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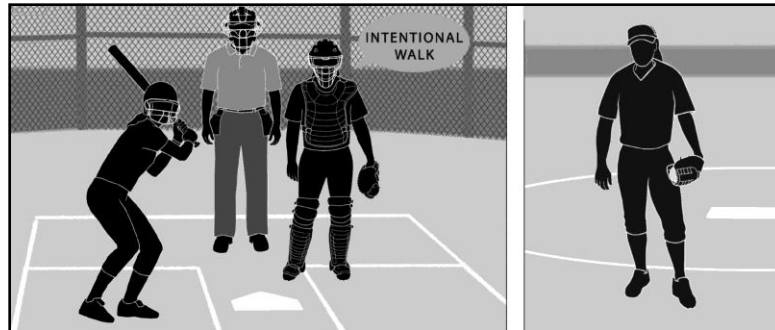
TO: CIF Commissioners, Softball Coaches, Officials and Administrators

FROM: Vince Rosse, CIF State Rules' Interpreter

## **RULES CHANGES FOR 2018**

### **1. Rules 2-65-2; 8-1-1c; 8-4-3a: Intentional Walk**

- **Intentional Walk (Base on balls).** A request made to the umpire by the defensive **coach, pitcher** or **catcher**, for the purpose of awarding the batter first base. The request may be made prior to or during the at bat.
  - This rule change to permit intentional walks was enacted to align fast pitch and slow pitch rules.
  - To keep up with current trends of the sport
  - To maximize the flow of the game.



### **2. Rule 3-2-7c Exception (NEW): Equipment**

- Any wristband with a **playbook/playcard** attached shall be considered equipment and is permitted as long as it is a single, solid color and not optic yellow. It does not have to match the color of the upper undergarment. It shall only be worn on the non-pitching arm.
  - It may have a cover flap.



### **3. Rule 3-2-15: Equipment**

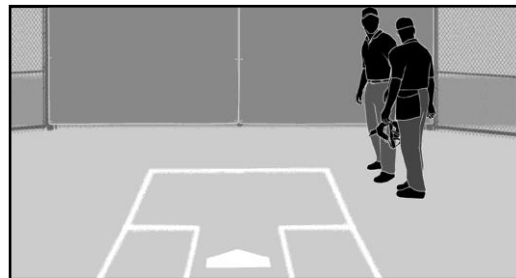
- ~~□ **ART. 15 . . . All equipment shall be inspected by the umpire, and is to be placed outside the dugout/bench prior to the start of the game.**~~
  - This article has been removed from the rules book.
  - This change removes the responsibility of the umpires to inspect equipment prior to the start of the game.
  - Rule 4-1-2d requires head coaches to verify that their players are legally and properly equipped during the pre-game meeting.

- The plate umpire will require a verbal yes to their questions regarding equipment and uniforms.



#### 4. Rule 10-2-3a: Plate Umpire

- ART. 3 . . . The duties include those listed in 10-2-1 and also the following:
  - Conduct the pregame conference as in 4-1-2.
  - Inspect the condition of the field.
  - Define the dugout/bench areas.
  - If necessary, designate the official scorekeeper (9-2-2).



#### 5. Rule 3-7-1 Note (NEW): Charged Conference

- If the incoming pitcher has already pitched in the game, she will receive five warm-up pitches. **When a pitcher is removed by rule and the incoming pitcher has not pitched in the game, the umpire is authorized to permit additional warm-up pitches.**
  - There were no guidelines and the default was 5 pitches.
  - If a coach has been charged more conferences than permitted by rule, the pitcher shall be removed from the pitcher's position for the duration of the game.
  - If she has already pitched in the game, she will receive 5 warm-up pitches, unless she has pitched that half inning in which case, she will not receive any warm up pitches.

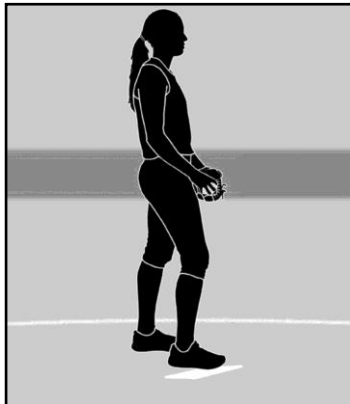


#### 6. Rule 6-2-5 Note 2: Infractions by Pitcher

- NOTE 2: Umpire is authorized to allow more pitches when weather is inclement or if pitcher was removed by rule or due to an injury.

## 7. Rule 6-1-2b: Pitching Regulations

- Any step backward shall begin prior to the start of the pitch. The step backward may end before or after the hands come together. Once the pitch has started, the pitcher shall not take more than one step, which must be forward, toward the batter and simultaneous with the delivery.
  - The pitcher may now step back with the non-pivot foot at any time prior to the start of the pitch.
  - There appears to be no advantage to the hands being apart or together prior to stepping back.
  - This slight change allows for a more fluid sequence of motion and will aid the development of pitchers.



