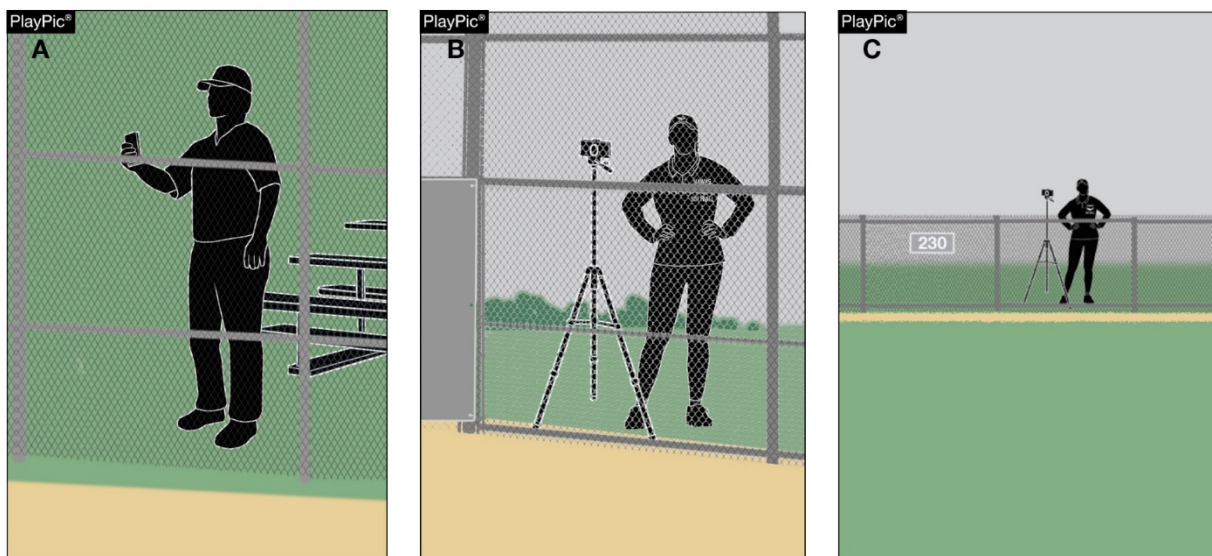




March 4, 2024

## NFHS Softball Weekly Rule Interpretations

There has been some discussion about the PlayPic's shown below. These discussions centered around if these PlayPic's were intended to show a coach being outside of the playing area while operating these cameras during the game. It was not the intent for these to show a coach being allowed to leave the dugout to operate the camera and then return to the dugout. There was no change to the rules that require team personnel to remain within the confines of the field for the remainder of the game, with obvious exceptions to retrieve foul balls or a trip to the rest room etc. These graphics are intended to show a parent or person who does not enter the dugout but is tasked with operating the camera for the team. Although they may be associated with the team, they would not meet the definition of team personnel, as they would not be located in the team dugout. This is no different from a scorekeeper located in the press box behind home plate. Just as these positions have been enforced in the past, there are no issues with them performing these tasks as long as they do not enter the dugout. As mentioned above there has been no change in the definition of team personnel as they are located in the team dugout and, with only a few exceptions, are not allowed to leave the confines of the field during the game. A person must either be team personnel and are then restricted to remain within the confines of the field which include the dugout, or they must remain outside of the confines of the field for the duration of the game.



**Situation 1:** During a game, it is brought to the umpire's attention that a student that is wearing a matching "State Finalist" shirt that a number of the team's players are wearing is operating a camera outside of the confines of the field. The umpire rules that since this student is operating the camera and has not entered the dugout there is no violation. **RULING:** Correct ruling. The only people who must remain within the confines of the field are those that have entered the dugout during the game as they

become team personnel and are not allowed to enter and leave the dugout repeatedly. (2-15, 2-59, 3-6-6)

**Situation 2:** During the second inning Team B approaches the umpire and informs them that there is an adult dressed the same as Team A's coaches operating a camera beyond the centerfield fence. The umpire rules this legal. **RULING:** Correct ruling. This person is allowed to operate this device outside the playing area as long as they remain outside of the confines of the field. The only restriction is that a person cannot enter the dugout then leave the dugout to attend to a device then reenter the dugout repeatedly. (2-15, 2-59, 3-3-6)

**Situation 3:** During a game the umpire notices that the third base coach is leaving the dugout to adjust an electronic device behind home plate every half inning when their team is on defense. The umpire informs the coach they are not allowed to continually leave the confines of the field once the game has started. **RULING:** Correct ruling. Coaches who are team personnel within the dugout and occupy the coach's box are required to remain within the confines of the field, with a few exceptions. Examples of exceptions are to retrieve foul balls, a rest room break etc. (2-15, 2-59, 3-3-6)