



Oregon School Activities Association
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February 18, 2016

TO: Athletic Directors and Head Softball Coaches
FROM: Cindy Simmons, Assistant Executive Director cindys@osaa.org
SUBJECT: 2016 Softball Reminders

Included within this memo are reminders regarding OSAA policies and NFHS rules specific to softball that each coaching staff should review as we begin a new season. The links provided will take you directly to more detailed information regarding that specific reminder. Each school offering softball should have received one copy of the NFHS Softball Rules Book from the OSAA. If your school didn't receive your copy, please let me know. Feel free to contact me if you have questions and best of luck this season!

GENERAL INFORMATION

OSAA Softball Plan: The 2016 OSAA Softball Plan is available on the OSAA website at <http://www.osaa.org/docs/sbl/sblplan.pdf>. This plan contains information regarding important season dates, the state championships; NFHS rule changes and points of emphasis, OSAA softball policies, participation limitations, etc.

Practice Limitation Rule Change for Pitchers and Catchers: The Practice Limitation Rule (Rule of 2) allows softball coaches to begin pitching instruction and throwing workouts with pitchers and catchers only (maximum of eight total per day) two weeks prior to the Spring Sports First Practice Date (February 15, 2016). Specifics related to this change may be found here: www.osaa.org/docs/sbl/Ruleof2.pdf.

Game Balls: Schools are reminded that per NFHS Softball Rules, softballs must include NFHS, COR and Compression stamps to be legal for high school competition. This includes all levels of play (Varsity, JV, JV2, Frosh). For the regular season, any brand of softball is legal provided it has the required marks. At no time are softballs required to have an OSAA stamp. During the OSAA state playoffs, teams are required to use the Wilson A9011 B-SST, **poly center**.

Field Markings and Game Preparation: A reminder to schools to have fields properly marked before a game begins. This includes all appropriate lines for batters boxes, coaches' boxes, the catcher's box, foul lines, etc. It is recommended that all outfield fence signs are properly secured to the fence and off the ground. Follow this link for the NFHS field diagram: <http://www.osaa.org/docs/sbl/softballfielddiagram.pdf>.

Game Ending and "Speed-Up" Procedures:

Varsity: 10-Run Rule is allowed, per league adoption.

Sub-Varsity: 10-Run Rule and Time Limit is allowed, per league adoption. **NOTE:** A maximum number of runs per inning limit are allowed only at the JV2/freshman level per league adoption.

Batting Practice During Games: No team involved in the game may take batting practice of any kind, even in a batting cage, once the game has started.

Courtesy Runners: When a player enters as a courtesy runner, it counts as an inning played for that individual.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Appropriate Equipment for Shaggers/Protectors/Warm-Up Catchers

Non-adult bat/ball shaggers shall wear batting helmets while in live-ball area, even if the ball is dead. Only the batter, runner(s), on-deck batter, coaches in the coach's box, bat/ball shaggers or one of the nine players on defense are permitted to be outside the designated dugout/bench or designated warm-up areas. Bench personnel are permitted to engage in



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throwing and running activities during the one minute designated for the pitcher to throw her five warm-up pitches at the beginning of each half inning. Any non-adult warming up a pitcher at any location within the confines of the field shall wear an approved catcher's helmet and mask combination and throat protector.

Health and Safety Information <http://www.osaa.org/health-safety>

The OSAA website contains a variety of information regarding heat and hydration, lightning safety, and concussion management. This page contains links to informational items that all coaches should familiarize themselves with as practices begin.

Practice Model <http://www.osaa.org/docs/sbl/sblplan.pdf>

Prior to last season, the Executive Board created a new policy governing in-season practices. The main component that impacts softball teams is the requirement that a student may not practice or participate in a contest for more than six consecutive days without a rest day. A rest day must be complete rest – no organized team physical activity is allowed. Travel is allowed on a rest day, just no organized team physical activity. Please be aware of this change, especially for those teams traveling to Spring Break tournaments.

Concussion Management <http://www.osaa.org/docs/sbl/sblplan.pdf>

OSAA Staff worked with the Oregon Legislature to align Max's Law (public schools) and Jenna's Law (private schools) when it comes to the return to participation protocol. Therefore, all OSAA member schools are subject to the same policy when a student is removed after exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body. The law still states that, on an annual basis prior to participation, private schools shall require each student and at least one parent or legal guardian of the student to sign a consent form acknowledging the receipt of information regarding symptoms and warning signs of concussions. Private schools shall maintain a copy of each student's signed form on file for review at any time by OSAA staff.

