOT** permitted.

**Slacks**

Charcoal Gray only - Charcoal Gray only - SHORTS are **NOT** permitted.

**Ball Bag**

Navy blue only.

**Socks**

Black – “footies” are **NOT** permitted.

**Shoes**

Solid black or black with WHITE ACCENTS with black laces.
White soles around the shoe are not considered an accent mark and are NOT permitted.

**Belt**
Black - large metal buckles **NOT** permitted.

**Cap**
Navy blue - caps are to be fitted type only, not adjustable style. Both male and female umpires must wear caps properly in all positions. A cap with **Gold 1½” high “PIAA” letters is REQUIRED** for all regular season, district and inter-district advanced play.

**Jewelry**
Umpires are **NOT** permitted to wear jewelry, with the exception of your wedding band and a Medical Alert Bracelet or Necklace while umpiring.

**NOTE: ALL UNIFORM ITEMS MUST BE IDENTICAL TO PARTNER(S), DRESS ALIKE!!!**

**OFFICIALS’ UNIFORM - AMERICAN FLAG DISPLAY**
Registered PIAA sports’ officials may display the American flag (maximum size 2 inches by 3 inches) on the right sleeve of their uniform shirt approximately three inches down from the shoulder seam. This will be the same position the PIAA official patch is displayed on the left sleeve. This policy is effective immediately. Thank you for your patriotism, support of interscholastic education, and the recognition and remembrance of our fellow Americans. An American flag may be displayed on umpires’ jacket.

**Player’s Uniforms Sleeves**

**Rule 1-4. ART. 2 . . . Compression sleeves that are solid black or solid dark-colored shall be the only colors allowed to be worn by the pitcher below his elbow.**

**Comments:**
Compression sleeves can be worn, by the pitcher, on either arm, both arms, or by itself.

**NOTE: This statement is different than other rule codes.**

Pitchers can wear a white or gray exposed t-shirt, dri-fit style or compression style shirts, as long as the sleeves do not extend below the elbow.

Compression sleeves, worn by the PITCHER, that extend below the elbow cannot be white or gray.

Pitchers Sleeves
“All compression sleeves must be solid black or solid dark, IF THE PLAYER IS PITCHING!”

Field players can wear COMPRESSION, not to be considered uniform sleeves, on one or both arms, with no restrictions on color or length.

PROPER CATCHER’S EQUIPMENT.

The catcher’s helmet - mask combination and CHEST PROTECTOR shall meet the NOCSAE standard. Helmets must have full ear protection with dual ear flaps.

The SKULL CAP and mask combination does not meet the NOCSAE standard, because it does not provide full ear protection with dual ear flaps and is not permitted for high school baseball.

Comment: There have been reports that umpires are allowing catchers to wear a skull cap and mask. The vast majority of catchers have the legal equipment, but a small percentage of them try to wear the more comfortable skull cap until forced to change.

DO NOT TO PERMIT IT!

BE CONSISTENT IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE RULE!

ARM BANDS

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

Players ARE PERMITTED to wear the ARMBAND SIGNAL BANDS, as they were designed to be worn-ON THE ARM OR WRIST, or placed (without exposure) in a pocket.

Hitters may wear them.

They MAY NOT be worn on the belt.

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 (restricted to the bench). The situation, if possible, should be handled without an ejection (restriction to the bench).

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

**POLICY ON EYE SHADE**

The use of eye shade must be worn as a single, solid stroke under the eye. There shall be no numbers, words, logos, symbols or other detail located in the eye shade. The eye shade shall not extend below the cheek bone and extend no further than the width of the eye socket. Players having eye shade that does not meet the standard are to remove it or comply with the PIAA interpretation before participation in the game. If the players do not comply, the officials may impose unsportsmanlike conduct type penalties as determined by their respective rules code.

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**COACHES UNIFORM**

PIAA policy is that all coaches of PIAA member schools must be in full school baseball uniform when on the field or in the dugout.

**Note:** Although Rule 1-1-5 mentions that all team members **SHOULD** be of the same color and style, PIAA's policy is that all players and field coaches **MUST** be dressed in uniforms of identical color and style.

