



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Softball Bulletin

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- Second reminder - 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. To get other assistance with book mailings email Amanda Harding – 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 White Book is designed to give you information needed – all in one place for better accessibility.
- **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.

- **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 24th at 11:59 PM.

The meeting window will be up with a \$50 late fee from Wednesday, March 25th until Tuesday, April 14th 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)

- **BAT WRAPS - directly from the NFHS**

The NFHS has been alerted to a product that is being marketed as a bat barrel wrapping which covers the bat's graphics. The covering is shrink wrapped to the bat barrel, which poses several issues associated with bat compliance and is therefore prohibited from NFHS softball competition. Specifically, NFHS rules require:

Bats that are crack free. Bat wraps potentially cover cracks and could make them undetectable to the coach and/or umpire.

Bats that bear 2000, 2004, or the USA Softball All Games certification mark (except all wood bats made of a single piece of wood).

Bats that do not contain materials inside the bat or treatments/devices are used to alter the bat specifications and/or enhance performance.

A bat wrapping that covers the bat barrel also covers potential cracks, the USA Softball certification mark and the bat model name and number and would be considered an altered bat per NFHS Softball Rules 1-5-1 and 2-4-2a. Bat wraps are not permitted for NFHS softball competition.

And finally, the NFHS adheres to the USA Softball Bat Certification program. USA Softball has also prohibited this product for its championship play.

- **Weather Issues and Interrupted Games** – It seems like every year we have issues with the spring weather including thunderstorms. This topic is covered on page 30 of the White Book – please review and remember that we never play in conditions which include thunder or lightning in the area. Also, we wait for at least 30 minutes following the last sign of lightning or thunder in the area before taking the field and resuming play. We have had reports of umpires allowing teams to warm up on the field during this thirty minute period and this should NOT occur. Also please refer to pages 28 and 29 of the White Book for information on Game Ending/Suspended/Interrupted Games. These topics are just one example of using the White Book as our “GO TO” for information.
- Situation: I was the base umpire. Early in the game, with no runners on, there was a line shot to right center. Both fielders converged on it. Since I judged this to be a “difficult catch,” I chased to take the catch/no catch call. My plate umpire told me that we do not chase (cover fly balls in the outfield) in 2-umpire mechanics. Ruling: Your plate umpire was incorrect. Base umpires should go to the outfield when there is the possibility of a difficult catch. It is important to get the catch/no catch judgement correct. While this puts added burden on the plate umpire, there will be only one play at one base and the situation will usually dictate where that play will occur. Base umpires, when chasing, should not return to the infield to make calls but should turn and watch the ensuing play and may help the plate umpire with additional information.
- Situation: With a runner on 1B, the plate umpire gave the count as 3 balls, 1 strike when it should have been 2-and-1. The next pitch is a ball and the batter advances to 1B with the runner advancing to 2B. The defensive coach asks the plate umpire to verify the count with the base umpire. The base umpire convinces the plate umpire that the last pitch was Ball 3. The plate umpire refuses to make any changes, saying that since a pitch was thrown after he gave the erroneous count, that count became official. Ruling: There are several errors by the umpires. (1) If the base umpire thought that the plate umpire had given the wrong count, the base umpire should have consulted the plate umpire at that time. (2) The count may be corrected at any time during the batter’s turn

at bat, which does not end until a pitch is thrown to the next batter. (3) The batter should have been called back to plate to resume the at-bat with a 3-1 count. (4) The runner should have been returned to 1B since her advancement was the result of the umpires' error, applying Rule 10-2-3m. When base runners are advanced or put in jeopardy by a reversed ruling of the umpires, they may be returned to their proper bases.

- After Play Mechanics: At the end of each play, unless time has been called, the ball remains live. It is important that umpires keep at least one set of eyes on the field while taking their positions for the next play. To accomplish this, the plate umpire should hold their position, after the play ends, and watch the field while the base umpire moves to their next position. Once the base umpire gets to their position, or close enough to where they can see the field, the plate umpire should moved back to home plate. This system keeps both umpires "tuned in" to each other and working as a team. This also provides the opportunity to begin pre-pitch planning.