

## 2012 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations

**Publisher's Note:** The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.  
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**NSAA Editor's Note:** For some coaches and umpires who viewed the NSAA on-line rules meeting the week of Feb. 13-18, some of the narration on the slides incorrectly stated that the batter would be ejected if caught using an illegal bat. That is not the case. According to NFHS Rule 7-4-1a, the batter is to be called out or the defense can take the result of the play if a batter is discovered to have used an illegal bat. The situations below will help further clarify the matter for umpires and coaches.

**SITUATION 1:** B1 walks to the batter's box with a bat that has (a) a BBCOR certification mark on the barrel; (b) both a BBCOR and a BESR certification mark on the barrel; or (c) only a BESR certification mark on the barrel. **RULING:** In both (a) and (b), the bat is legal and may be used. In (c), a bat without a BBCOR certification is an illegal bat. Had B1 entered the batter's box with this bat, he would be declared out. (1-3-2d, 7-4-1a)

**SITUATION 2:** B1 enters the batter's box with a bat that has a BBCOR certification mark that measures 1¼ inch by ½ inch. The catcher sees that the certification mark does not meet the rule book requirement and wants the bat declared illegal. **RULING:** The bat is legal. While the certification mark is not 1 inch-by-1 inch, the key point is that the bat is a legal BBCOR bat and does have a certification mark. B1 may use the bat. (1-3-2d)

**SITUATION 3:** It is a cold, blustery day and the plate umpire looks into the home team's dugout and observes two players warming their bats over a space heater. **RULING:** The plate umpire shall inform the head coach that the two bats in question are now illegal because of the use of the space heater and cannot be used for the remainder of the game. (1-3-5)

**SITUATION 4:** The home team's third baseman takes his position on the infield. The visiting team's head coach notices his glove and protests to the plate umpire that the glove is illegal. The home team's head coach comes out and voices his belief that the glove is legal for play. **RULING:** The umpire-in-chief shall rule on the legality of the glove. Any questions regarding the legal use of a player's equipment shall be resolved by the umpire-in-chief. (1-5-10)

**SITUATION 5:** As the catcher is receiving warm-up throws from the pitcher, the plate umpire notices that he has some blood on his jersey. The catcher's coach argues that the amount of blood is insignificant. **RULING:** If there is any amount of blood on the uniform, it shall be changed or cleaned before that individual participates again. (3-1-6)

**SITUATION 6:** The second baseman has a cut on his arm and some blood has soaked into his jersey. The team does not have a means to clean the uniform and the player does not have a backup jersey with him. **RULING:** The player must change the jersey before he can participate again. He may borrow another player's jersey (and inform the opposing team of the number change), use a jersey from a player on the junior varsity or freshman team, or even obtain a T-shirt and place his jersey number on it. While the player must change to another jersey, he does not have to wear the identical style uniform he had to start the game. (3-1-6)

**SITUATION 7:** S1 has been in the game for several innings, playing for the shortstop. On a play at second, he scrapes his knee and there is some blood on his uniform pants. The team does not have another pair of pants that he may use and has no means to clean them. **RULING:** S1 must change or clean the pants before he may participate again in the game. Since he must leave the game, and the re-entry rule applies, S1 cannot return. (3-1-6, 3-1-3)

**SITUATION 8:** U1 and U2 have just cleared the confines of the field with the game having ended, and look back to the field to see several players and coaches engaged in a shoving confrontation. **RULING:** While their jurisdiction over the contest ended when they left the playing field at the conclusion of the game, both officials retain authority to provide a report on what they observed to their state association. (10-1-2)

**SITUATION 9:** It was a close, tumultuous, emotion-filled rivalry game between two competitively close teams. The game ended on a controversial play at the plate with the home team losing by one run. As the umpires leave the field and are walking to their cars in the parking lot, an assistant coach and some parents follow them wanting to discuss the play and offer their opinions on the umpires' ability to officiate. **RULING:** Game personnel shall not confront or direct unsportsmanlike conduct to game officials after the game has concluded. Since the umpires have left the playing field, they cannot eject the coach, but do retain the authority to provide a report to their state association. The state association shall determine appropriate action. (3-1-7 Penalty, 10-1-2)

**SITUATION 10:** With a hard slide at second base, R1 and F6 exchange words that leads to a fight. Several players leave the dugout and advance to near the foul line, where they stop. They do not engage in any confrontational activity. **RULING:** The players are ejected. Players who leave their positions on the field or the bench during a fight or physical confrontation are to be ejected. (3-3-1q)

**SITUATION #11:** At the pre-game conference, the head coaches of both teams verify that their respective teams are properly equipped and are using legal equipment. In the third inning, B1 hits a single and the plate umpire notices before the next pitch that the bat has only a BESR certification mark. **RULING:** The bat is illegal and B1 is declared out. The head coach is restricted to the dugout for the balance of the game. (4-1-3b Penalty, 7-4-1a)

