



Baseball Bulletin 2025-9

May 22, 2025

From: Frank Grubb, Director of Officiating Development

It's tournament time! If you've been assigned to this year's tournament at any level, congratulations! Be proud and do your best to represent yourself, your local association, and the OHSAA in officiating the games you are assigned. This is absolutely my favorite time of year as an umpire. We start working for the tournament in January, if not before. The last 5 months we've spent training on rules, mechanics, handling situations, and everything else in between to prepare ourselves to be at our absolute best for this time of year.

This past Saturday, we had 65 umpires show up at Grove City High School to listen to some of the experts in Ohio give presentations on 3 and 4 umpire mechanics for 2+ hours. Then we went to the field and worked on those mechanics during live action with hands on instruction. I want to thank everyone who showed up. You are what makes umpiring in Ohio great! I want to especially thank the following individuals for their assistance with instruction: Ryan Thompson, Mark Kuhn, Chase Hatfield, Chad Snyder, and Jon Sapphire.

A few things I want to remind everyone of working tournament games over the next three weeks that I reminded the clinic participants:

- Communicate with your partners a minimum of a week from your assignment, make sure you all have the same understanding of when and where your game will be
- District and Regional assignments – be on-site a minimum of 1 hour before the expected start time
 - Crew Chiefs – reach out to the site coordinator to confirm dressing facilities. Dress inside if at all possible. Site coordinators can be found on the OHSAA website under the tournament information.
 - Conduct a thorough pre-game utilizing the 3 and 4 umpire mechanics manuals
 - Dress professionally (business casual is fine; dressy shorts and a polo shirt is also fine) showing up to games
- Remember, we are providing a service for the student athletes! The assignment is not about us but about celebrating the student athletes.
- Crew Chiefs – something to think about and I've done this for crews I've worked on in both football and baseball. Assign everyone on the crew a rule or two to be an expert in. Have them study that rule again along with the casebook. When there is an issue on a rule that needs to be discussed, everyone gets together to discuss it. Everyone on the crew should be an expert on rules 1 and 2.
- Remember, players' and coaches' emotions will be high! We are there to diffuse yet enforce the rules of the game. Our emotions CANNOT match that of the player or coach.

- Stay calm, breath, listen, respond calmly regardless of the emotions of the coach
 - Penalize unsportsmanlike behavior just as you have in the regular season.
- At this point, every game ends someone's playing career
- **Mechanics manuals** - The three and four umpire mechanics manuals can be downloaded on the Director of Officiating (DOD) webpage: <https://www.ohsaa.org/Officiating/DOD>. Under the sport of baseball you will find all of this year's Bulletins as well as links to all of the various mechanics manuals. The versions posted are the 2023-2024 versions which are what we are continuing to use for 3 and 4 umpire mechanics. It's a good idea to have someone print a copy out and have with you for your pre-game.
- **3 and 4 umpire flashcards** – Tyler Monk, of the Central Ohio Baseball Umpires Association sent me these links yesterday. He created flash cards that cover the 3 and 4 umpire system as a way to test his knowledge. I Love it! If you think this would be useful, feel free to use the links below:
 - [3 umpire flash cards](#)
 - [4 umpire flash cards](#)
- **2025-2026 OHSAA License renewal** – the OHSAA License renewal for the 2025-2026 season is live! Baseball licenses must be renewed by December 31, 2025 to avoid a late fee on top of your renewal fee. Renew your license now to avoid forgetting about it in December. To do so, log in to Dragonfly and click on your profile and then "my info". Once there click on the box for the "Prep for 2025-26" and follow the steps to renew your license.

Finally, I get asked by several umpires what they need to do to work the tournament or advance to high levels of the tournament. There are several factors that play into this. Here is a list of some of my top things you can do to help promote yourself as an umpire:

1. Be a good partner! Know the Blue book, show up on time, listen, communicate, work hard, etc. Be the umpire partners look forward to working with!
2. Be involved in your local association – if you show up to your minimum of 4 meetings (or less with the online) sit in the back of the room and play on your phone while meetings are being conducted, you will not advance as people will have no idea who you are. Offer to lead a meeting, be a mentor, ask to be mentored, help anyway you can. Ask the leadership how you can assist.
3. Know who the leaders are in your area and ask for honest feedback. Ask to be evaluated and listen to that feedback and then act on that feedback in your next games.
4. Continue to work on your skills in the summertime. Don't get lazy just because it's summer baseball. Continue to strive to get better.
5. Appearance is everything. Your perception starts the moment you walk on the field! Is your uniform clean and neat, shoes cleaned, hat free of sweat stains, shirt tucked in, etc. Looking the part will get you a long way in getting respect.
6. Work hard! Do you hustle and move with purpose or do you add unnecessary delays to the game because you are not in position? Do you look like you want to be there? People can tell if you don't.