



Ohio High School Athletic Association

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Baseball 2013 Season Bulletin #2

Director of Officials' Development – Baseball

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We almost have the first two weeks of the 2013 Baseball season in the scorebook. I trust that overall it has went well. Please, continue to share this information with all your officials in your association and/or assigning group. Also, I appreciate all the emails, questions, and situations that you send to me. It helps tremendously. Please keep them coming.

- 1) **CONCUSSIONS** – We have had two instances so far this season where a batter has been hit by a pitch in the helmet and the plate umpire conducted “concussion tests” to determine if the player could remain in the game. Let me adamantly say that this is NOT our role. If you are concerned enough to think about conducting whatever test you may think is good, have the player taken out of the game. In one instance, the plate umpire gave his test, allowed the player to stay in the game. An inning later when the trainer arrived, the trainer took the player out of the game. Do not be confused about your role: if you believe the player is exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a possible concussion, our role is to remove him from the game. Authorized medical personnel take it from there.
- 2) **MAKING UP RULES** – If you really want to talk with me, make up some rules and let it get back to us. As umpires, we are not in charge of rule making or deciding which rule we enforce or do not. We are responsible for knowing the spirit and intent of the rule and enforcing appropriately. There is no middle ground. Two instances illustrate this:
 - a. First base was occupied with two outs when the catcher dropped the third strike. As the batter takes off for first base, the plate umpire yells, “Batters out, batters out.” All play stops and players begin to exchange offensive and defensive positions. The coach of the team at bat wants to know why the batter was out and was told because first base was occupied. The coach agreed but pointed out that there were two outs. After huddling, the umpires told the coach that the out stood because of a little know exception with regard to the run differential. I understand we all have brain lapses and can forget a rule condition. In this instance, own up to the mistake and invoke Rule 10-2-3I and get it right as best you can.

- b. With the home team sending 36 batters to the plate in the first inning, the plate umpire invoked a “little known rule” that makes the team dominating to forfeit its time at bat. According to this rule (which does not exist) the losing team continuously bats, three outs at a time until the inning requirement is met for the ten run rule. As we know there is no such rule. I understand how frustrating such a game may be, but we cannot make up a rule to get it over with quickly. Period. I promise I will call so I can hear your explanation.
- 3) **LEAGUE EXCEPTIONS** – Leagues or conferences cannot create unique rules for their play that is not in accordance with NFHS rules or OHSAA procedures. Please let us know when this occurs. The latest instance regarded a game where the visiting team was ahead at the end of six innings and darkness prevented the game moving into the seventh inning. By OHSAA game-ending procedures for the regular season, this is a complete game with the visitors winning. The home coach stated that the game was suspended because their league rule was all games must be played to completion. I know you will handle the discussion professionally, but refer the coaches or A.D.s to the OHSAA procedure for suspended games.
- 4) **PICK - OFF MOVES** – In high school play, the third to first pickoff move is still a legal move. If the move meets the conditions of a legal pickoff attempt in Rule 6-2-4, then it is permissible. Please do not balk the move and tell the coach it is against the rules to attempt a 3-1 move.
- 5) **THE FIVE GALLON BUCKET** – I know this continues to be a fight, that many coaches believe somewhere in the Bill of Rights is a clause allowing them to sit on a bucket outside the dugout. But the Bill of Rights has no such clause, and coaches and players must be in the dugout. Please politely and professionally enforce this as if you don’t, you just created problems for the next set of umpires, as well as allowing an unsafe condition. When your game is on Fox Sports Ohio or Sports Time Ohio, realize that in such instances where you do not enforce rules, it becomes obvious to anyone watching the game what you are not doing. No place to hide on this one.
- 6) **NON-TEAM PERSONNEL IN THE DUGOUT** – There is no rule preventing a coach from allowing personnel in the dugout that are not coaches or players. They are subject to the same sportsmanship expectations and behavior as any player or coach. Simply because they are not a coach or a player is not a valid reason to tell the coach to remove them.
- 7) **CHARGED CONFERENCES** – It is true that by rule the offense may only have one offensive charged conference per inning. But it is also a rule that if one team is having a charged conference, the other may also have a conference that is not charged to them, provided their conference concludes when the opposing team’s charged conference is over. We had one game where the umpire would not allow the offense to hold a conference while the defense met at the mound with their coach in a charged conference, because the offense had already conducted their one conference for the inning. They may have one, provided it ends when the other conference does.
- 8) **PITCHER RETURNING TO PITCH** – A pitcher who is removed from the mound may return to pitch under NFHS rules provided these conditions are met: as a starter he faced the first batter of the game or as a substitute he completed his requirements to pitch to the first batter until that batter is out or on base, or the third out occurs; that the removal was not due to a violation of the charged conference rule (having more than 3 charged conferences in seven innings); the starter has re-entry available to him; the

substitute pitcher who came in after the pitcher in question took no more than eight warm-up throws. If these conditions are met, a pitcher may absolutely be removed as a pitcher and later return to pitch. Please do not deny a pitcher returning later in a game simply because “he can’t come back to pitch, everyone knows that.”

- 9) **OHSAA PATCHES** – Patches are not and will not be legal for placement on any required uniform piece that requires an OHSAA logo. Most of our suppliers will embroider the logo on the shirt or pullover jacket for a minimal price if you send it to them. There are no authorized OHSAA patches.
- 10) **OHSAA SHIRTS** – The only approved shirt for OHSAA baseball umpires is the navy blue shirt. Don’t ask uniform suppliers to place a logo on a cream, black, or any shirt that is a color not navy blue. If you do, you cannot wear it while officiating a game.
- 11) **THREE- MAN OFFICIATING CLINIC**- We will hold, at no charge, a three-man clinic for those officiating in the post-season. The clinic will be held on May 18th at Grove City High School, from 10AM to 3:30PM. Details may be found at www.ohsaa.org, officiating, camps and clinics, or contact me.

Thanks for all the hard work by everyone. It is much appreciated. Until next week, have a good one.

Yours in baseball,

Kyle McNeely