

## Pitch Count Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: April 17, 2017

**Q: A pitcher throws 78 pitches and goes to a different position, is he allowed to pitch again later in the game?**

**A:** Yes. The count is a daily total. In fact, he could pitch in the second game of a double header. But he is limited to the max of 100 in a day and must end on that batter.

**Q: How do you count an ambidextrous pitcher?**

**A:** If the pitcher is ambidextrous, the pitch count guidelines apply to the individual pitcher, not to the individual arm

**Q: Are intentional walks counted as pitching?**

**A:** Only if the pitch is thrown from the pitcher to the catcher. In high school baseball, the defense can tell the umpire to walk the batter without pitching.

**Q: When competing in another state, which pitch count should we use?**

**A:** For WIAA members, the WIAA rules apply and should be used.

**Q: If a pitcher is effectively wild, but unhittable (think Nolan Ryan) – let's say he averages 5 to 6 pitches per batter, striking out most of them – he could conceivably reach the sixth or seventh inning of a PERFECT GAME and have hit the 100 pitch limit and would therefore have to leave the PERFECT GAME without finishing it – correct? (Sub-question: Does the rule actually penalize strike out pitchers compared to pitchers who pitch to contact, since strikeout pitchers, by nature, throw more pitches? If so, do we really want this?)**

**A:** Yes, he has to leave once the 100-pitch count is reached no matter the game situation. In fact, last year in the Major Leagues a rookie pitcher was pulled after reaching 100 pitches. Dodger's manager Dave Roberts pulled Ross Stripling after 7 1/3 innings on April 8, 2016, despite the fact that the rookie was throwing a no-hitter in his Major League debut. On April 28, 2016, Don Mattingly decided to pull pitcher Adam Conley after throwing 116 pitches despite not allowing a hit for 7 2/3 innings.

In an article, David Lennon stated: "Back in 2012, Terry Collins was in tears after letting Johan Santana throw the first no-hitter in Mets history, perhaps knowing what those 134 pitches eventually might cost his ace." And "And Santana? After the 134-pitch no-hitter, he went 3-7 with an 8.27 ERA the rest of 2012. And after that season, he never threw another major-league pitch."

<http://www.newsday.com/sports/columnists/david-lennon/pulling-a-pitcher-from->

[possible-no-hitter-no-longer-a-no-no-1.11748057](http://www.mlbtraderumors.com/2016/09/dave-roberts-on-rich-hills-near-perfect-game.html)

On September 9, 2016, “The Dodgers’ Rich Hill was six outs away from throwing a perfect game against the Marlins on Saturday, but manager Dave Roberts made the difficult decision to pull him after only 89 pitches due to a blister. “

<http://www.mlbtraderumors.com/2016/09/dave-roberts-on-rich-hills-near-perfect-game.html>

The pitch count is a risk minimization rule addressing the health of the pitcher. It is not a penalty. A study published in the American Journal of Sports Medicine found that 58.9 percent of Tommy John surgeries were in athletes aged 15 to 19. Fleisig (American Sports Medicine Institute) found that a pitcher is more likely to suffer an injury if: 1) he throws more than 80 pitches in a game (four times more likely); 2) he throws more than eight months a year (five times more likely); and 3) he throws when fatigued in a game (36 times more likely).

**Q: At the previous 5 State Final tournaments, approximately half of the State championship games have had pitchers come in the game in relief that had pitched previously in the Semi-Final or Quarter-Final. Almost all of these pitchers would now be unavailable in the State championship game because of the new rule. Correct?**

A: Pitchers have required days of rest according to the number of pitches in a day. If they pitch more than 30 in a day, a minimum of 1 day of rest is required. We don’t know how many would have been ineligible last year. It is our hope that coaches will adjust their strategies, will develop pitchers, and will create opportunities for other athletes to pitch.

**Q: When originally proposed to the WBCA at last year’s clinic, the original proposal stated that when a pitcher hit 100 pitches, he could finish the inning. The current rule was changed to finishing the at bat. Why the change?**

A: With the proposal to complete the inning, it was determined that the pitcher might throw too many pitches and the recommendation was to finish the batter. The number 100 was used for the last batter to allow the pitcher to complete the batter. Otherwise, it was a 112 pitch count and pull the pitcher immediately. So it was a reasonable compromise.