**SITUATION #12:** At the pre-game conference the visiting head coach verified that his team was properly equipped and was using legal equipment. In the third inning, his lead-off batter entered the batter's box with a bat that was determined to have been altered. The batter was declared out and the head coach was restricted to the bench. In the sixth inning, B2 enters the batter's box with a bat that he had artificially kept warm. The opposing team brings that action to the attention of the plate umpire. **RULING:** Any bat that has been altered from the manufacturer's original design or has used artificial or intentional means to control its temperature is an illegal bat. The lead-off batter and B2 are both declared out, and the head coach is ejected from the game because this is his second offense in the game. (1-3-5, 4-1-3b Penalty, 7-4-1a)

**SITUATION 13:** At the pregame conference, the home team's head coach verifies that his team is properly equipped and is using legal equipment. In the second inning, with two outs, B4 takes his position in the batter's box with a batting helmet that is cracked on the side of the helmet. **RULING:** The helmet shall be immediately removed from play and B4 shall obtain a legal helmet. (4-1-3b Penalty)

**SITUATION 14:** How many pitches and with how much time do pitchers have to complete their warm-up throws? **RULING:** The starting pitcher and any relief pitcher may warm up by using not more than eight throws completed in one minute timed from the first throw. A pitcher who was the pitcher in the prior inning may warm up by using not more than five throws completed in one minute timed from the third out of the previous half-inning. (6-2-2c Exception)

**SITUATION 15:** Runch, who was the starting pitcher, takes the mound in the fifth inning and takes his five warm-up throws. After getting B1 out, he changes positions with the first baseman, Lewis, who takes his eight warm-up throws. Lewis gets B2 to pop out and Runch now returns to pitch. How many warm-up throws is Runch allowed? **RULING:** When Runch became a first baseman, he obviously no longer was the pitcher in the game. When he legally returns to pitch later in the same inning, he is considered to be a relief pitcher. Accordingly, Runch is allowed up to eight warm-up throws to be completed in one minute timed from the first throw. (6-2-2c)

**SITUATION 16:** As the umpires enter the field prior to the game, the home team's head coach tells them that his bats are ready for inspection. **RULING:** The umpire-in-chief's duties are to inspect the condition of the field, receive the batting order of both teams, announce any special ground rules, designate the official scorer and see that each player properly takes care of his glove and loose equipment. It is no longer mandatory for the umpires to inspect the bats and helmets of each team. Prior to the start of the game, both head coaches are to verify to the umpire-in-chief that their players are properly equipped and are using only legal equipment. (4-1-3b, 10-2-3a)

**SITUATION 17:** With one out and R1 on third base, the head coach puts on a squeeze play. B3, a left-handed batter, steps with his left foot on home plate and pops up to the pitcher, who catches the ball and throws to third base for an apparent inning-ending double play. **RULING:** B3 has illegally batted the ball and the ball becomes immediately dead. R1 is returned to third base and B3 is declared out for the second out of the inning. (5-1-1b, 7-3-2 Penalty)

**SITUATION 18:** In the bottom of the eighth inning, the score is tied, with the bases loaded and two outs. B6 draws a walk and runs and touches first base. B1 trots in from third and touches home plate. B2, however, begins celebrating and never touches third base. **RULING:** All runners must legally touch the next base in advancing. If the defense legally appeals while at least one umpire is still on the field of play, B2 is declared out for the third out. Since this out would be a "force" out, no runs would score and the game would continue into the ninth inning. (8-2-1, 8-2-6j, 9-1-1a and d)

**SITUATION 19:** Having already had an offensive conference, the head coach asks for time to talk with the new batter. U1 informs the coach that he is allowed only one charged conference per inning while on offense. The head coach ignores U1 and attempts to talk with the batter. **RULING:** U1 should do his best to professionally prevent the offensive conference from taking place. If the conference is taking place before the plate umpire realizes the infraction, he should stop the conference and warn the coach. If the head coach ignores the umpire and holds his conference to completion, he shall be restricted to the bench. Depending upon his subsequent behavior, the coach may be subject to ejection. Upon being notified by the plate umpire that the conference is not allowed, the head coach should stop his conference and he and his player return to their positions. (3-4-2, 10-1-1)

**SITUATION 20:** With runners on first and second and no outs, B3 has a 1-2 count. The next pitch is swung at and missed. The ball skips underneath the catcher's glove, bounces up and lodges in the plate umpire's clothing. While everyone is looking for the ball, R1 scores, R2 advances to third base and B3 obtains first base. **RULING:** Once the ball is found in the umpire's clothing, the ball is declared to be dead immediately. R1 will be awarded third base and R2 will be awarded second base. B3 is declared out. (5-1-1g4, 7-4-1b, 8-3-3d)

## **NFHS - Decertified bat --- effective immediately.**

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has advised us that the BBCOR decertification process has been implemented for the Marucci CAT5 33-inch model. The 33-inch model is the only version of the CAT5 that is being decertified. All other sizes of the Marucci CAT5 are currently legal.

Effective immediately and until further notice, this bat (Marucci CAT5 33-inch length) should be considered a non-compliant bat and subject to NFHS Baseball Rules 4-1-3b and 7-4-1a. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jim Angele at the NSAA Office.