

OSAA Softball SRI Bulletin # 1

Fellow Umpires and Administrators,

Welcome to the 2022 softball season. I hope you are getting through the Oregon State Athletic Association high school registration, and testing process. Along with completing this process, you must complete the annual OSAA concussion awareness training on-line.

Here are just a few reminders to get started with the season ahead.

1. Check your uniforms and protective equipment. These must be in good working condition to help protect you and look sharp. We always want to put our best foot forward when arriving at a game site. Proper fitting uniform and protective equipment is a great first impression.
2. Know your rules and mechanics before they are tested during a game situation. Study the book of rules and mechanics often. We all need reminders after the off-season.
3. Pre-arrange a meeting time and place with your partners before game day. This is a good way to be sure you're on time for the contest as an officiating team.

Game Ending and "Speed-Up" Procedures

All Levels: 15-Run (after 3 inn.) and 10-Run (after 5 inn.) Rule is in effect.

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

Score Differential: If a 15-run score differential occurs at the completion of three full innings or a 10-run score differential occurs at the completion of five full innings or anytime thereafter, the game shall be terminated and considered a completed game. **NOTE:** if agreed upon by both coaches, once a softball team has reached a 15-run lead after three innings they may continue to play. The exception to allow flexibility with this rule needs to be addressed prior to the contest during the pre-game conference when both head coaches and umpires are present. The mandatory score differential rule of 10-runs after five full innings is still in effect.

2022 New NFHS rules should be reviewed carefully. They include the following changes:

1. 1.2.1 Dislodged base rule – need to know the ruling if it happens during a contest.
2. 1.3.3 Aligns ball tolerances with other codes. In effect 2025.
3. 3.2.5b Removes language prohibiting hard items in control of hair in the sport of softball.
4. 3.2.5c Allows players to wear soft and secure headwear for religious purposes without state association approval.
5. 3.5.3 When in live ball area coaches shall be attired in school uniform or jersey/coaching shirt with slacks, shorts, or other leg coverings in school colors, or colors of khaki, black, white, or gray.
6. 3.621, 3.6.21 penalty Establishes the penalty for when a damaged bat enters the game.
7. 6.2.2, 6.262 note (new) Removes language from rule 6.2.2 and places it as a note under the penalty.
8. 8.2.6 Clarifies runner outside the running lane when either foot is contacting the ground completely outside the running lane.

2022 Softball Points Emphasis include the following items:

1. Huddles between innings. Very important to read this POE carefully. (pg. 86 umpire manual) It indicates the teams can still huddle but has very specific language to indicate when, and where, they can huddle. It also

indicates where and when the teams should not be huddling. Remember this is an issue related to player safety. The best advice I can give you is use common sense, when the teams are coming off the field after being on defense, they should not be allowed to huddle in front of their dugout. The safety of the players standing down the first baseline while the defense is throwing the ball around the infield is likely in jeopardy. That is not a safe place to huddle.

2. Guidance for picture utilization.
3. Assisting a runner. Remember to call and signal the out but let play continue until it concludes. If you kill the play by calling dead ball, that penalizes the defense who could possibly get additional outs.
4. Simulate taking a sign. When the pitcher receives the ball, they have 20 seconds to take or simulate taking a sign and begin delivery of the pitch.

Other areas of importance before officiating any contest.

1. Rule 3.2.12 – please remind athletes that jewelry is NOT allowed in high school softball, including plastic or silicone alternatives.
2. Rule 3.3.6. Understanding the DP/Flex. Use of DP/Flex must be declared at the plate conference.
3. Obstruction/Interference – Know the difference. Obstruction is on the defensive player, and interference is on the offensive player, coach, or fan.
4. Batting out of order – Know who's out, and who's now going to be up to bat?
5. Rule 5.1 - Dead ball tables pages 45, 46 and 47 are a way to study what happens when there is a violation. It gives you the activity (violation) reference number (rule) and the awards and penalties (what happens) in an easy to view and understand chart.
6. Rule 6 - Pitching rule. High School rule did not change the two feet in the air. (Leap) that is in the club sport side. Please enforce the High School NFHS pitching rule. Push and drag off the pitching plate.
7. Develop good game management habits. Be a student of the game, it will help you in tough situations.
8. Knowing the rules, displaying the proper mechanics will show everyone that you are putting in the necessary effort to be the best umpire you can be.
9. Remember to look for good sporting behavior with the schools and players individually. Send any notes or stories to Kelly Foster at kellyf@osaa.org.

Thank you for officiating softball for OSAA. We can't do this without all of you. Your willingness to put in the time to support student athletics is appreciated. Have a great start to your season.

Sincerely,
John Christensen
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Softball SRI