



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Softball Bulletin

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March 27, 2026

Bulletin 26 -8

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- Although we have now sent two sets of rule book mailing it appears that a very small number of umpires still may not have received them. If you have not received a mailing please note that last month we did offer an opportunity to get “virtual or online” books at no cost. If you need help with this, please email Charles Anderson – [canderson@ohsaa.org](mailto:canderson@ohsaa.org). To get other assistance with book mailings email Amanda Harding – [aharding@ohsaa.org](mailto:aharding@ohsaa.org). It’s not a surprise that the supply of books in our office is now low. Thanks to our office team, from many departments, that pitched in to rush out the second mailing. Also, thanks to our umpires who reported that their books had arrived but were unfortunately in the hands of someone else in their household.
- Due to the rush to get replacement books out not all umpires were sent a White Book in the second mailing. The White Book, along with all our bulletins can be accessed in the softball section of this link - <https://www.ohsaa.org/Officiating/DOD>. This web page has our bulletins from the last eight years along with several other resources.
- **Remember the online State Rules Meeting instructions were sent out in early February. The deadline was March 24 however for those who did not complete the meeting you can still do so (with a \$50 penalty) up until April 14 – reprinted here are the original details –**

The state rules meeting is now live on DragonFly! To access it, please visit your 2025-26 registration page on DragonFly. This is the same page in which you have paid your renewal fees on. Once there, click on the requirement that is titled “2026 SRI Meeting OHSAA Points of Emphasis”. You will be able to watch the video on that screen.

To access this screen, you can click on your name on the left side of your DragonFly page, and then select “My Info”. From there, you will see a box labeled “Prep for 2025-26 Official Eligibility”. That is where you can find the meeting!

You will select “Fill out form Electronically”, and it will take you to a screen where the video is available. After watching the video, you will select “Yes” to the question asking if you have watched the video, as well as signing your name at the bottom.

**Please note: You MUST sign your name and hit “done” on the screen to receive the credit. If you do not sign your name, your credit will not populate.**

This meeting is open without a \$50 late fee until Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM.

The meeting window will be up with a \$50 late fee from Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> until Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM.

**As a reminder, every official is required to attend at least one state rules meeting per year.**

**Loading Error Note:** If you are experiencing a loading error when trying to access the State Rules Meeting, try these steps:

If your page continues to spin without loading anything, and eventually a box with an "Exit Page" and "Wait" option, select the "Exit Page" option. It will take you to a "dead" page with a "reload" button in the middle. Select that button, and the meeting page should appear quickly.

For any questions, please contact Michael Cornathan ([mcornathan@ohsaa.org](mailto:mcornathan@ohsaa.org))

- In addition to the state meeting umpires are required to complete four educational credits – normally local meetings or Mechanics Clinics. There will be two online local meetings coming after the start of the season. The first online meeting was sent out via DragonFly on March 26, 2026. This meeting is available until April 8. I’ve found that a lot of unnecessary correspondence can be avoided by **carefully reading the instructions**. The second meeting will be issued later in April. Please make sure that you are up to date on your requirements. For those who attended Mechanics Clinics or local meetings held in conjunction with a state meeting those attendance records have been recently hand delivered to the Columbus office. These records will be posted in the coming weeks as the staff working very hard on these are not full time employees.
- Reminder and save the date – Our tournament clinic is Sunday, May 17. We have a new location this year and will be at Hilliard Memorial Middle School, 2900 Walker Rd,

Hilliard, OH 43026. That clinic will start at 1230PM with registration and doors open at noon. We will wrap up late afternoon.

