

Alaska Baseball High School Mercy and Pitch Count Rules/Guidelines

2023 Early Season Pitch Count – March 17 to April 30	
<u>Number of Pitches</u>	<u>Days of Required Rest</u>
1-25	0
26-45	1
46-65	2
66-85	3
86-100	4

2023 Late Season Pitch count – May 1 thru remainder of season	
<u>Number of Pitches</u>	<u>Days of Required Rest</u>
1-30	0
31-55	1
56-80	2
81-105	3
106-120	4

Mercy Rule (Rollover): The game shall end when; the visiting team is behind 10 or more runs after 4.5 innings; or after the 5th inning if either team is 10 runs behind and have had an equal number of times at bat. **In addition, if a team goes up by 15 or more runs after one full inning, the team with the lead will be declared the winner. At that point, the remainder of the game will go into “rollover” mode until after 4.5 innings when the regular Mercy Rule goes into effect. In the rollover mode, the team that was down 15 runs will pitch to no more than 9 batters per inning.**

Pitch Count:

- **Mandatory one day rest** (or more if the second day pitch count dictates) for any pitcher that pitches two consecutive days. A pitcher will rest 1 day even if they have pitched less than 30 pitches during each of the previous 2 days.
- During regular season, pitch count limit is determined after each single game appearance.
- If an Alaskan team is traveling out of State, the Alaska Pitch count is still in effect.
- The pitching limitation rule applies during all regular season and postseason games, as well as to tied, suspended, discontinued or protested games.
- Only official game pitches count, this includes foul balls. (all strikes, balls & pitches that result in ball being placed in play).
- Dead ball (Balks and pitches thrown but time-out has been called) do not count.
- **Game Day Tracking System:** A game-day tracking system recorded by each school during the contest will be shared by each head coach prior to leaving the facility. **Schools are responsible** for keeping pitch count forms on file throughout the season for all pitchers used. These forms are NOT to be sent to the ASAA unless there is a suspended/protested game. (ASAA has posted on its website a recommended form for game day tracking).

Guidelines for Tracking:

- When no OFFICIAL SCOREBOOK is kept, the home scorebook will be official recording for pitch counts. Both the visiting and home scorekeeper should compare the counts after each inning. If there is a discrepancy, the home scorebook will be the official record. Umpires will not record pitch counts and will not attempt to resolve any disputes regarding pitch counts. Umpires will assist the teams communicate the pitch count totals each half inning. However, the actual recording of the pitch count is up to the head coach from each school.
- The pitch count limit is per day, not per game. It would be possible for a pitcher to pitch in both games of a double header, depending upon the number of pitches thrown.
- Even though not eligible to pitch, a pitcher could fill other defensive positions on the field, although consideration should be given to the throwing requirement of the fielding position once the pitcher vacates the mound.

- Rest days are counted for the full day regardless of appearance start time. (ex. Varsity Pitcher throws 108 pitches on Friday – rest days are Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. He is eligible to pitch on Wednesday, not Tuesday night.
- A pitcher is allowed to exceed the highest pitch count limit during an at-bat, but only to complete that batter. This is allowed without an additional day of rest or penalty.
- The pitch count limits are in effect for an ambidextrous (player) pitcher, whether he/she switch to one arm or the other.
- The Pitch Count Regulations and procedures apply to all levels of High School play (JV and Varsity).
- **VIOLATIONS:** Using an unavailable pitcher is defined as a pitcher who has gone over the maximum number of pitches, not taking the required number of days of rest and/or falsifying records to allow a pitcher to not take the required number of days of rest. If an unavailable pitcher is used the team shall forfeit the contest on the date of the violation. All violations must be reported to the ASAA office.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q. How is an intentional base on balls counted in the pitch count policy?

A. A player's pitch count is not affected when issuing an intentional base on balls, unless pitches were thrown during the at-bat. The pitch count policy only counts pitches that are actually thrown.

2. Q. What constitutes a pitch?

A. Any throw by the pitcher that moves in the direction of home plate during live ball. Every pitch must be counted, including the pitches thrown that a batter fouls off after having two strikes and pitches thrown where an offensive/batter's interference is called. Warm-up pitches are not counted in the pitch count.

3. Q. Does the pitching limitation count for the second game of a double header?

A. The policy is based on days, not games. Therefore, a pitcher may pitch in both games of a double header, but the total pitch count for the day will be what is considered when determining the days of rest required. The total number of pitches for the day cannot exceed the 120 pitches.

4. Q. If a pitcher throws 40 pitches and the game is called because of weather, do those pitches count towards that pitcher's pitch count?

A. Yes, every pitch that is thrown needs to be recorded even if the game is postponed or cancelled. Ultimately, each school is responsible for adhering to the pitch count policy.

5. Q. Should the opposing teams get together during/after a contest to confirm/agree with the number of pitches thrown by each pitcher?

A. It is highly recommended that the opposing coaches or their adult representative consult with each other at the end of each inning to make sure the number of pitches thrown are consistent between the two scorebooks.

6. Q. Do sub-varsity pitchers need to follow this pitching limitation?

A. Yes, this policy is for all High School levels.

7. Q. May a pitcher who has reached the 30, 55, 80 or 105 or 120 pitch total exceed that limit while finishing an at-bat and still be considered within the limit?

A. No, each pitch beyond the 30, 55, 80 or 105 pitch total counts and will push the pitcher into the next level. At the highest limit, the pitcher may continue to pitch to the completion of that batter without a penalty.

8. Q: How is a day of rest defined?

A: A day of rest is defined as a calendar day. For example, if a pitcher throws 81 pitches in a Monday game thus requiring a three day rest before being allowed to pitch again, those days of rest would be Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday allowing that pitcher to pitch again on Friday.

9. Q: How does a Coach protest the use of a pitcher that has not sat the mandatory days of rest?

A: The Coach files a protest with the Head Umpire to verify the situation, but the School Administration must contact ASAA with the details of the protest. ASAA will not consider protests sent directly from coaches or other sources. All pitches thrown during the protested game will still count as part of those pitchers Pitch Count regardless of the outcome of the protest.