## 8. Rule 9-6-2: Pitcher's Record

- The number of bases on balls, batters being hit by a pitch (F.P.), strikeouts, and base hits allowed by each pitcher shall be recorded in the summary. If a batter is hit by what would have been the fourth ball (F.P.), it is recorded as a hit batter. **An intentional walk is recorded as a base on balls.**

### **MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES FOR 2018**

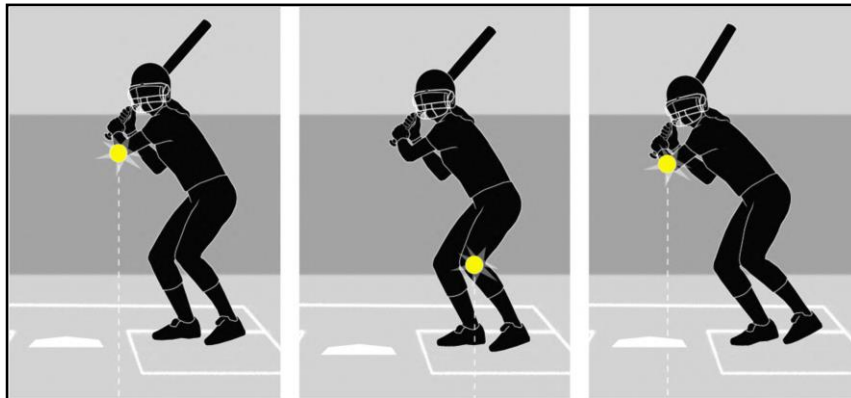
#### 1. Rule 3-6-12 and 10-1-6: Bench and Field Conduct

- ~~Tobacco products, in any form, are prohibited.~~ No participant, coach or administrator shall use alcohol or any form of tobacco product (e-cigarette or similar items) beginning with arrival at the competition site until departure following the completion of the contest.
- ~~Umpires shall not use tobacco products in any form in the vicinity of the playing field.~~ No game official shall use alcohol or any form of tobacco product (e-cigarette or similar items) beginning with arrival at the competition site until departure following the completion of the contest.



## 2. Rule 8-1-2c: Hit by Pitch

- (F.P.) A batter is awarded first base when a pitched ball (not entirely in the batter's box) not swung at nor called a strike touches any part of the batter's person or clothing. It does not matter if the ball strikes the ground before hitting the batter. The batter's hands are not to be considered part of the bat. **If no attempt is made to avoid being hit, the batter will not be awarded first base unless it is ball four.**
  - The batter must make an attempt to avoid being hit by a pitched ball in the area between the plate and the batter's box.

