

**MINUTES**  
**BASEBALL RULES COMMITTEE**

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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Indianapolis Marriott Downtown

Indianapolis, Indiana

JUNE 21 - 23, 2002

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Committee members in attendance:

Ray Faustich	Chair	2002
Dennis J. Meszaros	Section 1	2005
Gustave Rehnstrom	Section 2	2003
Greg Brewer	Section 3	2003
Paul Feldhausen	Section 4	2002
Robert Laufenburger	Section 5	2005
Ric Maxey	Section 6	2004
Leon Long	Section 8	2002
Manual Alvarado	NFCA	2002
Doug Hughes	NFOA	2005
B. Elliot Hopkins	NFHS	Staff Liaison

Guests in attendance:

Kyle McNeely	Chairman, Umpires' Manual Committee - June 21-23, 2002
Yagi Masanori	<i>Asahi Shinbun</i> (Newspaper) – June 21-23, 2002
Yuko Iwamura	<i>Asahi Shinbun</i> (Newspaper) – June 21-23, 2002
Dr. James Sherwood	Assoc. Professor, Baseball Research Center, UML - June 23, 2002

Absent:

John Reigar	Section 7	2004
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**1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, GENERAL INFORMATION**

Chairman Ray Faustich welcomed all members at 4:00 PM, EST.

B. Elliot Hopkins, NFHS Staff Liaison, reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

Committee members were apprised of presentations and visitors who would be in attendance. They were also reminded that they are voting on behalf of the states and constituents that they represent.

Mr. Hopkins returned the meeting to the committee chair, Ray Faustich. Chairman Faustich asked everyone to go around the table and introduce themselves, and then he introduced new committee members: Dennis J. Meszaros (Section 1), Robert Laufenburger (Section 5), and Doug Hughes (NFOA). They were presented with a NFHS pen.

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After the committee returned from dinner, Ray Faustich turned the meeting over to Elliot Hopkins. Mr. Hopkins reviewed the following documents with the committee:

- a) Expense Report
- b) Conflict of Interest
- c) Indemnification statement.
- d) Committee Biography
- e) NFHS Baseball Rules Committee Survey
- f) Procedures for National Federation Rules Committee
- g) Principles of rules writing
- h) Purpose of National Rules Code
- i) Rules Review Committee
- j) NFHS Rules Writing Video reviewed
- k) Voting Procedures – Ray Faustich reviewed
- l) 2003 Baseball Interpreters Meeting-January 22, 2003
- m) 2003 Baseball Rules Committee Meeting. The committee agreed that they prefer to meet Friday through Sunday rather than Saturday through Monday. Next year's meeting will be Friday, June 20 through Sunday, June 22, 2003.

## **2. QUESTIONNAIRE TOTALS**

Elliot Hopkins reviewed the results of the 2002 Baseball questionnaire, the three parts of the questionnaire and how the survey is comprised. The committee requested that a letter be sent to the Board of Directors to request a better accounting of how many surveys are sent out and to whom, as well as an accounting of how they are distributed by the states and to whom they are being returned to (state association or NFHS offices). The committee recognizes the importance of the questionnaire and the desire to have accurate and well-represented results. Dennis Meszaros (Section 1) introduced the motion, and Gus Rehnstrom (Section 2) seconded it. The motion was unanimously passed.

## **3. SECTIONAL REPORTING**

Gus Rehnstrom expressed a concern regarding that there was not enough time between when the state association received the proposed rule changes and when they needed to issue an opinion. Mr. Rehnstrom felt that the states did not have enough time to respond. Elliot Hopkins explained that the membership had longer than normal window of opportunity to express their opinion on the proposed rule changes. They will address the section's wishes during the rule proposal discussions rather than going through each report individually. Each committee member will turn in a report to Elliot Hopkins at the end of this meeting.

## **4. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Elliot Hopkins requested that the committee review the letter from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to Mr. J.W. MacKay Jr. Mr. MacKay had requested that the Commission issue a rule requiring that all non-wood baseball bats perform like wood bats. Per this letter: "Based on its review of these materials, and for the reasons discussed below, the Commission voted to deny the petition."

Mr. Hopkins also asked the committee to review the memorandum to NFHS Legal Counsel, John Black, from Dan Wexler, NFHS lobbyist, reporting on what the federal government's recommendations will be regarding performance-enhancing drugs being used in Major League Baseball.

