

NATIONAL FEDERATION PRESS RELEASE  
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SOFTBALL RULE CHANGES

Following is a press release on an additional rules change that has been approved in high school softball, effective January 1, 2004.

NFHS Softball Rules Committee Changes Coefficient of Restitution and Compression Specifications to Minimize Risk to Players

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Mary Struckhoff

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 8, 2002) - INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 2, 2002) - The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Softball Rules Committee has approved an additional rules change dealing with the coefficient of restitution (COR) and compression specifications for high school softballs.

The changes made to Rule 1-3-4 will become effective on January 1, 2004. The changes outline that the ball COR is not to exceed .44 in slow pitch softball, for both 11-inch and 12-inch balls. Secondly, the compression, which is the "hardness" of the ball, shall be reduced from a maximum of 525 pounds to no more than 375 pounds, in both fast pitch and slow pitch softball. The rule also calls for the marking of compression on each ball; currently only the marking of the COR is required.

According to Mary Struckhoff, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the NFHS Softball Rules Committee, the combination of stronger players, improved bat technology and the hardness of the ball may be increasing risk factors in the game. Also, recent testing and research suggest that changing ball COR and compression may diminish the magnitude of the bat-ball collision.

The new specifications put the NFHS rules more closely in line with Amateur Softball Association (ASA) and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) specifications. Although the specifications in these governing bodies' rules do not require the NFHS to make changes, Struckhoff believes it was the right time to address the issue.

"The timing is appropriate, because it provides the schools, manufacturers and retailers enough time to gear up for the new specifications," Struckhoff said.

Bruce L. Howard, National High School Federation,  
Director of Publications and Communications, PO Box 690, Indianapolis, IN 46206; 317-822-5724  
(phone), 317-822-5700 (fax), [bhoward@nfhs.org](mailto:bhoward@nfhs.org) (e-mail).