*Coaches may wear a team wind shirt, jersey or jacket.*
Examples:

![Example Image]

**Yes**  **Yes**  **No**  **No**

Don’t make a major issue of it on the JV and Middle School level. There are many reasons why coaches under the varsity level do not wear the proper attire. 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 AND T-SHIRTS!* 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 AD. The AD will take care of the problem.

**MEDIA AREA**

PIAA policy places the media area outside the confines of the field of play.

**SPORTSMANSHIP MESSAGE**

PIAA requires all registered sports’ officials to enforce the sportsmanship rules for coaches and contestants. Actions meant to demean opposing contestants, teams, spectators, and officials are not in the highest ideals of interscholastic education and will not be tolerated. Let today’s contest reflect mutual respect. Coaches please certify to the officials’ that your players are legally equipped and uniformed according to NFHS rules and PIAA adoptions. Good luck in today’s contest.

For distribution purposes, this message is printed on the back of all PIAA registered sports officials’ identification cards. Chapter interpreters are requested to remind all officials to **READ** this message at each contest they officiate.

**Protest Procedure – PIAA does not allow any forms of protests.**

If there is a question about a rule that was possibly misapplied, the team’s coach or captain shall inform the umpire at the time of the play and before a pitch to the next batter of either team, or before the umpires leave the field, if the play in question was the last play of the game. The umpires will then meet and arrive at a proper ruling. Umpires are to use whatever means necessary to reach a correct final decision.

**Exception:** Video replay may not be used to correct a call.
MEETING 4: UMPIRE MECHANICS. WORKING THE TWO MAN SYSTEM

A. REVIEW UMPIRE MECHANICS (TWO-MAN SYSTEM):

1. If possible, view the Two Man Mechanics PowerPoint “PIAA 2-Man System of Umpiring” available on the Baseball Document page of the PIAA web site or on the CD sent to your chapter by the PIAA.

2. Distribute to the members a packet of 2–man mechanics diagrams, which are available in the PIAA Umpires Manual on the PIAA web site baseball page.

3. Use blackboard or magnetic board to illustrate proper 2-man mechanics as presented in the NFHS Baseball Umpires Guide.

4. Use available video presentations.

5. Utilize indoor/outdoor facilities to provide actual experience.
MEETING 5: Major Rules Differences.

The rules shown below are the NFHS Rules that are different from the Official Baseball Rules. There are over 70 differences, but only the major differences are considered in this comparison. These differences account for over 80 percent of baseball rules problems in the State of Pennsylvania.

1. Rule 2-22-1. Obstruction of a runner is always a delayed dead ball.

   OBSTRUCTION as well as INTERFERENCE may be VERBAL as well as physical.

2. Rule 3-1-3. Starting players, including the Pitcher and Designated Hitter, may be pulled out of the game (substituted for) and then re-enter the game later, but only ONE TIME. The re-entered player must remain in the same spot in the batting order.

3. Rule 3-1-4. A Designated Hitter may hit for any player in the lineup. The role of DH is terminated when:
   a. A player who has played defense, replaces the DH.
   b. The DH or any previous DH assumes a defensive position.

   OR

   The starting DH may be any one of the starting defensive players not just the pitcher.
   thus, giving us a Defensive Player / Designated Hitter.

   This starts out as a nine player line up with the possibility of adding a tenth player later in the
When we begin the game with a DP/DH (Defensive Player/Designated Hitter) the role of the DH is terminated when:

1. A substitute for the defensive role subsequently participates in an offensive role.
2. The starting DP/DH is substituted for either as a hitter or a runner.

4. Rule 3-3-1 Penalty. An umpire may issue a written warning and restrict a coach to the bench.

5. Rule 3-3-1m. Malicious Contact by a runner or by a fielder results in the ejection of the player causing the contact.

6. Rule 3 – 4 – 1. A coach is allowed 3 “charged” conferences during a regular 7- inning game.

   There is no restriction as to when these conferences can be used. They could, if a coach desired, be used all in one inning or all during one batter’s at-bat.

