



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Jerry Fick

Softball Bulletin

Director of Officials Development – Softball

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Bulletin 26 -2

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- In this and our early season bulletins we will continue our focus on training opportunities and preparation for an outstanding 2026 season. Here are the topics being shared:

RULE BOOK MAILING INFORMATION UPDATE

MECHANICS CLINIC SCHEDULE - REGISTRATION INFORMATION – FIRST CLINIC FEBRUARY 7

STATE MEETING INFORMATION – FIRST MEETING NEXT MONDAY, JANUARY 26

UMPIRE UNIFORM INFORMATION

- Preseason packets are being mailed from the Columbus office and as mentioned in the last bulletin these are being sent during the last half of January. I was in the office Friday and we are right on schedule with roughly one third of the envelopes being mailed that day. With these on the way our now team has the space to work on the next group to be mailed and those should be sent this week with more to follow later in the month. **REMINDER** – book mailings are **not** all sent at the same time and **not** sent by First Class Mail so they may be delivered at various times to umpires. Look for these to arrive in late January or the first half of February. If an umpire does not receive a packet the first thing to do is check and make sure that they have renewed their permit for this year! This can be checked on DragonFly. Also, these mailings are not forwarded by the postal service. Umpires need to update their DragonFly profile and address when they move or have other updates.
- Soon it will be February, and our Softball Mechanics Clinics will be underway. Our opening clinic is February 7 at New Concord – East Muskingum MS. **The improved registration process is listed below. We encourage early registration for the clinics as that allows us to have proper staffing with plenty of individual instruction, enough pitchers and catchers for our plate stations, adequate supplies, and enough lunches.** The clinics are designed to help umpires improve their skills and attain their advancement goals. Staff will be from the OHSAA Softball Umpire Instructional Team and will include OHSAA softball tournament observers. Umpires attending will receive one local rules meeting credit and **also receive SIX points added to their TOURNAMENT SELECTION SCORE.** The cost is still only \$60 which includes all instruction, lunch, and a registration gift. This clinic will be a working clinic – attendees should come prepared for both plate and base drills in an indoor setting. Please bring your plate equipment - OHSAA umpire uniform is recommended. Please also bring gym shoes as the weather will likely require that these be indoor events. Stations will be rotated in order that attendees can

work with each instructor. We have learned that many of our newer umpires were as anxious as our veterans to take advantage of our Mechanics Clinics. These clinics provide a great supplement to the online RefPreps classes offered to our newest umpires. **CLINICS GROUPS WILL BE DIVIDED BASED ON EXPERIENCE LEVEL – THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR BOTH NEWER AND VETERAN UMPIRES TO WORK ON IMPROVING THEIR MECHANICS IN A SETTING BASED ON THEIR EXPERIENCE LEVEL.**

Questions should be directed to Clinic Director Jerry Fick, OHSAA Director of Officials Development – Softball, at jfick@ohsaa.org.

2026 SOFTBALL UMPIRE MECHANICS CLINICS SCHEDULE

All sessions are from 9 AM to 4PM

- Saturday, February 7 – East/Southeast – New Concord – East Muskingum Middle School - 13120 John Glenn School Rd. – across street from John Glenn High School – Enter Main Entrance**
- Saturday, February 14 – Northwest – Findlay – Liberty-Benton Middle School Middle School – 9190 County Road 9. – Enter MIDDLE SCHOOL – Main entrance**
- Sunday, February 22 – Northeast – Berea – Midpark High School – 165 E. Bagley Rd. - Enter at side gym doors in back of school off Eastland Rd.**
- Saturday, February 28 – Southwest – Westchester – Lakota West Freshman School – 5050 Tylersville Road – Enter at West Side of Building near Athletic Fields**
- Sunday, March 1 – Central – Hilliard – Bradley High School – 2800 Walker Rd.**

To register for these events please follow the instructions -

REGISTRATION FORM

Select Location:

- Saturday, February 7 – East/Southeast – New Concord – East Muskingum Middle School - 13120 John Glenn School Rd. – across street from John Glenn High School – Enter Main Entrance**
- Saturday, February 14 – Northwest – Findlay – Liberty-Benton Middle School Middle School – 9190 County Road 9. – Enter MIDDLE SCHOOL – Main entrance**
- Sunday, February 22 – Northeast – Berea – Midpark High School – 165 E. Bagley Rd. - Enter at side gym doors in back of school off Eastland Rd.**
- Saturday, February 28 – Southwest – Westchester – Lakota West Freshman School – 5050 Tylersville Road – Enter at West Side of Building near Athletic Fields**
- Sunday, March 1 – Central – Hilliard – Bradley High School – 2800 Walker Rd.**

Name: _____

DragonFly # _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Primary Phone Number _____

Years Registered as an OHSAA Softball Umpire _____

Attendees will also receive SIX points added to their TOURNAMENT SELECTION SCORE.

