



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** – the second will be available mid April. Details and login instructions will be emailed to all umpires when published. Watch your emails!
- **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. 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, 360 South Waggoner Rd. in Reynoldsburg. Registration will begin at

noon and the clinic will conclude around 4PM. All OHSAA umpires are welcome. In addition to other information we will highlight the three umpire system used in our Regional and District games.

- 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. THE FINAL DEADLINE, WITH PENALTY, IS APRIL 25.
- We have heard from a couple of schools that are having difficulty obtaining softballs due to supply chain issues. Please note that any softball with one of the marks found at Figure 1-4 (page 11) of the NFHS Rule Book may be used. There is no requirement for any OHSAA mark on the softball. The NFHS website includes a total of 41 models from over a dozen manufacturers - <https://nfhs.org/AuthenticatingMark/>
- Update on bat sensors – we discussed this in the last bulletin and these items are not permitted under NFHS Rules. There are some bats manufactured and sold with a sensor which is removable. The item that is prohibited is the sensor and the bat can be used when the sensor has been removed. There is a plug that may be inserted to replace the sensor or the bat may be used without either the sensor or plug.
- It seems most questions we receive are about equipment and the latest item is reflective sunglasses. These items are not automatically illegal – don’t confuse this with the rule prohibiting a mirror like surface on the batter or catcher’s helmets (Rules 1-6-1 and 1-7-1). At the same time if an umpire determines the item to be distracting to others it may not be worn.
- Sticking with equipment questions – please remember that a wristband with playcard is considered equipment (not part of the uniform rule) and is permitted as long as it is a single, solid color, and not optic yellow. The pitcher may not wear this on her pitching arm. As the name states a wristband must be worn on the wrist – not on the belt.
- **SITUATION:** R1 on 3B and R2 on 2B. As B3 swings, F2 commits catcher’s obstruction. B3 grounds to F6 and R2 is called for interference when she hinders F6 fielding the batted ball. **RULING:** The catcher’s obstruction resulted in a delayed dead ball and the interference results in a dead ball. The interference penalty has precedence and R2 is out, R1 returned to third base (unless she scored before the interference) and B3 is

awarded first base. **COMMENT:** This ruling may seem to unfairly penalize the offense but as per case book play 8.6.10G it is correct. This ruling supersedes all previous rulings including one in our first online meeting.

- **SITUATION :** With R1 on first base and no outs, B2 swings and misses strike three. As B2 is crossing in front of the plate returning to the first base dugout: (a) R1 is returning to first base play. In (b) F2 is throwing to second base to make a play on R1 who was stealing on the pitch when the throw hits B2's helmet and the ball ricochets toward first base. **RULING:** In (a), although B2 was hit with F2's throw there was no interference on this play. In order to have interference in this situation there must be a play being made on another runner as listed in 8-6-16c. Since R1 was not stealing and F2's throw was intended to return the ball to F1, there was no play to interfere with. In this case, a dead ball is called, R1 remains at first base and the ball is returned to the pitcher. There are other situations in the rules book that parallel this play where it is interference if there is a play being made, but simply a dead ball and runners return to last base touched if no play is obvious. These rules include interference by an on-deck batter (7-4-4) and a blocked ball caused by offensive equipment (8-6-15). In (b) F2 was making a play on R1 attempting to steal second base. This is interference by a retired player, the ball is dead and the runner closest to home, R1 in this case, is declared out. (7-4-4 PENALTIES 1; 8-6-15; 8-6-16c)
- **SITUATION :** F2 or another defensive player is wearing a radio transmitter/earpiece to receive signals or instructions from the coach. **RULING:** Under Rule 1-8-6 electronic devices may not be used on the field of play. The penalty is in Rule 3-6-1. The equipment shall be removed. The umpire shall issue a team warning. The next offender and the head coach shall be restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game. Of course, if that team has already had an equipment warning the bench restrictions are immediately applied.
- **SITUATION :** A player is wearing plastic inserts where she previously wore other jewelry. **RULING:** Under Rule 3-2-12 plastic inserts are jewelry. The penalty is in Rule 3-6-1. The item(s) shall be removed. The umpire shall issue a team warning. The next offender and the head coach shall be restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game. Of course, if that team has already had an equipment warning the bench restrictions are immediately applied.
- **SITUATION:** The batter comes to bat with a legal bat but one or more rubber "donuts" have been added to the knob to absorb shock and/or help the batter choke up. **RULING:** These are legal and the only restriction is that these have to be secure so if more than one is used to assist in choking up they would be allowed as long as they are secure and do not cause a condition that an umpire judges could cause a batter to lose their grip on the bat.