   After three “charged” defensive conferences, the coach must replace the pitcher on each subsequent visit.

   The pitcher forced to be removed by the 3 conferences rule may remain in the game and play another position, but may not return as pitcher.

   For extra-inning games, each team is allowed one “charged” defensive conference in each extra inning(s). Same as OBR.

7. Rule 4 – 4 – 1 f. NFHS requires a team to start a game with nine (9) players, but allows them to finish the game with (8) players.
   Once they have gone to eight players, they can return to nine players, if additional eligible substitutes show up for the game.

8. Rule 5-1-1-k. A balk is an IMMEDIATE DEAD BALL. All playing action after the balk is automatically negated (steals, home runs, etc.)

9. Rule 6-1-2. No pickoff move can occur from the windup position. The pitcher can only:

   (1) Pitch to the batter.
(2) Step off the rubber legally.

10. Rule 6-1-2. For the wind up position the pitcher’s non-pivot foot shall be in any position on or behind a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher’s plate. The “hybrid position” is not acceptable.

11. Rule 6-1-3. While in the set position:

   (a) The pivot foot must be on or in front of and in contact with and parallel to the rubber.
   (b) With no runners on base, the pitcher must still display a discernable stop.

12. Rule 6-2-4-b. From the set position a pitcher may step and feint towards a runner at third base, then turn and throw to first base. When making this move, the pitcher may also fake to first if his pivot foot is removed from the rubber on the feint to third.

13. Rule 8-2 Penalty. A dead ball appeal may be made by a coach or any defensive player, with or without the ball, by verbally stating the runner missed the base or left too soon tagging on a caught fly ball.

14. Rule 8-4-2 (b) The runner is out, if on a force play, he does not slide on the ground, and in a direct line between the two bases, UNLESS the runner is sliding or running away from the fielder to avoid contact or altering the play of the fielder.

15. Courtesy Runner Rule. A team may use courtesy runners for the pitcher and/or catcher.
MEETING 6: PITCHING REGULATIONS

The Wind-Up Position

In a wind up position the pitcher’s pivot foot must be somewhere on the pitching rubber and the NON-PIVOT FOOT MUST BE TOUCHING OR BEHIND A LINE EXTENDING THROUGH THE FRONT EDGE OF THE RUBBER. When in this position the TOES WILL BE POINTED TOWARDS HOME PLATE OR SLIGHTLY SLANTED. Under no conditions is the non pivot foot to be entirely in front of the front edge line.

In these diagrams the non-pivot foot could also be on the rubber

When in the wind-up position the pitcher can only do two things (NFHS RULES):

1. Begin the pitching motion with his non-pivot foot or
2. Step backwards (not to the side) off of the rubber with his pivot foot.

WHEN IN CONTACT WITH THE RUBBER IN THE WIND-UP POSITION THE PITCHER CAN NOT THROW TO A BASE.

PENALTY: ILLEGAL PITCH

THE HYBRID PITCHING POSITION
The pitching stance shown in the diagram is called the Hybrid Position and is illegal in High School Baseball.

THE SET POSITION:

In the set position the pitcher must have his ENTIRE pivot foot on or in front of and in contact with and PARALLEL TO the rubber.

The non-pivot foot must be ENTIRELY anywhere in front of the line (extended in both directions) that determines the front edge of the pitching rubber.

BALKS:

Tips on calling balks:

Here are some things to remember when calling balks:

a. When a balk occurs, the ball is dead immediately.

b. At the time of the balk, the calling umpire should say “TIME, THAT’S A BALK”

c. The call of “balk” should be made VERY loud and with emphasis.

d. At the proper moment, other members of the crew should loudly and emphatically call “TIME.”
e. If the balk is followed by a pitch, notify the pitch counters that the pitch does not count.

e. Remember to give the proper ball/strike count before resuming play.

f. Put the ball back in play when play is ready to resume.

