

NFHS Softball Rule 1-3-5 Change

1-3-5 Proposal: Effective January 1, 2004, the bat shall meet the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) 2004 Bat Performance Standard.

Rationale: Current lab and field testing indicates that changing the maximum batted ball speed (BBS) limit to 98 mph more accurately reflects the speeds found on the field of play. The change was necessary because some of the highest performing bats on the market adversely affect the character and integrity of the game and render a player's performance more a product of equipment than individual skill. This change may also reduce the risk of injury to participants. The ASA and the NCAA adopted this new standard within the last three weeks, with an effective date of January 1, 2004.

Implementation: The net effect of adopting this new standard will cause minimal hardship to NFHS member associations and schools for two reasons:

- 1) In essence, the NFHS will go back to using the ASA approved list to determine legal bats, and not require the bat to be stamped with the approved certification mark. Requiring the mark would be nearly impossible given the timing of this change.
- 2) In all likelihood, the vast majority of bats that have been used for the past several seasons for high school play will meet the new standard and be placed on the approved list. Only the highest performing bats, usually ranging in cost between \$300 and \$400, will be in jeopardy of not meeting the new standard.

Timing: Even though the June NFHS Softball Rules Committee Meeting has passed, the timing is such that we still have an opportunity to make any appropriate/necessary change in time for the printing of the 2004 NFHS Softball Rules Book.

Further Information: Detailed information about the ASA Bat Certification Program can be found at http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified_equipment.asp.

NFHS Softball Rules Committee Action (via conference call, 7/15/03) – Approved (7-0)