



Baseball Bulletin 2024-2

Date: March 11, 2024

From: Frank Grubb, Director of Officiating Development

- **Local Online Meetings:** The first online local meeting will be posted in the last week of March. The second online meeting will be posted the second week of April. Please do not email me asking when they will be posted.
- **Clarification on Digital communication boards:** I misspoke in the State Interpreters meeting regarding the use of digital sign boards to communicate with players from the dugout to players on the field. I was using a previous interpretation that is no longer valid. **These digital boards are LEGAL for use.**

**SITUATION:** A team is using a light board with multiple various color lights to relay instructions to the team. The opposing team complains that it can only be used by the catcher for calling pitches. **RULING:** This system is legal. It may be used by all players along with their wristband devices. (3-2-5, 1-6-1)

- **Scrimmages:** As a reminder, a scrimmage is defined by OHSAA, as a contest in sports in which the rules of the sport are not required to be followed in all respects. The length of the scrimmage is limited to maximum of three hours per squad for grades 9-12 and two hours per squad for grades 7-8. This means that teams can scrimmage beyond 7-innings or run situations within the scrimmage. This also means as officials, we can use this time to hone our own skills while working a scrimmage. If partners want to switch from plate to bases mid-scrimmage, this is permissible. These scrimmages are also a great opportunity to work with a mentee or bring a newer official along to get them some work.
- **Arm Sleeve communication equipment updates:** Every umpire at all levels need to enforce rule 1-6-1 – Player Communication equipment. There are several case plays in the NFHS publication titled [2024 NFHS Baseball Rules Interpretations](#). Please review situations 1, 2, 3, 4 as well as casebook plays 1.6.1 Situations A and B.
- **Electronic Communication devices** – As we covered in the State Rules Interpretation meeting, please review rules 1-6-2; Situations 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13; and casebook plays 1.6.2 Situation A, B, C, D and 3.2.5 Situation A and B.  
It is imperative that we are able to communicate this rule and provide enforcement consistently across the state. If you have scenarios that you are unsure or feel are unusual, please communicate those to me so we can address them in future bulletins.

## Mechanics Highlights

- **Plays at the plate:** Phil King, from the Lancaster BB/SB Umpires association has put a great publication together on taking plays at the plate or Working the Wedge. It can be found [here](#).
- **One-umpire mechanics:** I've had several requests for a one-umpire manual. Although we don't wish for umpires to have to work by themselves, the reality is we have many games with only one-umpire available especially at the sub-varsity levels. Many times, these are our more inexperienced umpires. My friend Larry Hanna, from the Central Ohio Baseball Umpires Association has put together a single umpire game management guidebook to reference. I will be having this posted on the OHSAA.org website but in the meantime, please find a copy of it [here](#).
- **Mechanics-**The bluebook is our official mechanics for OHSAA baseball. It can be found on the OHSAA website under the officiating tab and then under the Directors of Officiating Development.
- **Runner on First situations-** Both umpires should signal that the plate umpire will rotate to third when the situation dictates:
  - If the batted ball is fielded by an infielder or stays in the immediate infield area, the plate umpire does not rotate to third base to cover R1.
  - If the batted ball is hit down the right field line and is a catch/no-catch situation, the plate umpire has catch responsibilities and should communicate with the base umpire that (s)he has the ball. The base umpire should assume (s)he will need to cover R1 and the BR at any base (except home).
  - If R1, on a batted ball to the outfield, attempts to advance to 3<sup>rd</sup>, the plate umpire should move up the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line, announce to the base umpire, "I'm at 3<sup>rd</sup>" and move in to fair territory for the potential play at 3rd base.
  - If there is an overthrow at third base as R1 arrives at the bag and R1 now attempts to score, the plate umpire is responsible for ruling on the play at the plate. The base umpire has responsibility for any plays on the BR.
- **Save the date:** 3 and 4 umpire clinic is tentatively scheduled for May 18<sup>th</sup> at Grove City High School. This clinic will be free and is designed to prepare those working district, regional and State tournament games. All are welcome to attend, and a registration link will be sent in a future bulletin.

Good luck as the season begins, be a partner with the coaches during scrimmages and may the weather be sunny and 70!