**COMMON TYPES OF BALKS OR ILLEGAL PITCHES:**

1. Takes sign while not on the rubber.

2. Makes an illegal pitch from any position.

3. Attempts a pick-off move, from the rubber, in the windup position.

4. Assumes the set position without keeping his pitching hand at side or behind back.

5. Comes to his stop with the glove above his chin.

6. Brings the pitching hand to the mouth without wiping off that hand before it touches the ball.

7. Interrupts pitching motion.

8. Pitches from the set position with pivot foot not parallel to the rubber.

9. Steps forward off the rubber from the set position.

10. Pitches from the set position without coming to a complete stop. With or without runners.

11. Drops the ball while on the rubber when the ball does not cross the foul line.

12. Feints toward home.

13. Feints toward first.

14. Fails to step with the non-pivot foot toward any base before making a throw.

15. Feints or throws to an unoccupied base except when making a play.

16. Fails to pitch after making any motion habitually connected with delivery.

17. Stands astride or within five feet of the rubber, without the ball, during a hidden ball trick.

18. After bringing the hands together in the set position, feints with any part of the upper body, except the head.
19. Steps and feints toward occupied third and then turns and **FEINTS** to first **WITHOUT DISENGAGING** the rubber before the feint to first.

20. Commits any act, which in the umpire’s judgment, is an illegal attempt to deceive the runners.

**SPECIAL BALK REGULATIONS:**

The pitcher **shall not** be charged with a balk if he attempts a pick-off at first base and throws to the first baseman who is either in front of (coming into cover a bunt) or behind first base and obviously not an attempt at retiring the runner. As long as the fielder attached to that base is in the “**proximity**” (umpire judgment) of the base.

**Note:** There is no violation if the pitcher attempts a pick-off at second or third and throws to an infielder who is in front of or behind or to the side of either of those bases; i.e., this violation is only in reference to pick-offs at first base.

**NOTE:** There is no violation if a pitcher attempts a pick-off at second base and seeing no fielder covering the bag, throws to the short stop or second baseman, neither of whom is in the vicinity of the bag nor is making an actual attempt to retire the runner.

**Rationale:** He does not have to throw to second.

**THROWING TO AN UNOCCUPIED BASE:**

NFHS Rules provide that the pitcher be charged with a balk if, while in contact with the rubber, he throws to an unoccupied base except for the purpose of making a play.

**Play:** Runners on first and second pitcher in a set position, runner breaks for third or fakes going to third and pitcher throws to third base.

**Ruling:** Legal play – the runner caused the throw to third. The pitcher is permitted to make a play.

**THIRD TO FIRST MOVE:**

From the set position, a pitcher may step and feint towards a runner at third base, then turn and throw to first base. When making this move, the pitcher may fake to first **only if his pivot foot is removed from the rubber on the feint to third.**

**PITCHER’S GLOVE/MITT:**

Multi-colored gloves are permitted except, a glove/mitt worn by the pitcher that includes the colors white and/or gray shall be removed from the game upon discovery by either team and/or umpire.

**Replacing the Pitcher:**

A player may change to a different fielding position at any time except that a pitcher, after being listed as such on the official lineup card, cannot change until certain conditions are met.
The starting pitcher shall pitch until the first opposing batter has been put out or has advanced to first base. If the starting pitcher does not face one batter, he may play another position, but not return to pitch.

A player may be removed as pitcher and returned as pitcher only once per inning.

**Defensive Conferences:**

A team is allowed 3 “charged” conferences during a regular 7-inning game.

There is no restriction as to when these conferences can be used. They could, if a coach desired, be used all in one inning or all during one batter’s at-bat.

After three “charged” defensive conferences, the coach must replace the pitcher on each subsequent visit.

A pitcher forced to be removed by the 3 conferences rule may remain in the game and play another position, but may not return as pitcher.

For each EXTRA INNING, each team is allowed one “charged” defensive conference. Same as OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES.

**Defensive Conference Ends:**

A defensive charged conference is concluded when the coach or non-playing representative crosses the foul line if the conference was in fair territory. If the conference was in foul territory, the conference concludes when the coach or non-playing representative initially starts to return to the dugout/bench area. If a coach who has been restricted to the dugout-bench area is involved in a charged conference, that conference shall end when the players involved initially start to return to their positions on the field. The coach shall be given a reasonable amount of time for the charged conference as determined by the UIC.
MEETING 7: BATTING

POSITION AND BATTING ORDER

Before game time, the home team and then the visiting team shall deliver their respective line up cards to the Umpire-in-Chief.

