



Oregon School Activities Association

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To: Athletic Directors and Head Baseball Coaches
From: Kris Welch, Assistant Executive Director
Subject: 2025 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

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

Our plan books include all information necessary for schools. The plan contains the season dates, NFHS rule changes, OSAA baseball rules and policies, state championship information and qualifications, plus OSAA general policies. Remember that Oregon is allowing for the "Speed up rule" and allow Courtesy Runners during all State Championship Playoff games. Many items listed in this memo in past years are now included in the OSAA Baseball Plan.

2025 NFHS Rule Changes

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/25NFHSRulesChangesPOE.pdf>

1-3-2c1 BATS, BALLS and GLOVES: Modified that resin, pine tar or any other drying agent is permitted on the bat in a specific area.

ART. 2 . . . The bat shall have the following characteristics and components.

Sub-articles a-b remains the same.

c. Each bat not made of a single piece of wood shall:

1. Have a safety grip made of cork, tape (no smooth, plastic tape) or commercially manufactured composition material. The grip must extend a minimum of 10 inches, but not more than 18 inches, from the base of the knob.

Slippery tape or similar material shall be prohibited. Resin, pine tar or any drying agent are permitted to enhance the hold on the bat, not to exceed beyond 18 inches from the base of the knob. Molded grips are illegal.

Rationale: Risk minimization and consistency. This change allows the batter to have better control over their non-wood bat, so it does not slip out of their hands. It also makes the rule the same for wood bats and non-wood bats.

Pitching Position: Pitchers are required to use one of two positions: the wind-up or the set.

In the wind-up, the pitcher's pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate and not parallel to it.

The position of the pivot foot determines which of the pitching positions is being used.

In the set position, the pivot foot is in contact with or directly in front of and parallel to the pitcher's plate.

It is important that umpires, coaches and players know what position the pitcher is using so they know which part of Rule 6 is in play.

Bench Decorum: Coaches set the tone at athletic contests with their display of sportsmanship and respect.

If coaches act in a positive sportsmanlike manner, they model the appropriate behavior for the players/team personnel in their dugout/bench area. It also establishes a constructive, non-combative tone for players, spectators and others.

Use of Props: There is no logical purpose to have props at an education-based athletic event.

The use of props or any items to demean or embarrass one's opponent is contrary to the ideas and expectations supported by the NFHS, who writes playing rules for high school-age and skilled students.

Improper Use of Communication Equipment: The 2024 season was the first year of allowing one-way electronic communication devices from the dugout/bench to the catcher.

Various technologies, ear-piece style, electronic bands or smart watches could be used, giving schools several options at various costs.

No other player except the catcher is legally allowed to wear or use an electronic communication device, and the coach is not allowed to communicate with any other player using electronic communication.

Pace of Play

There is a concern with the length of contests, especially at the sub-varsity level, the state is declining in the number of participants and umpires. The OACA Baseball Coaches committee and the OAOA Baseball umpires committee have agreed to help with this decline, at the sub-varsity level there will be a conscience effort to enforce the 60-seconds between each half inning. We will also have no new inning after 2 hours and 15 minutes.

NOCSAE STAMP REQUIREMENTS

Friendly reminder about baseballs and catcher's chest protectors **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. There are three different options that would meet the requirement for catcher's chest protector. 1) a 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 stamp on the catcher's protective 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

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

This policy 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, 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. Teams should be using the [Pitch Count – Contest sheet](#) each game and to ensure no discrepancies, both coaches or designees should sign the sheet at the conclusion of the contest.

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.

Pre-Season Practice Limitation Rule for Pitchers and Catchers

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

The Practice Limitation Rule (Rule of 2) for the 3A, and 2A/1A Classifications allows baseball 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 17, 2025). The 6A, 5A and 4A classifications are following the Pilot Program for the Practice Limitation Rule.

Lightning Safety Guidelines

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.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

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.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

The elimination of the jewelry rule will permit players to wear these items freely, Additionally, with that freedom to wear jewelry, note that any jewelry that contains profanity, taunting, language to intimidate or baiting an opponent would not be allowed under our sportsmanship rule. Besides those examples, there is existing rule coverage that gives guidance on any player equipment that presents a danger to the player, teammate or opponent.

SCORE DIFFERENTIAL PROCEDURES

The following procedures shall be followed when the score differential reaches the level outlined in this policy at all contests, regardless of classification and level.

- A. Baseball. If a 10-run score differential occurs at the completion of five full innings, or the completion of any inning thereafter, the game shall be terminated and considered a completed game.

Ejections During a Doubleheader and Out-of-State Ejections

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

Multiple ejection reports came through the OSAA office last season 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

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.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.

OSAA WEBSITE / RANKINGS INFO

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.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.

1. ADDING CONTEST TO SCHEDULES AFTER CERTAIN DATES

Contests added to a team's schedule after the dates listed below may not count in the rankings based on new Board Policies regarding the rankings. Be sure that you don't delete contests from your schedule, but instead use the Postpone Contest or Cancel Contest button to keep the contest on your schedule.

a. Adding Contests to Schedules vs. Teams More Than One Classification Away After April 9

Remember that results from contests added to a team's schedule after a certain date each season (Spring – April 9) vs. a team more than one classification away shall not be included in the rankings.

b. Adding Any Contest to Schedules After April 16

Results from contests added to a team's schedule after a certain date each season (Spring – Apr. 16) 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

- c. 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).
- d. **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.

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.