



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Jerry Fick

Softball Bulletin

Director of Officials Development – Softball

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Bulletin 25 - 9

jfick@ohsaa.org

- Topics in this message –

1) More Plays and Situations – See below

2) Two Online Local Meetings will be available this year – late March and late April. The first online meeting was sent from the Columbus office on March 24 and is available until April 7. Refer to the email from the office to access the meeting. Here is that information –

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”** underneath the OHSA. Click on that box (make sure you are selecting the correct athletic year), and in the requirements list you will find the row titled **“OHSA Softball Online Local Meeting #1”**.

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. You will know when you have been credited when there is a green “Approved” box where it once said “Start”.

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. **For any questions, please contact me at kjones@ohsaa.org.**

- Although high school rules no longer have the umpires checking equipment before the game we can still use that time to be proactive and correct any noticeable concerns. Remember that required and illegal player equipment is not an appeal play and must be addressed. This creates consistency in enforcement across the state and across the entire season. Be preventative prior to the game and look for issues and address them prior to the start of the game so we don't have to assess penalties during the game. This could include play cards being worn on the belt, cracked helmets, and many other items. If we can correct these situations before the game begins, we don't have to enforce the penalties in Rule 3-6-1. When discussing this with a coach let them know that "we want to get this taken care of now in order to avoid the penalties that would come up during the game."
- Re-entry Rule – Note that the softball re-entry rule is different from the baseball rule. Rule 3-3-5 states that any player (starter or substitute) may leave the game and re-enter once, provided that they occupy the same spot in the batting order. Obviously, a starter and her substitute can't be in the game at the same time. In baseball, only starters can re-enter the game. This rule is complicated by the fact that Ohio has a special rule for BASEBALL SUB-VARSITY GAMES that allows any player (starter or substitute) to leave and re-enter the game any number of times provided they are in the same spot in the batting order. I expect all this to confuse some coaches who talk to other coaches from the other sport – let's help them if they have questions and make sure that we keep good line-up cards. If our softball coaches want this change in future years, there is a procedure that allows them to make such a request through their Coaches Association. We need to follow the rules as printed for 2025.
- We receive questions about how to handle situations where a team's uniforms don't comply with Rule 3-2-2. For example, the uniforms don't have numbers or the manufacturer's logo is larger than 2 ¼ square inches. In these cases, we want to play the game and report the situation to the OHSAA office. They can work with the school to correct the issue and if necessary, they will enforce any appropriate administrative penalties. To Submit Report Form – Officials will fill out the form electronically on DragonFly. Go to "My Assignments". Click on the contest needing the report. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click "Add Document". Please complete one report per offending school.
- Suspended Games – We did not make it through the first week of the season without having some confusion about suspended games – please review White Book page 24/25 for more information and examples of game ending procedures. The OHSAA has adopted it's own procedures and these are different from NFHS rules (Rule 4-2-3). What happened? The home team was leading 3-0 after the fifth inning. The visitors had scored four runs in the top of the sixth when the rains came. This game is suspended and resumed from the point of interruption. With our "Ohio spring weather" these situations can occur frequently. Refer to the White Book information and examples to resolve these questions.
- Question – When delivering the pitch does the pitcher's non pivot foot have to stay in the pitching circle? Answer – No, the circle's only significance is for the Look Back Rule (8-7).

- Question – When a batter is walked may she be put out if she legally runs through first base and does not attempt to advance to second base? Answer – No, this is the same as a batted ball because she is a batter-runner. Rules 2-5-2, 8-6-8, and 8-7-4e all help with this.
- We have received a report of players hitting home runs and conducting a planned celebration of wearing an animal costume mask while running the bases or otherwise in the field of play. This is not permitted and such action adds nothing positive to the game of softball. Please review following from the White Book – page 23 – and inform the coach that repeated such events will be penalized under Rule 3-6-13. **In recent years there have been some reports that celebrations have gone beyond what is acceptable and have been the cause of issues between participants. We certainly want to allow brief and spontaneous emotional reactions after a play. Beyond these reactions umpires should not permit prolonged, orchestrated, choreographed, self congratulatory, self glorifying, excessive, or demeaning actions that are not good for the game. It's impossible to write everything that should and should not be allowed. However, this listing of legal and specifically prohibited acts is intended to provide examples that will assist coaches in educating their teams and umpires in making decisions. Note that the penalty for illegal acts is covered in Rule 3-6-6.**

Examples of Legal Acts

1. Celebration in the dugout or bench area.
2. Handshakes, high fives, chest bumps, and similar brief spontaneous celebrations with a teammate legally on the field.
3. Simulating a cross on the chest, pointing to the sky, or raising the hands or the ball into the air to celebrate a play.
4. Players spontaneously celebrating together after a home run or other outstanding play.

Examples of Illegal Acts

1. Use of profanity; insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
2. Taunting, baiting, deceitful or intimidating actions toward an opponent.
3. Words or actions designed to incite spectators.
4. An action which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule, or demean others under any circumstances including but not limited to race, religion, gender, or national origin.
5. Derogatory remarks directed at a game official.
6. Dancing, forward or back flips, orchestrated, choreographed, or extended celebrations.
7. Bowing at waist, making a hand salute, or striking a pose meant to incite or taunt opponents and/or spectators.
8. Hand gestures such as choking, throat slashing, or pointing a finger like a gun.