Sample Line Up Card:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mentzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cosslett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Meyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Hansen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Shinew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Garritano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Leiper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Bevac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Hoover</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substitutes

A player’s name determines his position in the batting order, not his number.

Any of the starting players including the Designated Hitter may be substituted for and re-entered once, provided such player occupies the same batting position in the original line up.

The Designated Hitter: A hitter may be (not mandatory) designated for any of the starting players not just the pitcher.

The DH should have his own place on the lineup card and that space is to be immediately after the player he is designated to hit for. The DH and the player he is hitting for should be connected as shown on the example lineup card.
ERRORS IN BATTING ORDER:

Obvious errors in the batting order which are noticed by the UIC before calling “Play Ball” for the start of the game should be called to the attention of the coach of the team in error so the correction can be made before the game starts.

BATTING OUT OF ORDER (7-1 AND 2) PENALTY:

1. Only the defensive team can appeal batting out of order after the hitter has completed his time at bat.

2. If the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and the defensive team appeals, the umpire shall declare the proper batter out and return all runners to the base occupied at the time of pitch. Any outs made on play stand; i.e., steal; pick off; double play.

An out for batting out of order supersedes an out by the improper batter on the play.

DESIGNATED HITTER RULE

A hitter may be (not mandatory) designated for any one starting player (not just pitchers) and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game......
Batter’s Box Rule:

A batter may leave the batter’s box as presented in Rule 7-3-1 on page 44 of the 2018 NFHS Baseball Rules Book.

If the batter leaves the batter’s box, and “delays” the game, which is the key word to the rule, “delays” and none of the exceptions apply, the plate umpire shall charge a strike to the batter. The pitcher need not pitch, and the ball remains live (7-3-1 penalty).

The lines defining the batter’s box are considered “within” the batter’s box. When the batter assumes his position in the batter’s box, **he shall have both feet completely within the batter’s box; i.e., “no part” of either foot may extend beyond the lines defining the box when the batter assumes his position. CB 7.3.2 A**

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**Use the lineup card to follow these plays.**

**SITUATION I:**

In the 3rd inning Team A substitutes Applegate for Meyers in the number three spot. Applegate is to become the new pitcher. The pitcher Hansen, moves to 1st base and the 1st baseman Coslett moves to shortstop. The opposing team insists Team A must terminate the DH (Shinew) position because Hanson is no longer pitching.

**RULING I:**

INCORRECT. This is a legal substitution because neither part A nor part B of Rule 3-1-4 can be applied to eliminate the DH. The DH is not hitting for the pitcher, he is hitting for Hansen. Play continues with (DH) Shinew batting after Applegate and Hanson playing 1st base.

**SITUATION II:** Continue with the same lineup card.

Finney is entered for Applegate and plays SS. Applegate is removed for the duration of the game. Coslett is moved back to 1B. Shinew becomes the pitcher.

**RULING II:**

THESE ARE LEGAL CHANGES, however Hansen must leave the game because the role of the DH has been terminated RULE 3-1-4 b. Pitcher Shinew will bat after Finney.
If a batter hits a ball (fair, foul, or foul tip) with one or both feet on the ground **ENTIRELY** outside the batter’s box, he shall be declared out.

**Follow-Through Interference:**

In this illustration, on his natural follow-through, the batter has made contact with the catcher.

![Image of follow-through interference](image)

The ball is delayed-dead on follow-through interference and, if F2 is not able to complete the play and throw out the runner attempting to steal, the runner must be returned to first base and the batter is out.

If follow through interference occurs on strike three, the batter is out and a second out may be called, if the interference prevented an out at another base.

**Back-Swing Interference:**

Before the time of the pitch, if the batter’s practice swing makes contact with the catcher or his equipment, the umpire shall call an immediate dead ball. There is no penalty.

