

To: All Head Baseball Coaches
From: Jerry Snodgrass, Assistant Commissioner/Baseball Administrator
Emily Gates Team Sports Program Coordinator
Re: Coaches Memo 7: April 25, 2016

What a great weekend weather-wise. This week looks to be 'challenging' but at least we are getting games in. Keep in mind that as teams are making up games, obtaining umpires is more and more challenging. I encourage your patience with it. You may not get your top choice on a game – home or away. But be patient. A bad call does not give a license to open up in a tirade. 3 ejections last week came about as a result of a possible incorrect call but also opened the floodgates for arguments and language. Many think umpires are not held accountable for incorrect calls and coaches ARE....not always the case and I'll expand on that in a future memo. Again, I am simply urging patience and understanding as we move through the heart of the season. And, remember – tournament draws are Sunday!

NFHS Baseball Questionnaire

It is that time of the year again—be a part of the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS) baseball rules-writing process by taking the annual Baseball Rules Questionnaire. The questionnaire is provided so the opinions of a national sampling of coaches (and registered officials) will be considered by the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee. . Instructions and access to the survey was sent on the emailed version of this memo. If you are a HS Head baseball coach and did not receive that memo directly please email me (jsnodgrass@ohsaa.org) or Emily egates@ohsaa.org for the instructions.

The deadline for the NFHS Baseball Questionnaire is May 18, 2016

Records for Seed Meetings – Out of State Teams

Many who have traveled out of state to play inquire about how to post their record vs an out of state team. You will need to get the enrollment of that school and plug it into the enrollment breakdown for Ohio to determine what division that school would be if it were an Ohio school and record the win/loss based upon that.

Ball Shaggers

This is a reminder for coaches to make sure that the non-adult ball shaggers are wearing a helmet when retrieving foul balls. A suggestion from Baseball Director of Officiating Development, Dan McGinnis, is to keep a helmet on the fence at the end of your dugout, so that it is ready and available for any player.

Helmet Reminder

As the coach, it is your responsibility to make sure your players, and those in your dugout, are using the proper equipment enforced by the NFHS. It has come to our attention that there are several schools using the two-piece, helmet and face mask—this piece of equipment is **ILLEGAL**. This two-piece helmet is not permitted for **any person on the field of play, including the bullpen**. The umpires have been notified to be on the lookout for illegal pieces of equipment, so as the coach, please ensure that your players are not using illegal equipment.

When a Coach Receives a “Warning”

While we hold high standards for our Baseball coaches, we understand that a “warning” might be given to a coach from an umpire during a contest. If a coach receives a warning from an umpire, please know that the umpire mechanics and rulings require the umpire to write down the warning, and restrict the coach to the bench. The umpires **cannot** give a copy of the warning to the coach.

“Hybrid” Pitching Position

The MLB trending “hybrid pitching position” is **NOT LEGAL** in High School Baseball. With dominant MLB pitchers, like David Price, using the hybrid position, we know that many coaches and younger baseball players are watching this pitching technique on television, and are inclined to pitch like David Price in their own High School games. As the coach—please instill in your players that this is an **illegal** technique in High School Baseball. MLB recently issued a ruling that they are going to allow the hybrid technique at the professional level, but it **WILL NOT BE USED AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL**. **The hybrid position will be enforced by all umpires at every level of play in High School Baseball**—in-season/regular games, as well as at the Sectional, District, Regional and State Tournaments.

In-Game Reminders:

Here are a few reminders that have surfaced for issues received by umpires. Just a good time to pass them along.

- Wristbands/play-cards are **only to be worn on the wrist and/or arm**—a trend has been observed to wear these items on the belt, which is NOT permitted.
- Make sure your batters keep one foot in the batter's box.
- Like many of the NFHS sports, jewelry is NOT permitted in the sport of Baseball—this includes rubber wristbands. If they are wearing any form of jewelry, they will be asked to remove the items. Coaches, please enforce this to your players.

Did you Know?

There are 3,656 licensed active umpires in the state of Ohio. An interesting side note – nearly every summer league requires umpires to be licensed.....by the OHSAA. Interesting when you think about it.

Behind the Mask

Here are a few current clarifications on rules that have been communicated with OHSAA Umpires this week. My feeling is if it is communicated to THEM...it is certainly good to share with coaches.

The Play:

B1 lays down a bunt that is fielded by F2 in fair territory a few feet in front of home plate. As B1 is 60 feet from home base, he is running outside the running lane with one foot completely in fair ground and not touching the lines of the running lane. F2 fields the ball and (a) attempts to throw to first but throws high into right field as he tries not to hit B1, or (b) does not attempt a throw.

The Ruling:

B1 is required to be in the running lane the last 45 feet to first base when the ball is fielded and thrown from an area behind him. In (a), this is interference and B1 is out and the ball is declared dead. In (b), since there was no throw, there is no interference. F2 is not required to hit B1 to demonstrate that B1 is out of the running lane, but a throw must be made for the interference to be declared.

The Play:

On an Infield Fly- there is a man at first and second less than two outs; the batter hits a fair fly ball (not a line dry or bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort. Here are the 2 scenarios: A) The Fielder catches the ball, B) The Fielder misses the ball.

The Ruling:

In both A and B, the batter runner is out and the force is removed. In A, the runners on base must tag up before advancing at their own risk. In B, the runners on base do not need to tag up and can advance at their own risk but are not forced to do so.