



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Softball Bulletin

Director of Officials Development – Softball

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Bulletin 25 - 8

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- Topics in this message –

1) More Plays and Situations from State Meetings, Clinics and Correspondence – See below

2) State Meeting Online – Deadline Without Fee – March 25 – See end of bulletin for details

3) Two Online Local Meetings will be available this year – late March and late April

4) **RECRUITING** - In recent years our total number of umpires has declined each year. Our best recruiters are those who are current umpires. I encourage each of you to talk about the benefits of umpiring with your friends, neighbors, or whomever you think may enjoy it. It's never been easier to get licensed. A prospect just needs to go to this link and follow the instructions -

<https://www.ohsaa.org/Officiating/permits>. It has never been easier to get started! The online class can be taken at any time of the year and once it is completed the new official is referred to a local association for help with mechanics training and other aspects of getting started.

5) **Working with assignors** – There is more to umpiring than just working games. Part of our responsibility is administrative whether we like it or not. One of those administrative tasks which must be mastered by umpires is working with assignors and keeping your availability up to date. Keeping your Dragonfly calendar blocks current allows assignors to quickly find available umpires to assign. Although declining games assigned by assignors is allowed, as we are independent contractors, it can lead to frustration when umpires routinely decline games. Dragonfly allows for a variety of blocks. Please keep your availability up to date!

6) As we move into scrimmage season and prepare to start the regular season now is a great time to review the **WHITE BOOK**. This book is provided each year in order that umpires can have rules information, mechanics updates, OHSAA regulations all in one place. Also, please carry this with you to your games – just as you do with rule and case books.

- The most common question we receive have to do with markings on softballs. There is no requirement that the softball must have any OHSAA marking. OHSAA follows the NFHS Rule 1-3 found on page 11 and 12 of the rule book. The ball must include the one of the NFHS marks found in figure 1-4.
- Question - With our school colors being blue and white, our first base double bag has been blue. We hosted a scrimmage the other night and the official was unsure if we are able to use that. Ruling - The blue/white base is fine. NFHS Rule 1-2-1 Note includes "**The base in foul territory shall be a color other than white.**"
- **PLAY:** With R1 on third base in a) B2 with no outs and b) B4 with two outs, bunts the ball and runs to first base. In both cases the batter-runner has reached the three-foot running lane (more than halfway to first base) but both feet last touched the ground completely outside the lane when the batter-runner is hit with the throw hindering F4 from taking the throw at first base. R1 was off with the pitch and in both cases has touched home plate prior to the interference. **RULING:** In both cases when interference occurs the ball is dead, the batter-runner is out, and all runner(s) must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference. In this case the last base touched by R1 at the time of the interference was home plate. In a) the run would score. In b) since the third out of the inning was made by the batter-runner before touching first base the run would not score. (2-31, 2-60, 8-2-6, 9-1-1 Exception a)
- Question - What is the proper mechanic for an illegal pitch call when the pitcher does an action that is an illegal pitch as she is stepping onto the pitcher's plate? For example, hands together as she steps onto the pitcher's plate? Answer – When an illegal pitch is detected the umpire shall verbally call “illegal pitch” and signal delayed dead ball with the left arm. After completion of the pitch or play the umpire will call time (dead ball must follow a delayed dead ball), announce that there was an illegal pitch and enforce the penalty unless (1) the batter reaches first base and each other runner advances at least one base or (2) if all runners do not advance one base safely the coach of the offense shall have the option of the result of the play or enforcing the penalty for the illegal pitch. (Rule 6-1-1 Penalty)
- Question – What is the proper mechanic for calling obstruction? Answer - When obstruction occurs the umpire shall verbally call “obstruction” and signal delayed dead ball with the left arm. After completion of the pitch or play the umpire will call time (dead ball must follow a delayed dead ball), announce that there was obstruction and enforce the penalty indicated by rule. This process should be followed each time obstruction is called – even if the runner is not being awarded an additional base. Failing to make this call every time simply encourages the defense to continue to violate and ultimately can get the umpire in trouble. By making this call the defense is aware that the rule has been violated and allows them to adjust their play to avoid additional violations. (Rule 8-4-3b Penalty)
- Situation - Defensive team is using a digital board in the dugout to relay pitch calls to the entire defense. I would look at this the same way as if they had a white erase board and wrote a pitch number down every pitch and showed it to the field. Ruling – This is correct – there are many ways that signals can be relayed to those on the field – hand signals, verbal calls (numeric or other), signs, legal electronic communication to the catcher on defense, and more. Probably the most effective signals are those that are not noticed.

- **STATE MEETINGS**– In-person state meetings are complete. The online state meeting is available. Here are details that were emailed on February 4 concerning this meeting –

The state rules meeting is now live **on DragonFly!** To access it, please visit your 2024-25 registration page on DragonFly. This is the same page in which you have paid your renewal fees on. Once there, click on the requirement that is titled “**2025 SRI Meeting OHSAA Points of Emphasis**”. You will be able to watch the video on that screen.

To access this screen, you can click on **your name** on the left side of your DragonFly page, and then select “**My Info**”. From there, you will see a box labeled “**Prep for 2024-25 Official Eligibility**”. That is where you can find the meeting!

You will select “**Fill out form Electronically**”, and it will take you to a screen where the video is available. After watching the video, you will select “Yes” to the question asking if you have watched the video, as well as signing your name at the bottom.

Please note: You **MUST** sign your name and hit “done” on the screen to receive the credit. If you do not sign your name, your credit will not populate.

This meeting is open **without a \$50 late fee** until **Tuesday, March 25th at 11:59 PM.**

The meeting window will be up **with a \$50 late fee** from **Wednesday, March 26th until Tuesday, April 15th at 11:59 PM.**

As a reminder, every official is required to attend at least one state rules meeting per year.

Loading Error Note: If you are experiencing a loading error when trying to access the State Rules Meeting, try these steps:

If your page continues to spin without loading anything, and eventually a box with an "Exit Page" and "Wait" option, select the "Exit Page" option. It will take you to a "dead" page with a "reload" button in the middle. Select that button, and the meeting page should appear quickly.

We are working on fixing these errors, and I hope this helps you while the fixes are ongoing!

For any questions, please contact - kjones@ohsaa.org.