**BATTER INTERFERES WITH CATCHER’S THROW BACK TO PITCHER:**

If the batter interferes with the catcher’s throwback to the pitcher by stepping out of the batter’s box while he is at bat (no runners attempting to advance), it shall not be considered interference.

In such cases, the umpire shall call “TIME” only (no interference).

The ball will be dead and no runner shall advance on the play.

This interpretation does not, of course, give the batter license to intentionally interfere with the catcher’s throwback to the pitcher and in such cases the batter shall be ruled out. If the batter becomes a runner...
on ball four and the catcher’s throw strikes him or his bat, the ball remains alive and play (provided no intentional interference by the batter-runner) continues.

If the batter interferes with the catcher’s throw to retire a runner by stepping out of the batter’s box, **Intentionally or not**, interference shall be called on the batter under the interference rule.

The hitter’s momentum is not to be taken into consideration when enforcing this rule.

If the batter is standing in the batter’s box and he or his bat is struck by the catcher’s throwback to the pitcher (or throw in attempting to retire a runner) and in the umpire’s judgment there is no intent on the part of the batter to interfere with the throw, consider the ball alive and in play.

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**MEETING 10: TOUGH CALLS**

**ON THE BATTER-RUNNER:**

1. The batter is out when an Infield Fair Fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort. The catch may be made by an outfielder if an infielder could have made the catch and provided the hit is made before two are out and at the time when first and second bases or all bases are occupied.

   If the rule is in effect and there is no announcement, the infield fly rule is still enforced.

   **Remember:** *It's not the “Declaration” that counts; it is the “situation” that counts.*
2. After hitting or bunting a ball, he “intentionally” contacts the ball with the bat a second time in fair or foul territory.

The ball is dead, the hitter is out, and no runner(s) advance.

EXCEPTION: If the bat and ball accidentally come in contact with each other a second time while the batter is holding the bat in the batter’s box. It is a foul ball.

3. A third strike is not caught while a runner is on first base with fewer than two out and the hitter, even though he is out, runs to first base and draws a throw which results in the base runner(s) advancing.

The play stands. There are some rules and situations the players and coaches are to be aware of.

4. After a third strike or a fair hit; if the ball held by any fielder, touches the batter before the batter touches first base; or if any fielder, while holding the ball in his grasp, touches first base, or touches first base with the ball before the batter-runner touches first base.

NOTE: If a runner (including the batter runner) is forced to touch a base, and a defensive player in possession of the ball touches the base with any body part, an out shall be called.

NOTE: A fielder is considered to have possession of the ball, even though the ball is on the ground and is covered by a hand or glove hand only, if the fielder can demonstrate possession by lifting the ball from the ground without assistance from the other hand.

5. The batter is out when he runs outside (at least one foot entirely outside a line) the three-foot lines (last half of the distance from home base to first base) while the ball is being fielded or thrown there. If the runner is out of the running lane (except to avoid a fielder), and a THROW IS MADE FROM BEHIND THE RUNNER and not caught by the fielder at first base, we have interference. It does not matter, if the ball slipped out of the hand, or the player making the throw had a mental block. We only have to judge whether or not the runner was in or out of the lane and if the throw originated from behind the runner.

6. A batter runner who stops and/or retreats back towards the plate is not out until he touches or passes the plate. CB 8.1.1.A

TOUGH CALLS INVOLVING A RUNNER

1. A runner runs more than three feet from a direct line between bases to avoid being tagged.

   Note: When a play is being made on a runner, he establishes his baseline as directly between his position and the base toward which he is moving.

   Note: As a rule of thumb - Any runner, who goes beyond a fielder's arm reach out to the side, shall be considered out of his base path.
2. If in the "Judgment" of the umpire, a runner (including the batter-runner) interferes in any way and prevents a double play (a second out) "anywhere", two shall be declared out (the interferer and the other runner involved).

If the umpire is uncertain who would have been played on, the runner closest to home shall be called out also.

If the batter-runner interferes, the umpire shall call him out and the runner who has advanced the nearest to home base.

NOTE: A fielder is entitled to one attempt to field a ball. If he errors in that attempt and must leave his position to retrieve the ball and contact with a runner occurs, the runner is not to be called for interference unless his actions are intentional.

