

Dear Coaches and Umpires,

June 27, 2008

We are on the down hill side toward tournament time in baseball and we have some items we need to address.

First, our **ejection of coaches** is significantly ahead of last year, which is not a positive situation. I'm encouraging both coaches and umpires to be positive role models for the players and the game itself. Do a self evaluation of why you are there and what responsibilities each of you have as an adult and leader of these young people. Be a positive example!!

Removing a helmet:

Remember, we never call outs for deliberately removing a helmet during a live ball in live ball territory. The first offense by either team requires that team to receive a warning along with the head coach being notified of the warning. A second offense by the same team would eject the second violator from that contest. Please keep in mind this ejection is not reported to the state office and the second offended violator only sits out the remainder of the contest he's ejected from. If another game is to follow, the ejected player would be eligible to compete in the second game.

Remember, if the ball is dead, a player can remove his helmet and there is no warning. Example, player hits a home run (over the fence), and after touching second base removes his helmet. There is no warning issued because the ball is dead.

Courtesy runner:

1. At any time the team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or the catcher.
2. **The same individual runner may not be used for both positions** (pitcher and catcher) during the game.
3. Neither the pitcher nor catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances.
4. Players who have participated in the game in any other capacity are ineligible to serve as courtesy runners.
5. A player may not run as a courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher and then be used as a substitute for another player in that half inning. If an injury, illness or ejection occurs and no other runners are available, the courtesy runner may be used as a substitute.
6. **Remember the courtesy runner is running for the position not the player.**

Umpires need to keep track of who the courtesy runner(s) are throughout the game.

7. A player who violates the courtesy-runner rule is considered to be an illegal substitute.

New IHSAA baseball 15 run rule after 3 1/2 or 4 inning of play, regular season and tournament play:

If the home team is ahead of the visiting team by 15 or more runs after the top of the fourth inning is completed, the game is terminated by the 15 run rule. If the home team is behind by 15 or more runs at the completion of the 4th inning, the game is terminated by the 15 run rule. Keep in mind the 10 run rule after 4 1/2 or 5 innings also remains in effect.

Calling time:

Always remember that time is only in effect if the umpire gives a player or coach time. You may request time, but if the umpire does not call time, the ball and or play remains live.

Umpires need to use common sense during these situations, but on the same token, these requests must be legitimate requests, not to delay the game nor gain an advantage.

Coaches and players in the dugout:

Umpires, please make sure coaches and players are in the dugouts unless they are out for an authorized reason. Umpires, remind the coaches at the pre-game meeting no sitting on buckets outside the dugout or in dead ball territory outside the dugout. Umpires, if a violation occurs, calmly ask for the violator(s) to move back inside the dugout. Do not yell or make a scene.

Coaches, this is a National Federation safety rule and applies to all players and coaches.

Coaches, please take some time in practice to visit about good sportsmanship and respect of the great game of baseball we truly have. For some of these seniors this will be their last competitive sport they may participate in the rest of their life. Make it be something they are proud of.

EQUIPMENT:

Coaches, make sure you are checking your helmets and bats on a daily basis to make sure everything is up to speed. Umpires, you be sure and check helmets and bats each night before the contest.

Sportsmanship Ratings by Umpires:

If you have officiated any **varsity level contest**, you must login to your “Individual Officials Information” page with your new password and rate each school. Once logged in, you must click on “Enter your sportsmanship.” If you have any changes to your ratings, you can now log back in, see what you have completed, and make any necessary changes yourself. Make sure you are keeping up with your sportsmanship ratings so you will be tournament eligible next year. **FINAL SPORTSMANSHIP ENTRIES ARE DUE AUGUST 4, 2008 AT 5:00 p.m.**

IN closing I want to thank each of you for your time and commitment to the game of baseball and our youth.

Tournaments are just around the corner, and we want to wish each of you the best of luck.

If we want others to care about what we say, we need to care about what they say. We teach respect best by demonstrating it.

-Michael Josephson

Sincerely,
Roger Barr
IHSAA