- Filing OHSAA Game Reports – Our office recently sent a reminder concerning these. **The key point from that message is that reports can not be filed from the DragonFly app.** Information on this topic is found on page 24 of the White Book and continues to be accurate. Please follow these instructions when filing a report. The purpose of the White Book is to place as much information as possible in a single source for YOU!
  - **Have a play situation? – most umpires can quickly obtain information on these from their local association rules interpreter. If there is a further question the interpreter can email me and I will research. We do all these plays by email as all rulings are kept on hand for use in our bulletins or other training materials. This enhances our consistency around all parts of the state.**
  - **This Week’s Plays and Rulings –**
1. **Team A is taking the field and the umpire notices that a player is wearing sunglasses that have the capability to record or transmit audio and video. The umpire rules these glasses illegal and forces the player to remove them prior to taking the field. RULING: Incorrect ruling by the umpire. It is correct that a player cannot transmit or record audio or video from the playing surface. However, parallel with the previous interpretation in regard to smartwatches, a device is not limited due to its capabilities. Rather it is limited in the way a player can use the device. A player other than the catcher can wear a smartwatch provided they do not utilize the communication features of the device. Similarly in this case a player is allowed to wear sunglasses that could record or transmit, provided they do not utilize those features. If an umpire were to become aware that a player is utilizing features that are prohibited, then the appropriate penalty for the violation shall be enforced. In this case the penalty for this is ejection unless the offense is judged to be minor in nature. (1-9-6)**
  2. **Team A has #1 listed as their pitcher, in the second inning the coach reports #10 batting for #1. #10 bats and reaches first base safely and the coach reenters #1 then requests that #8, an eligible substitute, be allowed to courtesy run for #1 since they are the last player who physically occupied the pitching position. The umpire does not allow #8 to courtesy run for the pitcher as they did not bat and legally reach base. RULING: Correct ruling by the umpire. Although #1 is the last player who physically occupied the pitching position, they must bat and reach base legally (or earn the base) in order to be eligible for a courtesy runner. (8-10-2)**
  3. **Team A, the visiting team, has #1 listed as their pitcher and in the top of the first inning: In a) Team A’s coach requests to enter #3 for #1 prior to #1 coming to bat. In b) #1 bats and reaches base safely and utilizes a courtesy runner. In c) #1 does not utilize a courtesy runner in the top of the first inning. In b) and c) the coach request to enter #3 as their pitcher prior to a pitch being thrown in the bottom of the first inning. In all cases the umpire does not allow the substitution since, except for injury, #1 must throw at least one pitch to a batter prior to being replaced at the pitching position.**

**RULING:** Correct ruling in b) incorrect ruling in a) and c). The only time that a pitcher or catcher is required to face the first batter (one pitch), with an exception for injury, is in the bottom of the first inning when they have utilized a courtesy runner in the top of the first inning. (8-10-2)

4. In a Junior High/Middle School game a player of Team A wears metal cleats. **RULING:** Legal – the rules for Junior High/Middle School (grades 7 & 8) are identical to the rules for grades 9-12. This includes player equipment, pitching distance, batting order and substitution rules as well as all other aspects of the game. All NFHS rules and OHSAA modifications apply to all levels.
5. Pitcher steps in a legal position with the ball of the pivot foot on top of the rubber; heel of pivot foot is in dirt behind the rubber. The windup of this pitcher is a rock, not a step back and she raises her ball of her pivot foot off the rubber; thus no part of pivot foot is now touching the rubber. She then steps directly down where she started and legally pushes off. The question is when she does not maintain contact with the rubber during the rock back, is that an illegal pitch? **RULING:** Under Rule 6-1-2c-Note the pitcher must maintain contact with the pitcher's plate until she pushes off of it (drag or leap). Often times, contact may be lost so briefly and minimally that the umpires can not discern the break in contact. Since we never guess an illegal pitch that could not be called. If the umpire can detect that this contact with the pitcher's plate was lost an illegal pitch should be called.
6. Runner on third, one out. On a pop fly, shortstop makes a great catch. Runner on third takes off, not tagging, gets all the way to the plate and touches. Then realizes, she did not tag and returns to third. Can she return to third after touching the plate? **RULING:** Under Rule 8-3-2 the runner can return provided bases are touched in reverse order. However, this assumes that she has not entered dead ball territory - in that case she could not return and would be out on appeal. (Rule 8-7-19).
7. R1 advances from 1B to 2B on a wild pitch. She rounds 2B with no intention of continuing onto 3B when she is obstructed by F6. R1 is stepping back toward 2B when she hears the umpire say "obstruction" and then starts running toward 3B where she is tagged out. Should she be awarded 2B or is she out because she chose to attempt to advance to 3B after the *obstruction* call when she appeared to have intention of attempting this prior. **RULING:** This is one of our rules that is re-numbered for 2026 and is now 8-5-2. The rule has not changed beyond that. An obstructed runner may not be called out between the two bases where the runner was obstructed. There are six exceptions to this and those are listed on page 67 of the rule book – just one more complication with a difficult rule. This situation is not one of the six so the umpire is limited to an award of 2B or 3B as appropriate under the circumstances. You would award 2B in the play you describe.