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April 1, 2021

To: Athletic Directors and Head Baseball Coaches
From: Kris Welch, Assistant Executive Director
Subject: 2021 Baseball Reminders

Included within this memo are reminders regarding OSAA policies and NFHS rules specific to baseball that each coaching staff should review as we begin the season. The links on the right side will take you directly to more detailed information regarding that specific reminder. Each school offering baseball should have received one copy of the NFHS Baseball Rules Book from the OSAA, and if your Athletic Director has your email address listed on the OSAA website under your school, you will be able to have one NFHS eBook of the rules. If your school didn't receive your copy, please let me know. Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

GENERAL INFO

OSAA Baseball Plan Book

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/bbplanseason3.pdf>

We've revamped our plan books to be more thorough and include all information necessary for schools. The plan contains the season dates, NFHS rule changes, OSAA baseball rules and policies, plus OSAA general policies and COVID-19 protocols and expectations. Remember that Oregon is allowing for the "Speed up rule" and allow Courtesy Runners during all games. Many items listed in this memo in past years are now included in the OSAA Baseball Plan.

NOCSAE STAMP REQUIREMENTS

Starting with the 2020 baseball season every baseball being used in competition **at ALL LEVELS (Varsity, JV, JVII, or Frosh)** must have the NOCSAE stamp on it. To be clear, there will be 2 stamps on every baseball; the NFHS stamp and the NOCSAE stamp in order for it to be considered legal.

Also starting this year and has been a discussion point since 2017-18 every chest protector **MUST** have the NOCSAE stamp on it. There are three different options that would meet this requirement. 1) a new traditional chest protector that protects the heart/cardiac silhouette and meets the NOCSAE performance standard; 2) a body protector (compression shirt with heart guard built into the shirt) that protects the heart/cardiac silhouette and meets the NOCSAE performance standard under the traditional chest protector; 3) a chest pad that protects the heart/cardiac silhouette and meets the NOCSAE performance standard that fits on top of the traditional chest protector. **If a school does not have this on their equipment, the game WILL NOT take place!** Please ensure that every team at your school has at least one of these.

PITCHING LIMITATION

Pitch Count Limitation

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/bbplanseason3.pdf>

This policy is now into its fourth year of existence that includes required rest days depending on the number of pitches thrown. The policy, which was created by the OSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and Oregon Athletic Coaches Association, will be used for the 2021 season, schools will be required to enter the pitch counts of players through the OSAA website following each game at **ALL LEVELS, not just Varsity** by 10:00am the day following the game or the school may be fined, the head coach may be suspended, or the player may be considered an ineligible participant. It is required that lower levels enter their pitch count on the OSAA website as well. This year also the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association sponsored, and it passed that schools will need to get the opponents school to confirm with a signature the proper number of pitches thrown by each player. [Link](#) for pitch count form.

USA Baseball Pitch Smart Guidelines

<http://m.mlb.com/pitchsmart/>

The OSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) supports the Pitch Smart guidelines created by USA Baseball and MLB. The two entities have teamed up to help young players reduce arm injuries by providing a comprehensive resource for safe pitching practices. Research has shown that pitching too much, particularly at a young age, can increase a pitcher's risk of injury. Pitch Smart is a series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers. The NFHS has a course offering (www.nfhslearn.com), Introduction to Pitch Smart, hosted by Hall of Famer, John Smoltz, the course aims to explain the principles behind Pitch Smart, a joint arm care initiative between Major

League Baseball and USA Baseball. This course includes topics such as risks of arm injuries, common misconceptions, and the Pitch Smart guidelines. <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61054/introduction-to-pitch-smart>

HEALTH & SAFETY

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.

Lightning Safety Guidelines

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/bbplanseason3.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.

FIELD MARKINGS, OFFICIALS

Field Markings and Game Preparation

www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/baseballfielddiagram.pdf

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, runner's lane to 1st base, etc. It is recommended that all outfield fence signs are properly secured to the fence and off the ground.

Officials – Host School Responsibilities

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/bbplanseason3.pdf>

Remember that a game manager shall be designated by the host school for all contests. It's a good idea for the game manager to introduce themselves to the officials upon arrival. A member of the coaching staff of the home team is not eligible to serve as game manager during a varsity contest at which he or she is coaching. A coach of a sub-varsity team may act as the game manager at a sub-varsity contest at which he or she is coaching. The game manager shall wear easily recognizable identification, shall be physically present and / or readily accessible by phone, and shall be responsible for:

