



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Softball Bulletin

Director of Officials Development – Softball

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- Topics in this message –

1) More Plays and Situations – See below

2) Two Online Local Meetings will be available this year – Watch for an email from the office and DragonFly for the April (second) meeting. Refer to that email from the office to access the meeting.

3) Filing Procedure – Required Reports to OHSA and Member Schools

**Facility Reports/Concussion Reports/Sportsmanship reports/Ejection reports/Etc.–** Any sportsmanship issues including coach or player ejections must be reported through Dragonfly. You can also report positive sportsmanship! To file a report:

1. Open the Dragonfly app or website
2. Go to the game assignment for game in which the event occurred (you may need to select “past games”)
3. Scroll to the bottom of the page past the “workers” and “key people” and click “Add Document”
4. Select the category of report you need to fill out
5. Fill out all fields

A few notes about ejections:

- If you have multiple ejections, you must fill out a new document for each person who has been ejected.

- Contact the school's Principal/Athletic Director and notify them of the incident. If they are on site, speaking to them after the contest is acceptable.
- Ejection reports should be filled out within 48 hours of the event.
- Include all relative information in the report
- Someone from OHSAA may reach out for clarification or questions. We are not questioning your judgement but just making sure we fully understand the ejection.
- We have had some questions concerning what constitutes a charged conference. As is often the case this information is found in the definitions – Rule 2-14-1. A charged conference occurs when the coach or other dugout personnel request a time-out to meet with offensive or defensive personnel. More information on conferences can be found in Rule 3-7. It's not a conference if a coach hands the ball to the pitcher with a few words of encouragement or instruction at the beginning of a half inning. It's also not a conference if the catcher or another defensive player request time to talk to the pitcher.
- To say the weather has been an issue this spring would be a gross understatement. With the poor weather we have had several issues with our Thunder and Lightning Policy. This is reprinted from our White Book:

1. If thunder is heard, the game is stopped, the 30-minute clock kicks in-**NO EXCEPTIONS!**
2. If lightning is seen (but no thunder heard), the game will be stopped and the Game Administrator(s), Umpires, and Head Coaches will convene and determine what type of delay will be administered. **If there is lightning in the area, the 30-minute clock kicks in.**
3. At night (after dark) under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it MAY be safe to continue. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low to the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty. **If any member of the group assessing conditions is uncertain, delay for 30 minutes!**
4. **Lightning detection devices may be used to stop the contest if lightning is in the area (usually 10 miles) even if it is not seen or thunder heard. Often, school medical personnel are monitoring this equipment – obtain their input as part of your discussions.**
5. **Err on the side of safety. If there is a delay, players, coaches and officials must clear the field of play and seek cover. The host school is responsible to have an evacuation plan to get everyone to designated safer areas.**
6. The “thirty minute clock” is re-started each time that thunder is heard or there is lightning in the area.

- Also, on the topic of interrupted games – please review pages 24 and 25 of the White Book. We have had issues with schools being given incorrect information on whether a game is won, lost, or suspended. Also, note that when we come back with a suspended game on another day, players may be added to the lineup card without penalty (page 25).

