

Official Rules, Bylaws, & Specifications Proposals for 2026

PRC 1

Rule 12 – APPROPRIATE NHPA MEMBER CONDUCT

Currently reads:

Section C - Dress Code All contestants competing in a World Tournament shall have, as a minimum, their last name and State or Country abbreviation professionally lettered on the back of their shirts. Said shirts cannot be sleeveless. No cut-offs are permitted and closed-toe shoes must be worn. Further dress code restrictions may be imposed by the Executive Council if all entrants are notified no later than the mailing date of their pitching schedules. This Dress Code may also be adopted into any Charter Bylaws or may be enforced at any State Championship Tournament or at any local tournament, if announced in advance by the Tournament/League Officials. Contestants who do not comply may not be allowed to participate in the event.

Change to read:

Section C - Dress Code All contestants competing in a World Tournament shall have, as a minimum, their last name and State or Country abbreviation professionally lettered on the back of their shirts. **Said shirts can be sleeveless and or a tank top with a hem. Shirts may not be spaghetti straps or cut off.** No cut-offs are permitted and closed-toe shoes must be worn. Further dress code restrictions may be imposed by the Executive Council if all entrants are notified no later than the mailing date of their pitching schedules. This Dress Code may also be adopted into any Charter Bylaws or may be enforced at any State Championship Tournament or at any local tournament, if announced in advance by the Tournament/League Officials. Contestants who do not comply may not be allowed to participate in the event.

Rationale

Pitching horseshoes you swing your arms a lot. Many pitchers sweat and sleeves can stick to your arms causing irritation. Many pitchers find it more comfortable to pitch in a sleeveless shirt or a tank top for free arm movement.

PRC 2

RULE 2 - GAME PREPARATION

Section C - Painting of Stakes

Currently reads:

To make the stakes more visible for the contestants, they may be painted between games (white paint is often used) so that there is a good contrast between the color of the stake and the color of the background.

Change to read:

To make the stakes more visible for the contestants, they may **have chalk applied to or** be painted between games (white paint is often used) so that there is a good contrast between the color of the stake and the color of the background.

Rationale

Paint doesn't have time to dry and then gets on the shoes and hands. Chalk works and is probably better to be used indoors.

PRC 3

Currently reads:

Section F - Elders (become eligible to pitch in the Elders Division upon purchase of an NHPA card dated for the calendar year that they become sixty-five (65) years old).

1. Elder Men may pitch from any place on either the extended or full-distance platforms and shall observe the twenty-seven-foot (27') foul line. Elder Men must notify their Charter Membership Director, in advance, of the date that they intend to begin pitching from this shorter distance. Once a member declares himself a short-distance pitcher, he must remain in that Division until the next year's membership card is purchased. At that time, he may switch back to the Open Men's division but must remain in that division until the next year's membership card is purchased.

Note: See Rule 11, Section D.1 for additional information about re-qualifying.

2. Elder Women may pitch from any place on either the extended or full distance platforms and shall observe the twenty-foot (20') foul line. Elder Women must notify their Charter Membership Director, in advance, of the date that they intend to begin pitching from this shorter distance. Once a member declares oneself a shorter distance pitcher, they must remain in that Division until the next year's membership card is purchased. At that time, they may switch back to the Open Women's division but must remain in that division until the next year's membership card is purchased.

Note: See Rule 11, Section D.1 for additional information about re-qualifying

3. Physically Challenged Men - Physically challenged Male pitchers less than sixty-five (65) years old may be given permission, by their governing Charter, to move onto the extended platforms in the Elders Division and observe the twenty-seven-foot (27') foul lines. The prior completion and approval of a Medical Exemption Application form (available from Charter Secretaries and on some Charter Websites) is required. At the World Tournament and at State Championship Tournaments, they shall compete in the Elders Division.

