

New Rule Should Have Little Impact on Area Pitchers

Message From The Mound

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A new rule that will officially go into effect for the 1990 baseball season will attempt to put a limit on the number of innings a high school pitcher may throw in a three-day period.

The new rule, adopted by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, places a limitation of 10 innings within three days for high school hurlers. In other words a pitcher can work no more than 10 innings within a period of 48 hours.

OHSAA Assistant Commissioner checked into similar rules enacted by neighboring states before proposing the 10-and-3 rule for Ohio.

“Some states had a 12-inning within three days rule, some had 10 innings within two days, but most had the 10-and-3 rule and that was the one that the Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Association favored over the others,” stated Termeer.

WHILE THE NEW rule was enacted to protect the arms of youngsters whose college and professional careers may be jeopardized by overwork, some local coaches expressed doubt as to the effect the rule will have on their teams.

“I don’t think it will affect our program at all,” stated Napoleon coach Larry Sasaki. “I can see where the rule may be good because in a tournament situation a kid may throw hard one day and the coach might get excited and go with him the next tournament game. But our attitude has always been that if we have a kid with a good arm, who may have a shot at a pro career...why burn him out now?”

Paulding coach John Gudakunst agreed the new rule should not affect his team. “I’m not that familiar with the proposal, but 10 innings in three days is

definitely not too strict. We’ve been fortunate enough to usually have three or four kids who can pitch for us and we would never expect a kid to throw that much over that period of time,” noted Gudakunst

Defiance coach Greg Inselmann has some reservations about the new rule possibly infringing on the coaches’ decision making.

“I feel that basically it is a good rule, but I would like to think that the individual coaches know their personnel the best and know what each kid is capable of,” pointed out Greg Inselmann.

A COUPLE OF factors the rule doesn’t take into account are the type and total number of pitches thrown in a game.

A pitcher who relies on breaking balls the majority of the time tends to place much more stress on his arm than one who throws mainly fastballs. Also a pitcher with good control will generally throw far fewer pitches per game than one who may walk eight or nine batters a game.

Thus, one pitcher may throw as many as 50 pitches in only three innings of work while another might need fewer than 50 pitches for an entire seven-inning game.

“The welfare of the kids has always been the primary concern for me and my coaches and we’re constantly talking with our pitchers to find out how their arms feel. However, different pitchers are able to work more innings simply because of physical strength and pitching style and I feel the coaches are the best ones to monitor the amount of work they get,” added DHS’s Inselmann.