



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Softball Bulletin

Director of Officials Development – Softball

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Bulletin 24 - 7

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- This bulletin will provide some meeting updates and answers to the most frequently asked questions of the past weeks.
- **Our Pre-Tournament Clinic will be held Sunday, May 5 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. With the increase to seven divisions in 2025 there will be a significant increase in the number of regional and district games using three umpires. For those who want to be considered for these games, now is the time to start working on the three umpire system, it's positioning, coverages, and rotations. This is always one of our highlight training programs with a big crowd – no reservations are needed.**
- On the topic of mechanics, don't forget that the new and improved NFHS Softball Umpires Manual is a great tool provided by the OHSAA to help all of us as we work throughout the season on our mechanics. Make it part of your in-season study plan.
- **ONLINE MEETING # 2 ---** We apologize for the technical issue with the original file and offer special thanks to Lizzy Wilson in our Columbus office and also our outside vendor for their efforts to make this meeting available. It is now fixed and ready to go! Please read the information below and pay attention to the change in availability dates. Also special thanks to George and Sheilah Gulas, Tom Hathaway, and Chick Ludwig for their efforts with our 2024 online meetings.

The OHSAA has provided online local meetings for most sports within the local meeting window. Most sports will offer two online local meetings, cross country will offer one online local meeting.

These are optional meetings for officials to view and each meeting can be completed for **one local meeting credit each**. Your attendance credit is not uploaded automatically upon completion like the online state rules meeting.

The meeting will only be available on the timeline below. Your attendance will be uploaded on the timeline below:

Meeting Available	• Last Date Available	• Credit Upload
Wednesday, April 17th	• Saturday, April 27th	• Tuesday, April 30th

To access the online local meetings for your sport:

- 1 - Log in to your myOHSAA profile - <https://officials.myohsaa.org/Logon>
- 2 - Select the orange "Official" icon
- 3 - On the left-side menu toward the bottom select the button labeled "Special Presentations" under the orange section header labeled "OHSAA Resources"
- 4 - Once on the Special Presentations screen, select the meeting for your sport by selecting the "View" button for your sport's meeting.
- 5 - After the "Last Date Available" listed above, the meeting will not be available for viewing or local meeting credit.
  - It comes as no surprise that many questions received this month have had to do with suspended, interrupted, and shortened games. Rather than reprinting all those questions here we will remind you that the White Book – page 23 has much information and several examples. Please refer to this as needed – much easier than trying to memorize a complicated topic.
  - Play - After the DP hits safely, can the Flex run for the DP and use a Courtesy runner for the Flex(F2)? Ruling – Not permitted. This is covered in the last sentence of 8-9-2 - the pitcher or catcher must bat and reach base legally to be eligible for a courtesy runner.
  - Question - Can you please clarify the rule about wrist play armbands? In the rules meeting, it stated that the pitchers must wear them on their arm only. Do all players (other than pitchers) also have to wear it on their arm or can they be on their belt? Ruling - Rule 3-2-7 was changed to clarify that the wristband with playcard may be worn only on the wrist. For the pitcher it must be on the non-pitching wrist. Other players could have it on either wrist. It may never be worn on the belt. This is not really a rule change but a language clarification to make all this more clear. Violations would be penalized under Rule 3-6-1. The first equipment violation of any type is a team warning. On a second or subsequent equipment violation of any type, the offender and head coach are both restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game.

- Play – The umpire notes that a player in the on deck circle is using a non-approved bat. Should the umpire ignore this until the batter enters the box and then eject the batter and coach. Ruling – No, the use of the non-approved bat in the on deck circle is a violation of Rule 3-6-1 and penalized as in the previous bullet. By handling the situation in this manner we are using preventative officiating and avoiding two ejections. The illegal equipment was brought on to the field and used, even if only in the on deck circle. Case Book Play 1.5.2 Situation D covers a similar situation and provides support for this ruling: "The umpire notices that B1's bat has a "tacky" substance extending beyond the 15-inch limit (a) before B1 steps into the batter's box (b) after hitting a long foul ball. RULING: In (a), B1 may obtain a legal bat without penalty. In (b), B1 would be declared out for using an illegal bat. No ejection occurs since the bat was not altered (structurally changed) or non-approved. In both (a) and (b), the illegal bat is removed from the game (or made to be legal) and the umpire issues a warning to the head coach. The next player not properly equipped will result in the player and the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench for the duration of the game. (Rules 1-5-2b, 3-5-1, 3-6-1, 7-4-2)"
- Question – Can a team start a game with eight players? Can they continue a game with seven players? Ruling - Each team must start with nine players (Rule 3-1-1). Eight players are required to continue a game (Rule 4-3-1g). These rules apply at all levels.
- Question – We have a local team that has players wearing red face paint. Is the legal? Ruling - There is no rule that prohibits or restricts face paint unless something unsporting or derogatory is being printed. That would be a violation of other rules.
- Question – In our conference there some competitive imbalance when it comes to softball. We are scheduled to play a school over the next few weeks, and both coaches would like to play a DH consisting of 3 inning games. This is in the best interest of the players, and will allow us to fit both games in one day, minimizing travel for a game that is not going to be competitive. Is this something we can do and still count as official games if both coaches and the ADs agree to it? Ruling - Two NFHS rules apply here, both by state association adoption and both have been adopted by the OHSAA Board of Directors. Under Rule 4-2-3 Note 2 the OHSAA allows doubleheaders to be scheduled as five inning games provided both schools agree. Also under Rule 4-2-3 by mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the plate umpire remaining play of a game that has been started may be shortened at any time or by the same agreement a game may be terminated at any time. While this is a little complicated the thing to do is schedule five innings and terminate by agreement after three innings. This actually would allow you to go the five innings if the outcome was in doubt more than originally anticipated.