4. Physically Challenged Women - Physically challenged Female pitchers less than sixty five (65) years old may be given permission, by their governing Charter, to move onto the extended platforms in the Elders Division and observe the twenty-foot (20') foul line. The prior completion and approval of a Medical Exemption Application form (available from Charter Secretaries and on some Charter Websites) is required. At the World Tournament and at State Championship Tournaments, they shall compete in the Elders Division.

Change to read:

Section F - Elders (become eligible to pitch in the Elder Men and Elder Women Division upon purchase of an NHPA card dated for the calendar year that they become sixty-five (65) years old, **and for Elder Men 80 Division, eighty (80) years old.**

Change number 3 above to 4, number 4 above to 5, and insert new number 3 to read as follows.

3. Elder Men 80 (become eligible to pitch in the Elder Men 80 Division upon purchase of an NHPA card dated for the calendar year that they become eighty (80) years old). They may pitch from any place on either the extended or full distance platforms and shall observe the twenty-foot (20') foul line. Elder Men 80 must notify their Charter Membership Director, in advance, of the date that they intend to begin pitching from this shorter distance.

PBC 1

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

Currently reads:

SECTION 6. Eligibility of officers a. All officers shall be NHPA adult members in good standing (dues paid and not under suspension).

Change to read:

SECTION 6. Eligibility of officers

a. All officers and candidates for officer positions, shall be NHPA adult members in good standing (dues paid and not under suspension).

b. No person may serve as NHPA President for more than 3 full terms (9 years).

Rationale:

The NHPA President plays a major role in steering the direction of the NHPA as a whole, 9 years in this position gives an individual almost a decade to direct and guide the NHPA but leaves the door open for healthy administrative changes over time. As incumbents are rarely defeated, this change would open the door for the NHPA to inject fresh ideas and direction regularly while allowing the former President to hold other roles within the council, if needed. The limit of 9 years is almost exactly corresponding with the term limit of the United States President (8 years) and is a reasonable length of time for any individual to be limited to.

PBC 2

Article III: Membership

Currently reads:

SECTION 3. Full Member- Dues for Full Adult Members are the National dues of twenty five dollars (\$25.00) plus the amount set for State dues within their Charter. Three dollars (\$3.00) of every adult membership will be set aside for the World Tournament prize fund, for the next year. Only Full Members may enter State and World tournaments.

Change to read:

SECTION 3. Full Member - Dues for Full Adult Members are the National dues of **thirty-five dollars (\$35.00)** plus the amount set for State dues within their Charter. **A maximum of five dollars (\$5.00)** of every adult membership will be set aside for the World Tournament prize fund, for the next year. Only Full Members may enter State and World tournaments.

Rationale:

If membership totals were to level or even increase, inflation across all areas of the NHPA's business has still caused us to need a dues increase to keep up with rising inflation. All areas of the NHPA's operational budget have saw drastic increases with inflation in recent years and this increase is necessary for the sustainability of the NHPA long term.

PBC 3

Article III: Membership

Currently reads:

SECTION 4. Dues for Junior and Junior Cadet members are National dues of five dollars (\$5.00) plus the amount set for State dues for Juniors within their Charter. These dues entitle Junior members to participate in all Sanctioned Tournaments and/or Leagues and to League Program benefits.

Change to read:

SECTION 4. Dues for Junior and Junior Cadet members are National dues of **zero dollars (\$0)** plus the amount set for State dues for Juniors within their Charter. These dues entitle Junior members to participate in all Sanctioned Tournaments and/or Leagues and to League Program benefits.

Rationale:

In 2025 and 2026 the NHPA council moved to waive youth membership dues to promote free youth pitching in many charters, who followed suite with waving state dues for youth pitchers. This has a very small impact on the NHPA financials (less than \$2,500) annually and allows us the opportunity to advertise free youth pitching in many areas, and greatly reduced fees nationwide. This bylaw change will ensure the NHPA continues to do everything we can to support the youth divisions for years to come.

