

IOWA HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL THOUGHTS & TIPS

by Ira Blue

*The NFHS for decades has each year offered a few **Points of Emphasis** on issues we are either overlooking or need reminding of. I always make a point of emphasis to shine my plate and base shoes before the opening game and intend to repeat that throughout the season. I end up overlooking that and by the time I remind myself the damn season is done. Here are a few POE's over the years we all should remind ourselves of and maybe stop overlooking too much.*

2023 EYE BLACK

Eye black is supposed to help players reduce glare from the sun. Some nights it looks like a damn girl's makeup contest. NFHS football got so disgusted with it they made it a rule 1-5-3-c-3 that says eye shade that is not one solid stroke and includes any symbol is illegal and follow that with Casebook 1.5.3. Comment saying eye shade that extends outside the eye socket or below the cheek bone is illegal. Baseball has not had to go that far yet but it's frustrating coaches let players still paint up like Halloween even after the 2023 POE. Some nights I just give up. Some nights I tell them to get that shit off.

2018 & 2019 STANDING DOWN ON NATIONAL ANTHEM

Those 2 POE's said that players were "standing down" refusing to leave their respective baselines after the anthem in some grade school stare down intimidation crap. We must not got it right because they squawked at us 2 straight years. I had some American Legion guy tell me he saw it this summer and he ain't happy, so that we better stop it.

2008 & 2022 COACHES SITTING ON BUCKETS OUTSIDE DUGOUT

I think our Iowa Coaches got the message on this one because I hardly ever see it. Put them back in the dugout if you do see it unless you got different insurance coverage than the rest of us when the line drive foul ball busted eye socket lawsuit arrives at your door.

2018 & 2019 & 2022 & 2025 BENCH DECORUM

We can't have teams standing or kneeling outside the dugout during the opponent's infield practice. Chants/intentional distractions/loud noises directed at the opponent's pitcher prior to his pitching, or the batter getting ready to hit, or a fielder getting ready to make a play all are not good sportsmanship per the NFHS 4 times reminder.

2024 PACE OF PLAY

We've had 6-2-C for over 40 years regarding 20 seconds on the pitcher and the one minute between innings damn near as long. Do we have to start whacking them with a penalty ball on the 20 seconds or take away some of their 5 warm-up throws? I got no problem with either but hopefully we can do some strong encouraging with coaches/players prior to that to simply pick up the pace pretty please.

I'm gonna go shine my shoes before my game tonight...or maybe take a nap instead.

Have a good one guys!