



2017 Softball Points of Emphasis

Pitching

1. There has been a noticeable increase in the use of wristbands to communicate pitching signals in the last few years. Typically, the pitcher is behind and not in contact with the pitcher's plate when this occurs. While in this position, the pitcher must take (or simulate taking) a signal from the catcher. Even if the pitcher takes the actual signal behind and not in contact with the pitcher's plate she must comply to this section of the rule by simulating taking the signal from the catcher once she is on the pitcher's plate with her hands still separated. Then the pitcher must bring the hands together in front of the body for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball. The hands may be motionless or moving.
2. Rule 6-1-1 states that the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot on or partially on the top surface of the pitcher's plate and the non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be on the ground within or partially within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. Once the hands are brought together and are in motion, the pitcher shall not take more than one step, which must be forward, toward the batter and simultaneous with the delivery. **Any step backward shall begin before the hands come together.** The step backward may end before or after the hands come together.
3. NFHS Softball's pitching rule supports a wide range of pitching styles by allowing a pitcher to start with both feet on the pitcher's plate, one foot on and one foot behind or to step backward as a part of their pitching motion. The NFHS softball committee continues to believe the pitching rule, as written, allows players the greatest opportunity to pitch at the high school level.

Uniforms

The Committee discussed concerns about the use of glitter or reflective materials on hair control devices. Coaches and players are reminded that a uniform shall not have any reflective adornments. Reflective materials on ribbons, bows, and headbands, including glitter and rhinestones, are considered illegal and should not be permitted. A headband made of elastic material that is designed to be tied in the back is not considered a bandanna, and is legal if it meets the color and manufacturers logo restrictions.

DP/Flex Reminders

1. The DP can never play defense only.
2. The FLEX can never be on offense only.
3. The FLEX and DP can NEVER play offense at the same time. The FLEX and DP positions are linked by the DP/FLEX rule. If the FLEX is going to play offense they **must** do it in the original DP's position, therefore only one of them can play offense at a time.
4. The FLEX and DP can play defense at the same time. The DP can play defense for any player other than the FLEX and no one has left the game.
5. The player starting DP and starting FLEX have one re-entry just as all players do.
6. Once the game is started with the DP/FLEX positions in the lineup those positions are available for the entire game. Even if the starting DP or starting FLEX has left the game a second time, the position is still available and an eligible substitute can enter the game as the FLEX or DP. So even though the starting player(s) left the game twice and cannot re-enter, their positions **are** still active as long as the team has eligible substitutes.