



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Softball Bulletin

Director of Officials Development – Softball

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In this issue –

Tournament Clinic May 17

Plays and Rulings

- **Reminder and save the date – Our tournament clinic is this 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 program will start at 1230PM. Registration and doors open at noon. **Important – The school has updated entry instructions --** Use Doors A1 (main entrance) and go down the hall to the Commons Area. We will wrap up late afternoon. This clinic will cover both the three and four umpire system mechanics as we will be using four umpire crews for all our 28 regional final games this season. The tournament clinic is always one of our training program highlights and remember that we have a new location this year. As this clinic has grown (nearly 200 last year) we simply got too big for our previous venue. As in the past our observers' team will meet in Whitehall Sunday morning before the clinic.
- **Reminder -** Fleming's Ref and Sport will be on hand for umpires needing to get equipment or update their wardrobe to look sharp for the OHSAA tournaments. Fleming's staff will be there prior to the meeting and will stay until the meeting starts. **It's always suggested and a good idea to place advance orders and reserve your size – please call 614 798 8888 to place your order and they will have it packaged and ready for you.**
- **Plays and Rulings –**
 1. Play – With pitchers now allowed to leap I have seen some of the good ones landing outside the pitching circle. Is this an illegal pitch? Ruling – No, there is no limit to the length of the leap and the pitching circle does not create a constraint for pitchers as they deliver the pitch. The only time the circle is used is in the enforcement of the Look Back Rule (8-8).
 2. Play – With the many methods being used of getting pitching signals I'm confused about who can give signals and where they must be taken. Ruling - The signal can be taken from

anyone and anywhere. Regardless of how and where the signal is transmitted, the requirement of Rule 6-1-1b is that the pitcher, while in contact with the pitcher's plate, take or simulate taking a signal from the catcher. The purpose of the rule is to protect the batter from both a safety perspective and create an equity for both offense and defense. The reason we include this in our emphasis point is the ongoing evolution of where these signals originate and the various means of delivering them.

3. Play - I umpired a softball game for two schools in Southeast Ohio. I would like clarification on who/why someone has decided a pitcher is not illegal with her pitches. The pitcher definitely leaps, legal, but lands on plant foot and pushes as she releases the pitch. I define this as a crow-hop, thus shortening the distance, illegal. She only lands on the front foot (outside the circle) after releasing the ball. When discussing with the coach he informed me, he had it sent all the way to Columbus, and it was deemed legal. I need clarification as to where to read or see this to educate myself if this is in fact legal. I chose not to call illegal until I could confirm the reasoning behind the acceptance of her mechanics. Ruling - First, let me say that no one at OHSAA is going to rule that a pitcher is legal or illegal. That would be impossible as the pitcher may not make her deliveries the same way each day, each inning, or even each pitch. If the OHSAA was making these judgments it would reduce the need for umpires. We have some information in the White Book -page 8 on this topic. I am confident that you'll find the content both helpful and timely. Also, you may want to review Rule 2-47 which is only three lines and defines a replant. This clarifies that such occurs based only on the push of the PIVOT foot, not the front foot. There is never a requirement that the pitcher land in or stay in the circle. The circle only has purpose for the look back rule. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a spot in front of the pitchers plate and causing the front foot to move forward is a replant and an illegal pitch. (2-47)
4. Play - In the third inning Team A is batting with B3 due to bat but B4 enters the batter's box. With a 2 ball-2 strike count Team A's coach approaches the umpire telling them that B3 should be the proper batter. The umpire does not allow B3 to take B4's place stating that only the defense can appeal batting out of order. RULING: Incorrect ruling. The rule allows for either team to correct the error while the batter is still at bat, with the proper batter taking their position in the batter's box and assuming the ball and strike count. Only the defense can appeal after an improper batter has completed their time at bat, but during the at bat the error can be corrected by either team. (7-1-1, 7-1-2, 7.1.2 Situation A)
5. Play - With R1 on third base, they take a big lead on the pitch and are already walking back slowly toward third base as the ball is returned to F1 in the circle. F1 walks to the back of the circle looking away from R1. R1 seeing that F2 is not watching them anymore stops short of third base and advances immediately toward home where they are safe as F1 was late in getting the ball to F2. The umpire rules this a violation of the look-back rule and calls R1 out. RULING: Incorrect ruling as described. As described R1 has started to return to third base prior to the look-back rule being in effect, so they have not utilized their one allowed stop. Since they did not return and touch third base (stop at a base) and only stopped once after the look-back rule was in effect and then immediately advanced toward home they did not violate the look-back rule. (8-8-2, 8-8-3)
6. Play - It is noted that Team A has batters with a) helmets that have no face protector. In b) have no face protector that is certified by SEI to meet the NOCSAE standard, but do have a device attached to the helmet that has an area that extends from the helmet and protects the jaw of the batter on the side facing the pitcher. The umpire rules that these helmets are not legal for use in NFHS Softball and has them removed from the game and issues a team

warning for utilizing illegal equipment. RULING: Correct ruling in both cases. All fast-pitch batting helmets must be equipped with a face protector that is certified by SEI to meet the NOCSAE standard. These face protectors are designed to provide full face protection for the batter. It must also have the phrase, "Meets NOCSAE Standard at the time of manufacture" permanently affixed to the face protector. (1-7-6, 3-5-1 Penalty)

7. Play - B1 hits a ground ball to F6. They run to first base, contacting the colored portion of the base prior to F3 receiving the ball. They overrun first base and return to the colored portion of the double first base. F3 then tags the runner as they are standing only on the colored portion of first base, and the umpire rules them out stating they must return to the white portion of the base. RULING: Incorrect ruling. The rule allows the offense and defense to touch the white or colored portion of the base: a. On a fair ball hit to the outfield with no play being attempted or when the runner is returning to first base. b. On a fly ball tag-up play. c. (F.P.) On an attempted pick-off play. d. On a base on balls. (8-11-3)
8. Play - In the fifth inning the coach approaches the umpire and in a) says "Blue I want to enter #11 for #1, #12 for #2 and #13 for #3". In b) says "Blue I want #11 to bat for #1 but #1 will reenter when we go on defense." In both cases the umpire states they can accept #11 for #1 but the remaining changes are projected substitutions and cannot be accepted at that time and must be made when the player is actually entering the game. RULING: Incorrect ruling in a) correct ruling in b). A projected substitute is an attempt to enter a substitute without first removing a player from that position in the lineup. In a) all three players can be removed from the lineup and replaced by their substitutes when the coach requests the changes. #11, #12 and #13 are replaced in the lineup by their substitutes when requested and #1, #2 and #3 are officially in the game in those positions in the lineup. It is good preventative umpiring to remind the coach that all three players are officially in the game when reported (now) so even if they do not get to bat that half inning they are now locked into that position in the lineup. However, all three changes are able to be made at the time requested and should be accepted by the umpire. In b) #11 batting for #1 is able to be recorded on the lineup card when reported. However, the reentry of #11 cannot be recorded until after #1 has completed their at bat, this is what makes this reentry a projected substitution and prohibits the umpire from accepting it when reported. A lineup card is an active document that is intended to provide an accurate account of which players are active in the game at the current moment in time. All substitution issues are decided by the plate umpire's lineup card, so it must be accurate and current. If there was a question during the offensive half of the inning #11 has to be listed as the player that is active in that position in the lineup to settle any possible lineup issue. After the offensive half inning the coach can then report #1 reentering for #11 so that the lineup then accurately reflects the players currently active in the lineup. (2-57-4)