- a. Designating reserved parking for officials as close as possible to the contest site; where available if requested by the commissioner of the Local Association providing the officials
- b. Designating dressing facilities for officials where available if requested by the commissioner of the Local Association providing the officials;
- c. Monitoring and responding to inappropriate crowd conduct during and after the contest; and
- d. Providing an escort to the designated dressing facilities or vehicle for officials following each contest unless that offer is declined. ***(This is especially important at fields where officials must walk through the spectator area when leaving the field.)***

JEWELRY, EJECTIONS, GAME ENDING/SPEED-UP, INTERRUPTED CONTEST PROCEDURES

Jewelry

Remember that rubber bracelets are considered jewelry and shall not be worn during games. NFHS rules are very clear in this area. *"Jewelry shall not be worn (see 3-3-1d) except for religious or medical medals. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert must be taped and may be visible."* **(Rule 1-5-12)**

Game Ending / Score differential Procedures

1. **ALL LEVELS:** 10-Run Rule is in effect.
2. **Sub-Varsity:** Time Limits are allowed, per league adoption.

Ejections During a Doubleheader and Out-of-State Ejections

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/bbplanseason3.pdf>

Multiple ejection reports came through the OSAA office two seasons ago where a player or coach had been ejected in the first game of a doubleheader. A reminder that when this happens, the player or coach is done for the rest of the day (**Ejection Period**) and is also suspended through the next contest at that level of competition (**Suspension Period**). Some schools have mistakenly thought that the 2nd game of the doubleheader counts as the suspension period.

- a. Example #1 – A varsity coach is ejected in the first game of a doubleheader. The coach is done for the rest of the day (**Ejection Period**). The coach is also suspended through the next varsity contest (**Suspension Period**).

- b. Example #2 – A JV player is ejected in a game on Friday (single game that day) and the JV team has a doubleheader the next day on Saturday. The player is done for the rest of the day on Friday (**Ejection Period**). The player sits out the 1st game of the Saturday doubleheader (**Suspension Period**) but is eligible to play in the 2nd game of the doubleheader on Saturday.

Remember that when a player or coach is ejected from an out-of-state contest, OSAA ejection policies still apply. It is the responsibility of the school to notify the OSAA of the out-of-state ejection.

Interrupted Contests / Tie Games

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/bbplanseason3.pdf>

Listed below are the procedures on interrupted contests as there are no ties in Oregon high school baseball. Games don't have to be continued, but if they are it shall start from the point of interruption. If teams choose not to continue, the game should be deleted from each team's schedule and won't count against either team's participation limitation. Pitches thrown by pitchers in the tie game are still counted toward the individual pitching limitation.

Home/Away Designation

- a. Baseball and 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.

Rosters

It shall be the responsibility of each member school to submit varsity team sport rosters to the OSAA through <http://www.osaa.org/> prior to the first contest date of that sport's season. Varsity rosters are required for the following OSAA-sanctioned sports: football, boys' soccer, girls' soccer, volleyball, boys' basketball, girls' basketball, baseball, softball. Subsequent changes to each varsity teams' roster shall be updated as they occur throughout the season.

SCORE DIFFERENTIAL PROCEDURES

Starting with the 2020-21 Association year there is a new Board Policy for score differential. The following procedure shall be followed when the score differential reaches the level outlined in this policy at all contests, regardless of classification and level. Baseball has adopted the 10-run score differential, which occurs at the completion of five full innings, or the completion of any inning thereafter, the game shall be terminated and considered a complete game.

COVID – 19 PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/bbplanseason3.pdf>

Face Coverings

Face coverings are mandated to be worn at all times.

Dugouts

The OHA mandate of six feet of physical distancing is still in effect and so the schools need to determine how many players they can have inside the dugout and then extend the team dugout area either down the foul lines or spectator bleachers realizing that only coaches and players are allowed in those area (no spectators can be in the team area). Those team areas should be marked off as to where the players and coaches can be to ensure physical distancing is in compliance. This responsibly belongs to the schools and administration. The umpires will help monitor the live ball playing area and friendly reminding the players and coaches about the face covering protocols.

Baseballs

The umpires will not be handling the baseballs, the schools will be responsible for sanitizing and placing them back into the game while their team is on defense. Each team should have their own baseballs (provided by the home team) to help prevent cross contamination between teams.

Equipment

Equipment (bats, batting helmets, catcher's gear) may be shared between players, but need to be sanitized prior to the next person using the equipment during a game.

Conversations between coaches and umpires

Head Coaches who wish to converse a call with an umpire need to request time and approach the foul line, as they are not permitted to approach umpires in fair ball territory to discuss/question/argue any decisions. The umpire will come to the foul line and maintain the six feet of physical distancing while discussing the ruling.

Handshakes

Teams shall not exchange handshakes following the contest – teams can acknowledge opponent with other appropriate non-contact measures.