3. Any runner is out when he is contacted by a fair batted ball before it touches an infielder, or after it passes any infielder, except the pitcher, and the umpire is convinced that another infielder has a play.

   Exception: If a runner is touching his base when he is hit by an infield fly, he is not out, but the batter is out by the infield fly rule. The ball is still dead in this exception.

   In cases where a runner is in contact with a base, when hit by a fair batted ball and a fielder has a play on the ball, the runner is out.

4. A runner is out when he attempts to advance to home base when the batter interferes with a play at home base, provided two are not already out.

   Note: With two out, the batter is out.

6. Base-Runner's Responsibilities

Runners are never required to slide, but if a runner elects to slide, it must be legal. A legal slide can either be feet first or head first. If a runner slides feet first, at least one leg and buttock shall be on the ground.

Runners may not pop-up into the fielder. Except at home plate, runners may not slide through or beyond the base.
Runners may not slide away from a base in the direction of the fielder.

Jumping, hurdling and leaping are all legal attempts to avoid a fielder as long as the fielder is lying on the ground.

Diving over a fielder is ALWAYS illegal. Diving supersedes obstruction.

5. A runner is out when he does not slide or attempt to avoid a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag or if he "maliciously" runs into a fielder (Rule 3-3-1M) (malicious contact supersedes obstruction).

6. A runner is out when, if on a force play at any base (except first base), the runner or retired runner fails to execute a legal slide or if he does not slide, fails to avoid the fielder on the play. At home plate, it is permissible for the slider’s momentum to carry him through the plate in the baseline extended.
Note: If such action by the runner, the batter-runner or retired runner causes illegal contact and or illegally alters the play, interference "shall be called."

**OBSTRUCTION** Rule 8-3-2:

**NFHS DEFINITION 2-22 – ART. 3...** Obstruction is when the act of a fielder, without possession of the ball, denies access to the base the runner is trying to achieve.

Penalty: When a runner is obstructed, while advancing or returning to a base, the umpire shall award the obstructed runner a minimum of one base beyond his position on base when the obstruction occurred.

**SITUATION I:** The photo above shows a pick off play occurring at (a) 1st or (b) 2nd base. The fielder has his knee on the ground, without possession of the ball. The runner has no access to the bag.

**Ruling and Mechanics:**
1. Point to the play and say “that’s obstruction”. (No signal is given)
2. Let continuing action occur.
3. At the end of playing action, signal “Dead Ball”.
4. In (a) award the runner 2nd base. In (b) award the runner 3rd base.

After a fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and “has missed” he can no longer be in the “action of fielding the ball.”

Example: If an infielder misses a ground ball and he moves to retrieve it and in doing so, delays the progress of the runner, “he very likely has obstructed the runner.”

**RUNNER MISSES HOME PLATE**

Should a runner in scoring fail to touch home plate and continue on his way to the bench, he may be put out by the fielder touching home plate and the umpire calling the runner out (end of playing action) upon proper appeal. However, this rule applies only where a runner is on his way to the bench and the catcher, would be required to chase him.

Note #1 It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner “misses” the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged.
Note #2  On a play at the plate, should the runner miss home plate and the fielder miss the tag on the runner, the umpire shall make “No Signal” on the play. As outlined in the previous paragraph, the runner must then be tagged if he attempts to return to the plate; if he continues on his way to the bench, the defense may make an appeal, or the umpire will call him out at the end of playing action. See NFHS Umpires Manual Page 24 #43.

RUNNER MISSES FIRST BASE MECHANICS

Should the batter-runner fail to touch first base after beating the throw, the proper procedure for the umpire is to call the runner “Safe.” See NFHS Umpires Manual Page 35 #20.

2020 Important Dates and events:

March 2 - First Day of Baseball Practice
March 7 - First Baseball Scrimmage Date
March 20 - First Play Date
June 1 - Baseball First Round
June 4 - Baseball Quarter Finals
June 8 - Baseball Semifinals
June 11 & 12 - Baseball Championships at Medlar Field at Lubrano Park

August 7 & 8 PIAA Officials Convention