**5. RULES CHANGES**

<b>Rules Reference</b>		<b>Passed</b>	<b>Failed</b>	<b>Discussed No Action</b>
1-2-5 (new)	New Rule: It is recommended that when the dugout area is extended, for any reason, it shall be extended toward the outfield on a line parallel to the foul line. The extension of the dugout area shall be equally applied for both teams..	<b>XX</b>		
2-4-3	Add to the existing rule: An intentional base on balls is a legal pitch and may be given by the defensive team by having its catcher or coach request the umpire to award the batter first base. This may be done before pitching to the batter or on any ball and strike count. The ball shall be declared dead before making the award.		<b>XX</b>	
2-8 (new)	Add a definition of "bench personnel": Bench personnel are all individuals who are part of or affiliated with a team, including, but not limited to: substitutes, coaches, manager(s) and statistician(s). (Need to renumber remaining Sections of Rule 2.)			<b>XX</b>
2-9-1	Have a legal catch be the same as pro/college. Eliminate the straddling of a line as a way to make a catch.			<b>XX</b>
2-24-2	Add to the existing rule: A putout is the act of a member of the defensive team in retiring a batter or runner. For putouts credited to the catcher and to other fielders, see 9-5-2. An "out" is one of the three required retirements of players of the team at bat.			<b>XX</b>
2-28-4	Change rule: An Intentional base on balls is considered a pitch. Pitch ends when; a. the pitched ball is secured by the catcher b. comes to rest c. goes out of play d. becomes dead e. or the batter hits the ball (other than a foul tip) f. an intentional base on balls		<b>XX</b>	
2-29-6 (new)	A defensive appeal of a runner failing to touch a base or tag up is not a play.	<b>XX</b>		
3-1-3	Change rule to: Any player may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once, including a player who was the designated hitter, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the lineup. The pitcher is governed by the provisions of Article 2 above. A violation results in illegal substitution. A substitute who is withdrawn may re-enter.			<b>XX</b>
3-2-4 (new)	New Rule: After a home run, no offensive team member, other than the base coaches, shall touch the batter runner before home plate has been touched. Team personnel, except for preceding base runners, shall not enter the dirt circle at home plate to congratulate the batter runner. Penalty-after a warning for first offense, ejection from contest of one offending players.			<b>XX</b>

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3-2-4 (new)	Change rule to: Coaches are required to make all bats and helmets available in a central location for inspection by the umpire crew at least 10 minutes prior to the game.			<b>XX</b>
3-3-1	Add to the penalty section: For offensive players entering the field of play when the ball is alive upon recognition by either umpire, time will be called immediately, unless the defense is in the act of making a play on any runner. In the later event, once the play attempt is completed, time will be called preventing any further advance by runners. All runners will be "frozen" to the last base touched. (A home run is a dead ball and therefore does not apply.)			<b>XX</b>
3-3-1i	Add to the rule: have any object in his possession in the coach's box other than a rule book, scorebook, a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or comparable electronic score recording device \ which shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only;	<b>XX</b>		
3-3-1e	Add to end of the rule: use television monitoring, electronic video replay or photographic equipment or any device that captures the speed of pitched balls (not limited to radar guns);			<b>XX</b>
3-3-1 Penalty	Add to the penalty section: At the end of playing action, the umpire shall issue a warning to the coach of the team involved and the next offender on that team shall be either restricted to the bench or ejected, except for (e), where the coach shall be ejected. In (a), it is also obstruction (8-3-2)			<b>XX</b>
3-3-1j	Change to read: be outside the designated dugout (bench) or bullpen area if not a batter, runner, on-deck batter, one of the nine players on defense, in the coach's box or an adult coach.		<b>XX</b>	
3-3-1 1 <sup>st</sup> Penalty	Add to the penalty section: The umpire shall restrict the offender to the bench or eject the offender from the game. Failure to comply shall result in game being forfeited. In (n), the ejected player is declared out, unless he has already scored. In (q), a coach who attempts to prevent a fight or restore order is not in violation of the rule.			<b>XX</b>
3-3-1r (new)	New rule: failure of a coach to report substitute players to the umpire-in-chief.			<b>XX</b>
3-3-2	Revise last line: He may return when requested by an umpire to attend to an ill or injured player.	<b>XX</b>		
3-3 2 <sup>nd</sup> Penalty	Add to the end of the sentence:...or attempts to prevent a physical confrontation or restore order.			<b>XX</b>
4-2-2	Change rule to read: By state association adoption the game shall end when at the end of 4 1/2 innings, the visiting team is behind by between (10-15) runs or after the completion of the 5th inning, either team is behind by between (10-15) runs and both teams have had an equal number of at bats. (If a state chooses to use this rule as a game ending procedure, they must do so prior to the beginning of that season. The run differential [10-11-12-13-14-15] must be clearly defined and will be in effect through the conclusion of that season.)		<b>XX</b>	
5-1-1h	Change h to read: the umpire handles a live ball or calls "Time" for inspecting the ball or for any reason, including items in Section 2, gives the "Do Not Pitch Signal" or verbally announces "Foul Ball; or		<b>XX</b>	