**Q: My understanding is that the team reps and pitch counter meet at the end of every complete inning...NOT every half inning. Is that correct?**

A: They meet at the end of the complete inning, not half inning. If the coaches mutually agree, it can be the half inning.

**Q: Can the pitch count log info be shared between opposing coaches as teams arrive to the field for a game, rather than at the pregame meeting right before first pitch?**

A: You may take care of the pitch count log when convenient if the coaches agree.

**Q: #4 on the WIAA Game Day Requirements document references a “collection program.” Is the collection program simply the WIAA Pitch Count Chart or is there another collection program where coaches are logging this info?**

A: Coaches must have the pitch log which can be maintained in the best manner they choose. It must be available if questions arise. It may be a 3 ring binder, a spreadsheet, etc.

**Q: With the new pitching rule, I believe there will be questions coming up about pitcher usage. I have talked to two coaches recently who didn't understand that a pitcher can be taken out as a pitcher, put in the position of first base for example, and then re-enter as a pitcher that inning or later in the game. I was disappointed in the rules video when none of this was covered. For example, how much switching of pitchers can be done per inning and per game? Also, how many warm up pitches does the pitcher receive when he returns back to the mound in the same inning? It is my understanding that as long as the pitcher stays in the game you can pitch him, take him out, and then return him once an inning?**

I was hoping to have some clarification on this activity if possible. I have been coaching for over 15 years and this is by far the biggest rule change I have encountered. I feel we have been given a chart of pitches allowed and days of required rest and that is it. There are many things that will happen now because of the new pitching rule and I feel none of this has been covered or addressed and there will be major confusion once the games begin. For example, is a balk a pitch? Let's say a pitcher doesn't pause and throws a pitch to home plate and during the pitch a balk is called??

A: Nothing has changed in the rules about position changes and therefore, it wouldn't be discussed in the video. For coaches who don't understand substitutions, I recommend that they read the substitution Rule 3 Section 1 area and the pitching Rule 6 area. The corresponding case book sections have clear examples. There is no reason to discuss anything that hasn't changed. A balk isn't a pitch. It isn't counted.

**Q: How does the pitch count for scrimmages work?**

A: Scrimmages are practices. No pitch count. But the coaches should be cautious since this is the beginning of the season.

**Q: If a pitcher reaches a pitch count (say 90) on a Monday, putting him in the category**

**of 3 days rest, he can't pitch again until Friday. The 3 days must occur between the appearances, and are considered calendar days, right? Also, if the days are considered 24 hours segments, if a pitcher were to finish a game by 6:00 on a Monday, and there was a 6:30 game scheduled on a Thursday, would that not meet the 3 days rest requirement if days are considered 24 hour segments?**

A: A day is a calendar day. A clock is not used. 3 days rest = 3 calendar days between pitching. Therefore, a pitcher must rest for 3 calendar days and becomes eligible on the 4<sup>th</sup> calendar day. If a pitcher throws 76+ pitches on Monday, he/she becomes eligible on Friday.

**Q: When a pitcher reaches 100 pitches and the third out is made to end the inning on a pickoff at another base does said pitcher have to be removed or is he still allowed to finish said batter next half inning?**

A: When the pitcher gets to 100, he's done. He would not enter the next inning since he would face that batter with 100 pitches.

**Q: Maximum Number of Pitches/Days of Rest "Thresholds". Are the levels a drop dead? Example, Pitcher A reaches 50 pitches in the middle of a batter. He finishes the batter with 55 pitches. Is his days of rest 2 days or 1 day?**

A: The only time a pitcher ends is when they finish a batter with 100. In the example, 55 is when he is done and that final number determines the days of rest.

**Q: Where can I find the requirements for who serves as the "pitch recorder?" Specifically, can it be an assistant coach, a team manager, a player who is not in the game... and, does the same person have to do the entire game?**

A: There is no specific requirement. Schools designate a person to count pitches. I would recommend an adult for varsity. You may only have kids at non varsity games available. But the third neutral pitch count recorder is not required at this point.

**Q: I told coaches I would get an answer for them from the WIAA. Game suspended going into 9th inning. Game will be finished at a later date. Does pitch count continue for a pitcher from the 8th inning of the suspended game or does the count start over?**

A: The game continues with the same line ups in the same positions and batting order at the time of suspension. The pitch count applies immediately for the days following the contest. For the make up game, the pitch count is dependent on the days leading up to the make up date. If the pitcher is not available, then the substitution rule applies.