

To: All Head Softball Coaches
From: Jerry Snodgrass, Assistant Commissioner/Softball
Lauren Prochaska, Team Sports Program Coordinator
Re: Coaches Memo 6: May 10, 2016

Another tough week weather-wise. With Sectional Tournament play on top of league/conference games, it makes it very tough getting games in. Our first informational item below addresses some of this.

Length of Season – Softball

Many do not realize that a regular season softball game can be played as late as June 11. Most will choose NOT to play that late, but you can. The 'danger' on that is that regardless of how late you play, you must caution your players not to practice, tryout, etc. with their summer travel teams until your last game is played.

NFHS Softball Questionnaire – One More Reminder

Just a second reminder to participate in the NFHS Rules Questionnaire. It is extremely important for Ohio to respond. Typically, Ohio has had the first or second most respondents of all states and it goes a long way on what will appear in front of the National Rules Committee. So...please take a moment and respond to the survey. The link to the survey was included in the memo sent directly to head softball coaches. Please contact Lauren or me if you would need this link.

Tournament Regulation Reminder

Addressed in last week's Coaches' Memo was a request for coaches to download, print and read the OHSAA Softball Tournament Regulations. Specifically addressed is the number of individuals permitted in uniform and in the dugout/bench area. Please make sure you read these to eliminate questions when you get to tournament play. You can access these at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/sb/girls/sbrglts.pdf>

Speaking of Tournament

Yes, this is a repeat but if you didn't catch it last week, this is a very good explanation of tournament structure that explains the set-up of the OHSAA tournament from Sectional through State. This explains how travel issues are almost unavoidable in some divisions in some districts of the state. Read it at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/sb/girls/2016/OHSAASoftballTournamentsHowRepresentationAffectsTeams.pdf>

Summer Teams – Here We Go.....

It's that time. Regardless of what it's called (Travel, Club, etc.) every coach wants that jump to get started. As I have stressed in each weekly memo – players are NOT permitted to participate, tryout, etc. for ANY of these programs while they are members of the school team. (Still have 2-3 violations each week!). So, the logical question becomes 'WHEN, CAN THEY?'. Here is another way to look at it – a player CAN actually tryout, participate, etc. **anytime she chooses to do so**. BUT – as soon as she does she is **INELIGIBLE**. That also then answers 'when' a Freshmen or JV player can start to participate – when her season (freshmen, JV) is complete. But, as soon as she does, she is NOT eligible to return to the varsity team for tournament. And, I have some great advice for all of those summer coaches to help you out. You can find that on the "Inside OHSAA Softball" webpage or directly at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/sb/girls/2016/SummerTeamAdvice.pdf> I think you will find the document extremely helpful, not only for you – but for those that you probably are in close contact with that organize and/or coach those summer teams. As different questions arise come to me that I may not have heard, I continue to update this document.

Ejections through Monday, May 10

Softball ejections are always lower than baseball. And though it is not a significant factor, this year we (the OHSAA) now will permit players to ride the bus and be in the dugout (but NOT in uniform) during their time of suspension as a result of an ejection. You can read this ejection policy at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/sb/girls/2016/SoftballEjectionPolicy.pdf>

Softball

Coaches: 8
Players: 5

Baseball

Coaches: 23
Players: 77

From the Eyes of the Umpire

Here are a few items being addressed to ALL softball umpires this past week:

Here's the Play from the UMPIRE'S View and the Advice Given:

I've called some illegal pitches this year for the pitcher turning her pivot foot and pivoting it forward so that her whole foot is about eight inches in front of the pitcher's plate. She then uses that as her push point to drag forward. I've also called some when the pitcher slides out away from the rubber and uses this as a new starting point. The coaches don't like these calls but I think I am right. Ruling - It sounds like in each case the pitcher is, one way or the other, moving her foot forward and pushing off from in front of the rubber. In Rule 6-1-2c the last sentence provides great clarification – "Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal." Basically any attempt to do this results in pitching from less than the required distance of forty three feet. In Rule 2-16 we see the definition of crow hop – a replant of the pivot foot prior to the delivery of the pitch. Base umpires need to pay close attention to both this and leaping, which is defined in Rule 2-33 as both feet being airborne prior to the delivery of the pitch – just another way of reducing the pitching distance to less than what is required by rule!

Here's the Play from the COACH'S View and the Advice Given:

Play from a coach - We had batter hit line drive to gap. She was obstructed by the first baseman and was thrown out in a close play at third. Without the obstruction, she would have reached 3rd base safely. She was called out. My opinion, she should have been ruled safe or at least returned to second. Ruling - In the obstruction question you pose the runner would be awarded 3B if she would have reached 3B without the obstruction. If not she would be out in this play. She can't be returned to 2B in this play. As per Rule 8-4-3b she could not be retired between 1B and 2B. Once she has advanced beyond 2B the umpire must determine whether to award the next base or call the out. If she was called out at second base she could not be put out but could be awarded second base if she would had reached it without obstruction or first base if she would have been tagged out at second base without the obstruction. It is important for the umpire to understand what the rule is and what choices can be made in each situation.