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5-2-2b Exception	Change rule to: A runner who is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball became dead, or advances and touches a succeeding base after the ball became dead, may return and shall be called out upon proper and successful appeal.		<b>XX</b>	
5-2-2b Exception	Change rule to: A runner who is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball became dead, or advances and touches a succeeding base after the ball became dead, may not return and shall be called out upon proper and successful appeal.	<b>XX</b>		
6-1-1	Change rule to: ....The pitching regulations begin when he intentionally contacts the pitcher's plate. He shall not make a quick return pitch in an attempt to catch a batter off balance. (Delete: "Turning the shoulders to check runners while in contact with the pitcher's plate is a balk.")		<b>XX</b>	
6-1-1	From the set have the restrictions begin when the pitcher comes set, not when he unintentionally touches the rubber.			<b>XX</b>
6-1-2	Add to rule in body of text: The direction of the pitcher's step with the non-pivot foot shall be determined by a line extending through the front edge of the pitcher's plate.			<b>XX</b>
6-1-3	Change rule to: ....He shall come to a complete and discernible stop (a change of direction is not considered an acceptable stop) with the ball in both hands in front of the body. Natural preliminary motions such as only one stretch.... (Delete: ..."and his glove at or below his chin.")			<b>XX</b>
8-2-5	Add to the rule: If a runner who misses any base (including home plate) or leaves a base too early, desires to return to touch the base, he must do so immediately. If the ball becomes dead and the runner is on or beyond a succeeding base, he cannot return to the missed base and, therefore, is subject to being declared out upon proper and successful appeal.	<b>XX</b>		
8-2-5 Penalty	Change the rule: For failure....A live-ball appeal may be made by (Delete: "by a coach or") any defensive player with the ball in his possession by tagging the runner or touching the base that was missed or left too early. A dead-ball appeal may be made by a coach or any defensive player with or without the ball by verbally stating that the runner missed the base or left the base too soon....		<b>XX</b>	
8-2 Penalty (Art. 1-5)	For failure to touch a base (advancing and returning), or failure to tag up as soon as the ball is touched on a caught fly ball, the runner may be called out if an appeal is made by the defensive team. The defense may appeal during a live ball immediately following the play and before a pitch (legal or illegal) granting an intentional base on balls, or before the next play or attempted play. If the offensive team initiates a play before the next pitch, the defensive team does not lose the right to appeal. A live ball appeal may be made by a defensive player with the ball in his possession by tagging the runner or touching the base that was missed or left too early. A dead ball appeal may be made by a coach or any defensive player with or without the ball by verbally stating that the runner missed the base or left the base too early. Appeals must be made by (1) before the next legal or illegal pitch, (2) at the end of an inning, before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory, (3) before an intentional base on balls is granted, or (4) on the last play of the game, an appeal can be made until the umpires leave the field of play. NOTE: When a play by its very nature is imminent and is obvious to the offense, defense and umpire(s), no verbal appeal is necessary, e.g. runner attempting to retouch a base that was missed, or a failure to tag up and a throw has	<b>XX</b>		

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	been made to that base or plate while a play is in progress			
8-2-1-5	Put appeal play in the same way it reads in college/pro.			<b>XX</b>
8-2-5 Penalty	Add to the rule: ....Appeals must be made (1) before the next legal or illegal pitch, (2) at the end of an inning, before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory, (3) on the last play of the game before the umpires leave the field of play, or (4) prior to an intentional base on balls.		<b>XX</b>	
8-2 Penalty Appeal Procedures and Guidelines	Add a new number 4: The defense must draw a clear and unmistakable intent to appeal a baserunning infraction. An unintentional and/or accidental tagging of a base or a runner will not result in an out.			<b>XX</b>
8-3-2	Eliminate that the obstructed runner must be advanced at least one base.			<b>XX</b>
Baserunning Awards Table	Delete: Award only if infraction is not ignored.			<b>XX</b>
8-3-3 Note	Add to the 3rd note: A runner shall not be declared out if the fielder deliberately throws or carries the ball into dead ball territory to prevent that runner who has touched or advanced beyond a succeeding base from returning to a missed base or a base left too soon. Award the runner two bases. This allows runner(s) to correct base running errors. Defense may still appeal.			<b>XX</b>
8-3-5	Change rule to: When a runner, who is either advancing or returning to touch a base when a batted ball has been caught is unable to retouch his base because a thrown ball has become dead (5-1-1g), his award shall be from the base occupied at the time of the pitch.			<b>XX</b>
8-4-2i	Add to the end of the rule: does not retouch his base before a fielder tags him out or holds the ball while touching such base after any situation (8-2-1,2-3 and 4). Umpire may also call him out at end of playing action upon proper and successful appeal. Also, it is not necessary for runner to retouch his base after a foul tip.(2-16-2); or	<b>XX</b>		
8-4-2j	Add Exception 2: A Runner who fails to touch a base to which he is forced and is beyond such a base when either he or the base is touched is not out except upon proper appeal (8-2-5).			<b>XX</b>
8-4-2q	Add to the end of the rule: ...is on or beyond a succeeding base when the ball is declared dead (5-2-2b exception) after having left a base too soon on a caught fly ball, or he failed to touch a preceding base, or he continues and touches a succeeding base after the ball has become dead, and the defense initiates a proper and successful appeal.	<b>XX</b>		

**MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES**

8-4-2f	f. as a runner or retired runner, fails to execute a legal slide, or <i>does not</i> attempt to avoid the fielder or the play on a force play at any base; or	<b>XX</b>		
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**MINOR EDITORIAL CHANGES**

2-19-1	Add to the rule:... (rule does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to <i>attempt to</i> make the catch)...
3-1-2 Note	Delete “c” from rule reference 6-2-2c.

## 6. PRODUCT ANALYSIS

The Game Face Sports Safety Mask was reviewed by the committee. Paul Feldhausen (Section 4) introduced a motion to approve the Game Face Sports Safety Mask for use in high school baseball. Ric Maxey (Section 6) seconded the motion. The majority voted to allow the use of the Game Face Sports Safety Mask for use in high school baseball. Mr. Hopkins will send a letter notifying the manufacturer of the actions of the committee.

## 7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Elliot Hopkins gave a history of the bat rule specifically in regards to the new BESR rule that is effective in 2003. He asked the committee to discuss what will happen if the BESR sticker falls off the bat mid-season or if the sticker is only partially on the bat. The committee recommended that if the sticker is not legible then the bat is illegal. This will be a Point of Emphasis.

Mr. Hopkins began a discussion regarding the NOCSAE standards and the mask and helmet combination. It was recommended that this should be a Point of Emphasis.

Greg Brewer (Section 3) asked the committee members if their sections were experiencing the problem of team members lining up on the foul side of the baseline when the opposing team is taking infield practice. Several committee members responded that they had witnessed this in their states also. The committee decided to include this in the Points of Emphasis in regards to Sportsmanship.

## 8. POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- ❖ **BAT CERTIFICATION:** As of January 1, 2003, all non-wood bats shall meet the Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark. The BESR marking may be in the form of a permanent sticker. That permanent sticker must be professionally manufactured. If at any time, all the letters of this marking are not legible, this bat will be illegal. Bats must meet all other rule specifications.
- ❖ **CATCHER'S MASK/HELMET:** For improved catcher protection, the helmet/mask combination must meet NOCSAE testing and certification. Prior to the start of the game, umpires shall check all catcher's helmet/mask equipment to ensure that they are NOCSAE certified. Both coaches will verify that all equipment, including catcher's equipment, is legal.
- ❖ **APPEAL RULE:** In 2002 the ability for the defense to appeal for failure to tag up on a caught fly ball or a runner missing a base returned to high school baseball. Coaches, players and umpires need to understand how, when, and who can make a proper appeal. The rule is similar to other rule codes, but there are distinct differences that address the high school game. The rules committee has removed the coach live ball appeal. A granted intentional base on balls now voids the defense's right to appeal. Additionally, the defense will lose its right to appeal following a play or an attempted play. If the offense initiates a play before the next pitch, the defensive team would not lose its right to appeal. An appeal does not constitute a play.
- ❖ **GOOD SPORTING BEHAVIOR:** Umpires and coaches need to work together. Each contest is another opportunity for coaches and umpires to teach not only baseball, but also model good sporting behavior as well. The committee feels that the practice of attempting to intimidate the other team before, during or after the game is not acceptable. The positive values that are learned will serve the players long after their baseball experience has concluded. Game situations typically provides a coach the opportunity to identify a teachable moment to reinforce good sporting behavior.

## **9. APPRECIATION**

Elliot expressed appreciation to Raymond Faustich, Paul Feldhausen, Leon Long and Manual Alvarado for outstanding service during their tenure on the committee. They each received a baseball signed by their fellow committee members, a NFHS men's wristwatch and a certificate of their participation.

## **10. EXPERIMENTS**

There were none requested.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 Noon EST, June 23, 2002.

### **Attachment:**

NFHS Baseball Rule Revisions