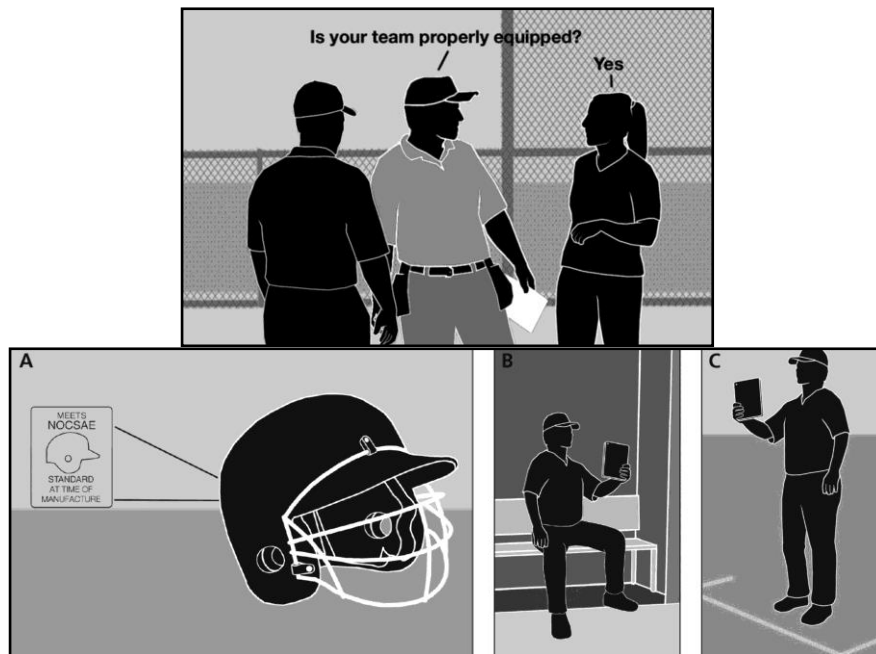


## POINTS OF EMPHASIS FOR 2018

### 1. Coaches Responsibility

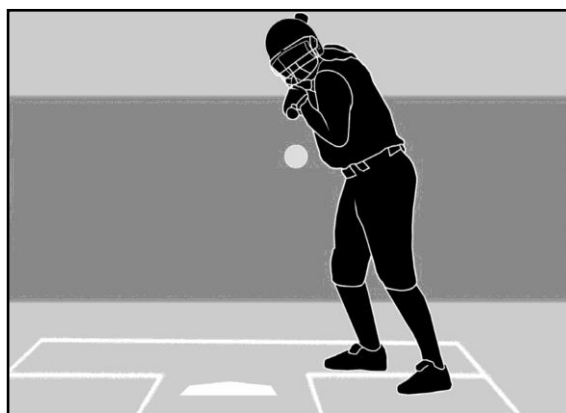
- Coaches are responsible for verifying at the pregame conference that all their players are legally and properly equipped. Penalties for illegal equipment range from correcting the problem if possible or having the equipment removed. Possible restriction to the dugout or ejection for the player and coach depending on the severity of the infraction could occur.

- Rule 3-2-15 has been removed.
- Coaches are reminded of their responsibilities per Rule 4-1-2d, which requires them to verify that all their players are legally and properly equipped, at the pregame conference.
- Coaches should review the following rules: 1-4 Gloves/Mitts, 1-5 Bats, 1-6 Batting Helmets, 1-7 Catchers Equipment and 3-2 Uniforms and Player Equipment.



## 2. Hit by Pitch

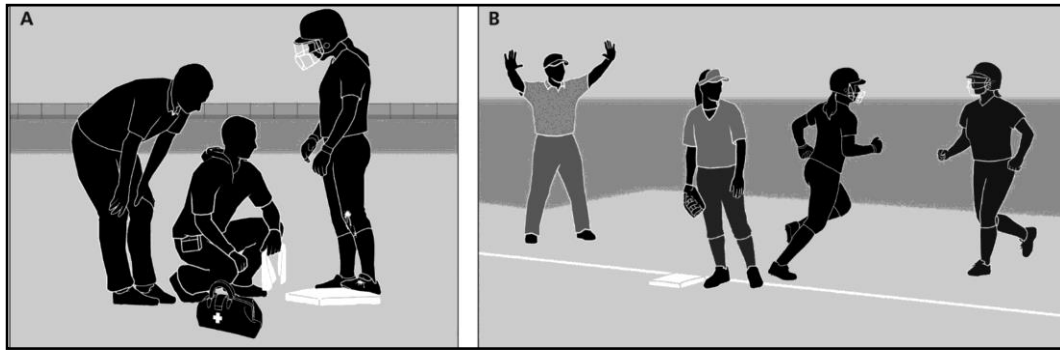
- The ball is not in the strike zone and is not completely in the batter's box. The batter still must make an effort to avoid being hit.
  - **8-1-2c-** describes a situation in which the ball is not in the strike zone (this is a dead ball strike) and is not completely in the batter's box (hit by pitch and awarded first base). In the area between the strike zone and completely in the batter's box, it was intended that the batter still had to make an effort to avoid being hit.



## 3. Courtesy Runner for Pitcher and Catcher

- **8-9-2 has a unique exception:** When an injury or disqualification occurs in the top of the first inning to the pitcher and/or catcher identified on the lineup card and she is unable to face the first batter in the bottom of the first inning, the player who ran for her is retroactively her substitute, no longer a courtesy runner. All substitution rules apply and the pitcher and/or catcher has left the game. **If the pitcher and/or catcher is able to play at another position on the field, the player who ran for her is retroactively her substitute and is no longer a courtesy runner. All**

substitution rules apply.



## OTHER SOFTBALL TOPICS FOR 2018

### 1. CIF-STATE – Points of Emphasis

- **NFHS Authenticating Mark Program (AMP)** - Requires teams to use softballs which meet NFHS standards and display the NFHS Authenticating Mark.
  - **SITUATION:** A team provides softballs which do not display the NFHS Authenticating Mark.
  - **RULING:** **DO NOT** play the game. The umpires are to report the incident to their local CIF Section Office.
- The COR of .47 and Compression of Max 375 lb. Must also be displayed.



### 2. California State CIF Bylaw 2502

- Bylaw 2502: It is required that adult base coaches wear a protective helmet. Play will not continue until compliance with this rule is met. It is recommended that the helmet meet NOCSAE standards.
  - Note: NFHS rules govern use of protective equipment by a player/student.

### 3. California State CIF Bylaw 503 “H”

- A student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time **for the remainder of the day**. A student-athlete who has been removed from play may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in education and management of concussion and receives written clearance to return to play from that health care provider.