



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Softball Bulletin

Director of Officials Development – Softball

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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 and final online meeting is now published and will be available until April 27. Details and login instructions were emailed to all umpires on April 20, 2022. Follow those instructions and note that the deadline won't be extended.
- **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 2022 National Federation Softball Rules Questionnaire will be sent to all umpires this week. This will come from the OHSAA office. We encourage you to take the time to complete this survey and be a part of the rules making process.
- 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". THE FINAL DEADLINE, WITH \$50 PENALTY, IS APRIL 25.
- Thanks to all of our umpires who took the optional rules test and worked to improve their rules knowledge which in turn helps our schools and the young people who play the game. For those who wish to review the test and its answers you can go to this link:
  - [2022 OHSAA Softball online test.xls](#)
- **Sorry but this is repeat from the last bulletin as we continue to have issues – Some 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.**

**We need everyone to handle this correctly – this information was included in our state meeting as well!**

- **SITUATION:** B1 comes to bat with an “extended barrel” bat which includes one of the three marks from Figure 1-6 and is not on the non-approved list. Is this legal? **RULING:** The NFHS does not specifically prohibit extended barrel bats and as long as the bat has the proper certification marks and does not appear on the banned list, it can be used in high school softball.
- **SITUATION:** B1 enters the batter’s box with a legal bat which has had a bat sensor added to measure swing speed. Either the umpire or the defense notes this and asks the umpire to rule that this is an altered bat resulting in the batter being called out and the batter and her head coach being ejected. **Ruling –** An altered bat is a bat that was once legal but has been structurally changed as defined in Rule 2-4-2a. Since this bat was not structurally changed the actual violation is of 1-8-1 and 3-6-1 which requires the use of legal equipment. When discovered the item must be removed from the game or be made legal, the umpire will issue a team warning, 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.
- **Question:** Can eye black be worn by a softball player? Can it include glitter? **Ruling -** Eye black is not prohibited in softball rules. It can be of any color and could include glitter provided the umpire did not find the glitter or eye black to be distracting in such a way that it impacted the game. Of course, there can be no unsporting comments painted on the face.
- **Question:** We have been running into players with band aids on ears and noses. In these cases upon inquiry umpires have been told band aids are covering cuts or scratches or the band aid is a lucky charm. In each case players said they did not have ear rings. What is the course of action for this? **Ruling -** There are a number of things to consider here. First, just because a player has a bandage on the ear or nose I would not suggest that we automatically confront the player's coach. I think that we would not do this if the player had a bandage somewhere else. At the same time, if the umpire can see that there is something under the bandage the coach should be asked to check this as he/she is responsible for making sure that everyone is legally equipped. If it is determined that illegal jewelry is being worn it is a violation of Rule 3-2-12 and the penalty is in Rule 3-6-1. The item must be removed and the umpire shall issue a warning to that team with the next offender and head coach restricted to the dugout for the rest of the game. Of course if this is a second violation of any equipment rule and the warning was already issued both would be restricted on this offense.
- **Question:** In our 4th game into the season we had an umpire tell us that he's been told not to allow home run celebrations at the plate this year. Is this something that OHSAA

has instituted for 2022? Ruling - We did have a Covid modification in 2021 covering this and that was based on a suggestion from the Ohio Department of Health. We notified everyone earlier that the 2021 Covid Modifications are no longer in effect. Please note that this is covered in Case Book play 3.6.6G and it is emphasized that all bench personnel must remain behind the umpire and the batter's boxes in order that all runners can complete their required baserunning responsibilities and the umpire has a clear opportunity to view runners touching all bases.

- **Question:** Can an electronic device or app be used in the coaches box for scorekeeping purposes? Ruling – Yes, Rule 3-6-10 specifically allows scorekeeping devices in the coach's box. With the increase in electronic game tracking software this is becoming more and more popular. As long as the device (tablet, phone, etc.) is being used for scorekeeping, by rule it is allowed for use in the coach's box.
- **Situation:** B1 steps into the batter's box with the toes of their left foot on the ground outside of the line that makes up the batter's box. The umpire instructs the batter that they must be completely within the lines of the batter's box in order to be in proper batting position. **RULING:** Correct ruling. The batter must be completely within the lines of the batter's box to be legally prepared for the next pitch. Within the batter's box includes the lines of the batter's box, if B1 moves their foot back so that no part of their foot is past the batter's box line they are legally within the batter's box for the start of the pitch. (7-3-1)
- **Situation:** B1 swings and makes contact with the pitch while their foot: In (a) is touching home plate; in (b) is still partially in contact with the batter's box line and also in contact with home plate; in (c) is in contact with the ground completely outside the batter's box; in (d) is partially in contact with the batter's box line and the other part on their foot is in contact with the ground outside of the batter's box. **RULING:** Illegal in (a, b and c), the batter is out whether the ball is hit fair or foul. The batter is out if they make contact with the ball while either foot is touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or while any part of their foot is touching home plate. Legal in (d) as long as part of their foot is still within the lines of the batter's box they are still considered to be within the batter's box. (7-4-8)
- **Situation:** With bases loaded and no outs, B4 is at bat. R1 and R2 both leave their base prior to the ball leaving the pitcher's hand. The umpire calls a dead ball, no pitch and rules both R1 and R2 out. **RULING:** Incorrect ruling. A runner failing to keep contact with their base prior to the ball leaving the pitcher's hand is an immediate dead ball. As soon as the first runner lost contact with their base the ball becomes dead, they are ruled out and any other runners are returned to their bases. (8-6-18)