



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Softball Bulletin

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**THIS ISSUE OF THE SOFTBALL BULLETIN OPENS WITH SOME REMINDERS AND THEN CONTINUES WITH SOME ADDITIONAL UPDATES INCLUDING PLAY SITUATIONS AND RULINGS**

- **Online Local Meetings** – as previously announced there will be two of these with one available mid to late March and one mid April. Details and login instructions will be emailed to all umpires when these are published. Watch for the first meeting soon!
- The online state meeting is still available. To access, log in to your myOHSAA profile, click the “Rules Meetings” icon in the top right, click “Find a State Meeting” from the left side menu, then select “Softball” from the “Sports” dropdown menu, “Official” from “Meeting Type” dropdown menu, and then click “Search”. You may view the online meeting on any device except for a Google Chromebook. A Google Chromebook is a type of laptop computer, entirely different from the popular internet browser Google Chrome. You may view the online meetings using the internet browser Google Chrome.  
**PLEASE NOTE THIS MEETING MUST BE COMPLETED BY MIDNIGHT ON MARCH 26. AFTER THAT TIME A \$50 PENALTY FEE APPLIES – THIS IS BECAUSE UMPIRES ARE EXPECTED TO COMPLETE THE MEETING PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SEASON.**
- **Rules Test** - The OHSAA is offering an optional exam for umpires who wish to improve their rules study and knowledge. This will also provide umpires with an opportunity to earn extra points for their tournament composite rating for the 2023 season. This exam was available on Arbiter as of [March 18](#) and will now close on [April 8](#). Please note the exam must be completed in this time frame as it will not be extended. **There have been some issues discovered with the test which resulted from the rotation of questions from the NFHS testing bank not going as we expected. This has resulted in the test not including all of our preferred questions. There are a couple of questions duplicated so I would suggest that you be doubly careful to get those correct. Also question #38 refers to the NFHS umpire uniform and would not apply in Ohio. In order to answer this question correctly you should go to Rule 10-4-2 on page 84 of the rule book and you will see that a black jacket is never part of the NFHS uniform.** Umpires who

complete the optional rules test will receive additional point credit for their tournament officials rating based on their score as follows:

94% and above - 3 points

86% - 92% - 2 points

80-84% - 1 point

**To access the exam, please log on to [arbitersports.com](http://arbitersports.com). From there, select "OHSAA Central Hub." Hint: click on your picture or the picture icon – this is in the upper righthand corner. That will bring you to a new page, and at the top of that page, select "testing." This will bring you to a new page where you can select the exam you need. Again, this test is optional. We hope that you find it useful in your rules study.**

- Hold the date – Our Pre-Tournament Clinic will be held Sunday, May 15 at Waggoner Rd. Junior High School in Reynoldsburg. Registration will begin at noon and the clinic will conclude around 4PM. All OHSAA umpires our welcome. In addition to other information we will highlight the three umpire system used in our Regional and District games.
- The OHSAA has adopted an addition to our procedures for suspended games. Due to timing issues this was not included in our state meeting or White Book but can be found in the online Softball Manual. It is reprinted in its entirety here.

**Rule 3-1-3 states: The team's lineup card shall include first initial and last name, jersey number, position and batting order of each starting player and shall include each eligible substitute. PENALTY: After the lineup card has been submitted to and verified by the umpire and a change is subsequently made to a player/substitute name or number, or if a player/substitute is added to the lineup card, the umpire shall issue a team warning to the head coach of the team involved. Any further changes made to a player/substitute name or number results in the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench area for the remainder of the game.**

In Ohio we have this exception to this rule - **EXCEPTION: If a game is suspended and resumed on another date the head coach may make any number of additions to the list of players and substitutes or uniform number changes to the lineup card provided such changes are reported to the umpire immediately prior to the resumption of play on the new playing date.**

**Rationale:** Due to weather conditions and darkness, suspended games with resumption of play on another date can be a common occurrence. This exception allows for lineup card numbering changes and player additions to be made in these situations without penalty. These changes and additions are often necessary for a variety of valid reasons – damaged uniforms, players moving from JV to varsity or vice versa, etc .

- **PLAY SITUATION :** In the first inning, the offensive coach notices that the other team's pitcher is placing a hand into a back pocket before a number of pitches and then going directly to the ball.

In (a), the plate umpire asks the pitcher and is informed that the pitcher is using a drying agent that is comparable to powdered rosin. The umpire inspects the ball and finds no discoloration and that no material has been transferred to the ball. In (b), later in the third inning a foul ball has been returned to the plate umpire who notices that the ball is discolored, and a tacky substance has been transferred to the ball. **RULING:** Legal in (a), drying agents comparable to powdered rosin and designed for use in softball are permissible and by rule do not require the player to wipe off the hand before making contact with the ball. In (b), comparable drying agents are allowable unless they discolor and/or transfer material to the ball. Once the umpire notices discoloration or material that has been transferred to the ball from the drying agent being used, this material is no longer permitted (6-2-2). Since this is a violation of Rule 6-2-2 an illegal pitch is called if a pitch has been thrown when the ball has such a substance on it. This is also a violation of Rule 1-3-6 and in turn Rule 3-6-1 for the failure to use legal equipment. The penalty for 3-6-1 includes a team warning for the first equipment violation with the offender and the head coach being restricted to the dugout on any subsequent violation. **COMMENT:** These products are designed to dry the player's hand without transferring material that would result in the ball becoming discolored or making it "tacky". It is impossible for an umpire on the field to determine the exact makeup of drying agents being used by the pitcher during a softball game, or for them to determine if the product has been altered from its original design or chemical makeup. Drying agents are allowed to be used unless/until it is noted that they have discolored the ball or transferred material onto the ball. If either of these conditions are noted at any point during the game, their use will no longer be permitted. If the player has another drying agent (a different towel with the product) that new product can be utilized provided there is no discoloration or material transferred to the ball while using that new item.

- A reminder on bat sensors – These are attachments to the bat knob and are used to measure swing speed. They are not legal for NFHS play (Rule 1-8-1) and the NFHS has updated the penalty for use this season. **PLAY SITUATION :** B1 enters the batter's box with a legal bat which has had a bat sensor added to measure swing speed. The umpire observes this or defense notes this and calls this to the attention of the umpire. **RULING:** When discovered the item must be removed from the game or be made legal. The umpire will issue a team warning (unless such a warning has already been issued), and the next violation of Rule 3-6-1 by that team will result in the offender and the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game. In addition, since the batter entered the batter's box with the illegal bat, Rule 7-4-2 would also apply and the batter would be ruled out.
- **PLAY SITUATION :** With no outs and no runners on base B1 hits a ball toward F6. B1 beats F6's throw to F3 but fails to touch first base as they overrun the base. **RULING:** The base umpire should signal and verbalize safe. The umpire's first responsibility is to rule on the play at first base and since the batter-runner was not legally put out prior to reaching first base, they should signal and verbalize safe. Once a runner passes a base, they are considered to have touched that base until properly appealed. If the defense properly appeals B1 missing first base prior to them returning to first base, the umpire would then rule on this appeal and call B1 out. (2-1-10; 8-2-2)