PSC 1 IV.

SPECIFICATIONS

Currently reads:

I - EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

Section A - Sanctioned Horseshoes The maximum weight and measurement standards are as follows: The horseshoe weight shall not be more than two (2) pounds, ten (10) ounces (there is no minimum weight) No horseshoe can exceed seven and one-quarter inches (7-1/4") in width or seven and five-eighths inches (7-5/8") in length The opening of the shoe must not exceed three and one-half inches (3-1/2"), measured from a parallel line three-fourths of an inch (3/4") inward from a straightedge touching the tips of the shoe points (A one-eighth inch (1/8") tolerance to three and five-eighths inches (3-5/8") is allowed on used shoes **No part of any horseshoe shall exceed one inch (1") in height when placed, with calks down, on a level surface.** Shoes not meeting these requirements shall be declared "illegal" Illegal shoes shall not be used in any NHPA sanctioned competition and all games pitched with illegal shoes shall be forfeited All horseshoes used by a pitcher may be checked at any time, before or during competition, to verify that they are legal shoes A judge or other Tournament/League Official will do this checking (see Bylaws, Standing Rules 7 & 8 for additional information)

Change to read:

No part of the original manufactured shoe shall exceed one inch (1") in height.

Rationale

It has been brought to my attention by a flip pitcher from Alabama that when measuring the one inch height of a shoe, the Snyder flip shoe when measuring with the heel calks down on a flat surface the points exceed one inch. When measuring a flip shoe the toe calk is on the opposite side from the heel calk. When placed on a flat surface the shoe is on an angle causing the points of the shoe to exceed the one inch.

PSC 2

II - SPECIFICATIONS FOR COURT LAYOUT

Section B - Court Sanction Requirements/Specifications

Currently reads:

6. Stakes - The stake is the target at which the shoe is pitched. Stakes shall be positioned in the very center of the pitcher's box, on the court's lengthwise centerline, with a minimum of twenty-one inches (21") from the stake to the front and back of the pit substance. The distance between stakes shall be forty feet (40'). This distance is to be measured from the front of each stake, level with the pitching platform. Stakes shall be one inch (1") in diameter and shall be made of cold-rolled steel, mild iron, soft metal, or NHPA-approved synthetic material. The top of each stake shall be no less than fourteen inches (14") and no greater than fifteen inches (15") above the level of the pitching platforms(see exception for raised pits in Section C) Stakes shall be securely mounted (see diagram on page 46) and have a three inch (3") lean toward the opposite end.

Change to Read:

6. Stakes - The stake is the target at which the shoe is pitched. Stakes shall be positioned in the very center of the pitcher's box, on the court's lengthwise centerline, with a minimum of twenty-one inches (21") from the stake to the front and back of the pit substance. **Stakes are recommended to be forty feet (40') apart at the pitching platform level.** This distance is to be measured from the front of each stake, level with the pitching platform. Stakes shall be one inch (1") in diameter and shall be made of cold-rolled steel, mild iron, soft metal, or NHPA-approved synthetic material. The top of each stake shall be no less than fourteen inches (14") and no greater than fifteen inches (15") above the level of the pitching platforms(see exception for raised pits in Section C) Stakes shall be securely mounted (see diagram on page 46) and have a three inch (3") lean toward the opposite end .

Rationale

The foul lines are the main criteria for the distance. Even though stakes being 40' apart is standard, in a tight area such as indoor pitching, stakes at 42' actually takes up less room as the Men's foul line is 5' from the stake giving more room for a backswing and large stride. Someone who takes a large stride or stands near the back of the platform, they would have had issues with some indoor courts hitting fences or walls with their backswing.

The above proposals will be voted on at the 2026 NHPA Convention on July 19 in Wausau, Wisconsin by your Charter Delegates. Let your delegates know your thoughts on these proposals; they are there to represent you! To find out who the delegates are for your Charter, contact one of your State Officers.