- Situation: Team A is at bat when B1 hits a fly ball that leaves the playing area in fair territory without touching the ground. As B1 is almost to second base they see the ball clear the fence and begin celebrating as this is their first home run. As they are jumping up and down, they do not touch second base, they then continue on around the bases touching third base and home plate. After touching home plate, a teammate tells them they missed second base and B1 retouches home plate then third base on their way to touch second base. After touching second base, they then legally retouch third base and home plate. Team B then appeals B1 missing second base saying the runner cannot return to touch a missed base after they have scored. The umpires agree and call B1 out and negates the run. RULING: Incorrect ruling by the umpires. A runner may return to touch a missed base until a following runner has scored or they leave the field of play. Since neither of these items occurred B1 can return to touch second base as long as they retouch the bases in reverse order. There are other areas in the rules where a runner cannot return if they have reached a base beyond the base missed but those apply to a situation where the runner is awarded bases for a violation by the defense (obstruction or actions resulting in the ball going out of play) or on a caught fly ball, neither apply to this situation. (2-1-6, 8-3-1, 8-3-2, 8-3-9, 8-4-3f)
- Situation: In the third inning Team A has R1 on third base, R2 on first base and one out, B4 bunts a ball that goes off the bat into the air. F1 dives and catches the ball as they fall to the ground. As they are almost to the ground they are reaching inside the mitt to get the ball to throw to first base as R2 was off with the pitch and there is the chance of a double play. As they reach for the ball at the same time they are pushing to get up, the ball slips from their hand and they fall back to the ground with the ball ending up beside their glove. Team A's coach insists that this is not a catch as the fielder lost control of the ball as they fell to the ground. The umpire rules that in their judgement F1 gained control of the ball making the catch and dropped the ball while attempting to transfer it to the throwing hand. This results in B4 being out. RULING: Correct ruling. If the umpire judges that the fielder securely gained possession of the ball and then dropped the ball either in transferring it to the throwing hand or in making the throw the ball shall be ruled caught. (2-9-3)
- Situation: Team A is at bat with B1 in the left-hand batter's box and they square to bunt with their left foot in the front corner of the batter's box closest to home plate. As the ball comes off the bat it hits B1's left foot that is still on the ground completely in the batter's box. The umpire rules this a dead ball and the batter-runner out for contacting a fair batted ball before reaching first base. Team A's coach argues that the ball hit the batter in the batter's box so it should be ruled a foul ball. The umpire rules that since the batter's foot was in the part of the batter's box that is in fair territory when contact was made that the ball is fair, and the batter becomes a batter-runner since they have hit a fair ball. Also they are out for contacting the batted ball prior to reaching first base. RULING: Incorrect ruling by the umpire. When the ball touches the batter while the batter is still within the batter's box it is a foul ball. Since the ball is foul by rule then the batter has not become a batter-runner and has not violated the rule for contacting the ball prior to reaching first base. Unless the

batter had two strikes when they bunted the ball foul, the batter remains at bat with a strike added to their count. (2-24-1f, 2-64, 7-4-9, 8- 1-1a, 8-2-7e)

- Situation: With R1 on second base and no outs, B2 hits a deep base hit that gets past the outfielders and ends up at the fence. R1 rounds third base and is obstructed by F5 and falls to the ground. In a) the third base coach seeing R1 on the ground and the ball still at the fence grabs R1 and helps them back to their feet. The umpire rules R1 out for being physically assisted and allows play to continue. In b) F8 retrieves the ball and returns the ball to F1 in the circle with B2 standing on second base and R1 is still laying on the ground unable to get back to their feet. The umpire rules R1 out for violating the look-back rule for not immediately advancing toward home or returning to third base. **RULING:** Incorrect ruling in both cases. When R1 is obstructed, the umpire should signal a delayed dead ball and verbalize “obstruction”. Since the obstruction occurred between third base and home plate the runner cannot be called out between these two bases unless they violate one of the six exceptions listed in 8-4-3b Penalties 1 Exceptions. In a) when a runner is physically assisted by an offensive team member, other than another runner, typically the ball remains in play and the runner is called out (live ball out). In this case since the runner that was assisted is still between the two bases where they were obstructed and has been put out for being physically assisted the ball becomes dead. Since the runner is still between the two bases where they were obstructed, they may not be called out unless they violate one of the listed exceptions. A runner being physically assisted is not one of these exceptions allowing a runner to be called out. So when the obstructed runner is put out the ball becomes dead and the umpire would award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction the base or bases which would have been reached, in the umpire’s judgement, had there not been obstruction. Similarly in b) violating the look-back rule is not an exception allowing the runner to be put out between the two bases where they were obstructed. When the runner violated the look-back rule the ball becomes dead and the umpire would award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction the base or bases which would have been reached, in the umpire’s judgement, had there not been obstruction. (8-4-3b Penalties 1 Exceptions, 8-6-5, 8-7-2)