Lightning Safety Guidelines <http://www.osaa.org/docs/sbl/sblplan.pdf>

The OSAA has made a concerted effort to educate member schools and officials associations regarding the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. Once thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, all personnel, athletes and spectators should evacuate to available safe structures or shelters.

NFHS RULE REMINDERS

Confines of the Field / NFHS Rule 2.15: "The confines of the field includes the field of play, the designated dugout/bench area, and any enclosed or clearly marked area designated as a warm-up area that is adjacent to the field and within the view of the umpire(s)." All warm-ups must take place within the confines of the field.

Team Personnel / NFHS Rule 2.58: "Team personnel consist of all school representatives located in the team dugout, including but not limited to coaches, managers, certified athletic trainers and scorekeepers." Non-team personnel are not allowed in the dugout/bench area.

Lineup Cards / NFHS Rule 3.1.3: "The team's lineup card shall include first initial and last name, jersey number, position and batting order of each starting player and should include each eligible substitute. Lineups become official after they have been exchanged, verified and then accepted by the plate umpire during the pregame conference.

PENALTY: After the lineup card has been submitted to and verified by the umpire and a change is subsequently made to a player/substitute name or number, or if a player/substitute is added to the lineup card, the umpire shall issue a team warning to the head coach of the team involved. Any further changes made to a player/substitute name or number results in the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench area for the remainder of the game."

Player Equipment / NFHS Rule 3.2.5: "Headwear (caps, visors, headbands, ribbons, etc.) may be mixed. If worn, they must be white, black, beige or school colors (the colors are not required to be the same for team members). The logo may be any



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color. Flat items, no longer than 2 inches, used to control the hair, such as bobby pins, barrettes and hair clips, are permitted. Plastic visors, bandannas and hair-beads are prohibited.”

Jewelry / Rule 3.2.12: “Players in the game are prohibited from wearing jewelry such as rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces (including cloth or string types) or other hard cosmetic or decorative items. Religious and medical-alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible.” Rubber bracelets and plugs inserted into piercings are considered jewelry.

OSAA WEBSITE / RANKINGS INFO

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/sbl/sblplan.pdf>

Postponing/Canceling Contests

On the day of a contest, schools are able to change the status to either Postponed or Cancelled by selecting the appropriate box in your editing window. When Postponed is selected, schools have the option to list the new date/time, if known. If a postponed contest will be replayed but you aren’t sure when, you can leave the new date/time field blank to complete at a later time. If you aren’t sure if the contest is going to be replayed, it should be Cancelled. That way you can always reinstate the contest if you end up being able to get it scheduled. Deleting contests from your schedule and adding them back later in the season may result in contests not counting in the rankings based on the following policies. When in doubt, leave it on your schedule as Cancelled.

Adding Contests to Schedules vs. Teams More Than One Classification Away After April 4

Remember that results from contests added to a team’s schedule after a certain date each season (Winter – April 4) **vs. a team more than one classification away** shall not be included in the rankings.

Adding Any Contest to Schedules After April 11

A new policy recently approved by the OSAA Executive Board states that results from contests added to a team’s schedule after a certain date each season (Winter – April 11) shall not be included in the rankings. NOTE: Contests not affected by this policy include bracketed contests at tournaments, league tiebreakers, and district/league tournaments. Schools may apply for an exception to OSAA Staff in extenuating circumstances.

Tracking Out of State Opponents

www.osaa.org/docs/osaainfo/ManagingOutOfStateRecordsInstructions.pdf

Varsity teams are required to update their schedule and results through the OSAA website throughout the season. Schools are also required to track records of out of state opponents. Each Oregon school is ultimately responsible for making sure their own schedule and results are accurate, including the records of their out of state opponents.

Home/Away Designation

- a. Softball contests, even those played as part of a tournament, shall not be listed as neutral due to the fundamental difference associated with being the home team in those sports (advantage of batting last).
- b. **Doubleheaders:** If a team is playing a doubleheader at another school, both contests should be shown as away contests on the schedule to accurately portray where the contests are physically taking place. When scoring the contest, schools are able to check a box if the “home” team batted first so the home/away designation is correct for the rankings.