

FHSAA P/DH Rule

~Designated Hitter Rule

NFHS rule 3-1-4... A hitter may be (not mandatory) designated for any one starting player (not just pitchers) and all subsequent substitutes for that player in the game. A starting defensive player cannot be listed as the designated hitter in the starting lineup. A designated hitter for said player shall be selected prior to the start of the game, and his name shall be included on the lineup cards presented to the umpire-in-chief and to the official scorer. Failure to declare a designated hitter prior to the game precludes the use of a designated hitter in that game. If a pinch hitter or pinch runner for the designated hitter is used, that player becomes the new designated hitter. The player who was the designated hitter may re-enter as the designated hitter under the re-entry rule. A designated hitter and the player for whom he is batting are locked into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting rotation. The role of the designated hitter is terminated for the remainder of the game when:

- A. The defensive player, or any previous defensive player for whom the designated hitter batted, subsequently bats, pinch-hits or pinch-runs for the designated hitter: or
- B. The designated hitter or any previous designated hitter assumes a defensive position.

New addition –

The designated hitter and the starting pitcher may be the same person. If the pitcher opts to bat for himself, he is treated as two separate positions – a pitcher and a designated hitter (abbreviated P/DH on the lineup card) – and may be substituted for as such (i.e. if he is removed as the pitcher, then he may remain as the designated hitter and vice versa). However, if a player who starts the game as a P/DH is relieved as the starting pitcher, he may not return to the mound even if he remains in the game as DH, and he may not play any other defensive position after being relieved as the pitcher.

Cases

1. The starting pitcher is listed as the P/DH on the lineup card. His team gets a 12 run lead after one inning. The head coach can replace the pitcher and put the starting pitcher in to play left field. Answer – No, the new rule prohibits the starting pitcher listed as the P/DH from playing any other position in the field once removed from pitching.
2. A coach must list the starting pitcher as the P/DH. Answer – No, it is the coach's option to list the starting pitcher as the P/DH.
3. A starting pitcher is listed on the lineup as the P. The coach can replace him as pitcher and have him play second base. Answer – Yes, since he was not listed as the P/DH on the starting lineup.
4. The coach forgets to list the starting pitcher as the P/DH when the lineup cards are turned in to the umpire-in-chief. He can make a correction after the first inning. Answer – No, the P/DH must be designated when the lineup card is turned into the umpire-in-chief.
5. The starting pitcher is listed as the P/DH on the lineup card. He cannot play any other defensive position that game. Answer – Yes, if a player who starts the game as a P/DH is relieved as the starting pitcher, he may not return to the mound even if he remains in the game as DH, and he may not play any other defensive position after being relieved as the pitcher.
6. A coach can list the starting pitcher as P/DH and have a designated hitter for his centerfielder. Answer – No, a designated hitter can only be listed for one starting player.
7. A coach can still have a designated hitter (another player) for the starting pitcher. Answer – Correct. The new addition does not change this option.

Please note – This is not the NCAA designated hitter rule.