



Oregon School Activities Association
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503.682.6722 fax: 503.682.0960 <http://www.osaa.org>



April 2, 2021

TO: Athletic Directors and Head Softball Coaches
FROM: Kelly Foster, Assistant Executive Director
SUBJECT: 2021 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, 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 and best of luck this season!

GENERAL INFORMATION

OSAA Softball Plan Book

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/sblplanseason3.pdf>

The 2021 OSAA Softball Plan Book is available on the OSAA website. This plan book contains the season dates, NFHS rule changes, OSAA softball rules and policies, and OSAA general policies.

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.

Field Markings and Game Preparation

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

Schools shall 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.

Invitational Tournaments with Game Time Limits

- a. If fewer than 4 and 1/2 or 5 innings have been played, or the game is ended, and the score is tied, the game is removed from both team's schedules and another contest may be scheduled with a different opponent. If a game is scheduled between the same two schools at a later date, it must be continued from the point of interruption.
- b. If 4 and 1/2 (home team ahead) or 5 innings have been played and the score is not tied, the contest is declared an official game.

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.*

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. Other teams not involved in the game cannot interfere or impede the game in progress. If the sounds of batting in the cage simulate the sounds of the game, (i.e. batted balls) it is not allowed. If the facility has doors that can be closed, and/or the game umpires agree that the sounds don't interfere with the game in progress, it is permissible.

Courtesy Runners



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

HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and Safety Information

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/sblplanseason3.pdf>

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/sblplanseason3.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

Player Equipment / NFHS Rule 1-8-4: Defensive players are permitted to wear a shield on their face/head protection in the field, but it must be constructed of a molded, rigid material that is clear and permits 100 percent (no tint) allowable light transmission.

Pitching / NFHS Rule 6-1-1 PENALTY, 6-1-2 Thru 4 PENALTY, 6-2-1 PENALTY, 6-2-7 PENALTY: In the case of an illegal pitch, the batter is awarded a ball. The penalty that permitted base runners to be awarded one base without liability to be put out is removed.

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

<https://www.osaa.org/activities/sbl>

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. When in doubt, leave it on your schedule as Cancelled.

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

<http://www.osaa.org/>

It shall be the responsibility of each member school to submit varsity team sport rosters to the OSAA 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.

Sportsmanship Award

<http://www.osaa.org/awards/sportsmanship>



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The OSAA Sportsmanship Committee, along with the OAOA, implemented a sportsmanship award aimed at improving the relationship between our schools and athletic officials. Officials have the opportunity to submit a form after every contest and select which team they would like to nominate. At the end of each season, the committee chooses a winner for each sport. That program is given a banner to hang in the gym and earns 100 OSAA Cup points for their school.

COVID-19

Protocols and Procedures

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/cs3/sblplanseason3.pdf>

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 maintained. 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.

Softballs

The umpires will not be handling the softballs, 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 softballs (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 needs 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.