Payment of \$60 may be by our online registration/ticketing system or by check. We have a new simplified online registration process - to register online use the links listed below for each clinic – **IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO USE THE CTRL BUTTON WHEN CLICKING ON THE APPROPRIATE LINK.**

[East/Southeast Softball Clinic - New Concord](#)

[Northwest Softball Clinic - Findlay](#)

[Northeast Softball Clinic - Berea](#)

[Southwest Softball Clinic - Westchester](#)

[Central Softball Clinic - Columbus](#)

If you chose to register using the paper form above checks are made payable to OHSAA and mailed with registration form to: OHSAA, Attn: Accounting, 4080 Roselea Place, Columbus, OH 43214.

- **STATE MEETING INFORMATION – FIRST MEETING IS JANUARY 26** - As in the past, all softball umpires must complete four education credits (local meetings, etc.) and one state rules meeting. The state meeting will be available both online and in person. The **BEST WAY** to start your preparation for the coming season is to attend a “face-to-face” State Rules Interpretation Meeting. There will be seven in person meetings. **Each meeting will feature sessions of about two hours and in addition to the state meeting will review the most important items that we want to cover prior to the season. By attending the entire session, you will receive credit for a local meeting in addition to the state softball meeting.** There is no need to “pre-register” for face-to-face State meetings. The schedule is listed below with all meetings starting at 6PM.

Monday, January 26 – Columbus – Franklin Heights High School – 1001 Demorest Rd.

Wednesday, January 28 - New Concord – John Glenn High School - 13115 John Glenn School Rd.

Tuesday, February 3 – **West Chester - Lakota West High School, 8940 Union Centre Blvd. - Cafeteria - Enter through cafeteria doors east end of building – Door #24**

Thursday, February 5 – Cleveland - Berea-Midpark High School - 165 E Bagley Rd. - **Enter at side gym doors in back of school off of Eastland Rd.**

Thursday, February 12 – Findlay – Donnell Middle School – 301 Baldwin Ave.

Tuesday, February 17 – Piqua – Upper Valley Career Center – 8811 Career Dr.

Thursday, February 19 –Canton –Stark County Educational Service Ctr., 6057 Strip Ave NW

The online state meeting for softball will be available by the week ending February 6. Details will be emailed to all officials and will include both login instructions and the deadlines for completing the meeting.

- We have received several questions concerning uniform updates for 2026. This information is included in the White Book, which is part of the annual mailing. The White Book can also be accessed at this link – again it may be necessary to Control Click to open the link - <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Officiating/dod/Softball/2026OHSAAWhiteBook.pdf> When using the White Book note that we have expanded to 36 pages and to simplify reference work included an enlarged Table of Contents on the front cover. Here is the uniform information reprinted - *There are no changes to the softball umpire uniform for 2026 but there are some clarifications as well as some improvements coming in 8 years.*

*Although the OHSAA has an updated logo the officials' uniform logo stays the same. We have made updates to our Handbook for Officials to reflect the change made back in 2024 - the approved navy blue knit cap with the OHSAA logo may be worn in lieu of the navy cap for cold weather situations. We've also clarified that the plate umpire may wear a short or long sleeve shirt, and the base umpire could wear a jacket or vice versa. In our meetings and publications last year we provided advance notice that we will be making a transition to have charcoal gray pants as our default color and eventually to become our only color for pants. This is primarily for two reasons – first, the charcoal shade seems to hold the color better without fading and second, as more baseball/ softball organizations make this change it appears that many vendors are reducing availability of heather gray pants. We are taking this opportunity to further update you on next steps in this transition: **For 2026 - In the event the umpires do not agree, heather gray pants shall be worn. This will allow the umpires to wear either pants color, but all must be dressed alike. (NO CHANGE).** **For 2027 - In the event the umpires do not agree, charcoal gray pants shall be worn. This will allow the umpires to wear either pants color, but all must be dressed alike.** When purchasing new pants, umpires are encouraged to obtain charcoal gray pants. These will become mandatory in the next few years. Also, as we make this transition, we will take the opportunity to use navy blue ball bags as choice of color for that item.*

Some other reminders as to uniforms:

- A navy shirt with the OHSAA embroidered or sublimated logo. It is not permissible to wear a long sleeve garment under a short sleeve shirt.
- A jacket shall be the red shoulder stripe model – Navy with red/ white trim on the shoulder. The OHSAA logo shall be embroidered on the jacket.
- A navy cap with the OHSAA logo is required. The OHSAA embroidered or sublimated logo is the only logo permitted on shirts, jackets and hats.
- Finally, we are observing umpires wearing ankle-length socks which expose the lower leg, particularly when the plate umpire drops into the set position. Please wear socks that cover the mid-calf—this looks so much neater.