

Oregon School Activities Association

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Following are five (5) to help in improving your umpiring and becoming the best that you can.

- **Stop** – It is very important to fully stopped when making a decision. When taking a good mental picture through your eyes you should be stopped.
- **Set** – The set is dropping to a set or calling position. By lowering you view you will improve your calling position.
- **Focus** – The focus is vitally important. A good calling position goes for naught if the umpire is not looking at the focal point where all the elements are present. **(Ball, fielder, base runner and base)**
- **Hold** – The hold allows the umpire to see the play in its entirety and not rush to judgment and render a decision before the play is over.
- **Call** – In the final act the umpire becomes a communicator and, with confidence verbally makes their announcement, using a sharp, clear, concise convincing and correct signal.

QUICK TIPS

The **preparation** for your season cannot begin when the first game is just a week away. Spend the offseason in the **gym**, in the **rule book** and in **training classes**. The teams and your partners deserve an official who is ready to go from the first play. **You cannot be ready if you have not done the necessary offseason preparation.**

A base umpire can sometimes determine a possible pickoff attempt at first base by observing the second baseman. If the second baseman sets up a step or two toward first from their normal position, there is a good chance that the defense is planning a pickoff play on the runner. The base umpire can make a break for first by moving parallel with the baseline to be in the best position for a call when the catcher throws to first.

CASEPLAYS

Batter Erases Line – Play: Fast pitch. Slap-hitting lefty batter B1 intentionally erases the front line of the batter's box upon entering the box. **Ruling:** In NFHS, B1 is charged with a strike and a team warning is issued. For a second violation such violation by the same team a strike is charged to the batter with the offender and the head coach restricted to the dugout. **NFHS 3-6-17 Pen., 7-2-1i**

Is Fake Tag Obstruction? – Play: R1 is on first base with no outs when B2 singles sharply to right field. As R1 nears second F4 fakes a tag on R1 on her way to third. **Did F4 commit obstruction?** **Ruling:** In NFHS, a fake tag always results in obstruction even if the runner does not stop, slide or slow down. **NFHS 2-21, 8-4-3b Pen.**

Ball Slips From Pitcher's Hand During Delivery – Play: Fast pitch. The count is 1-1 with **one** out. R1 is on first base when the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during her delivery and lands behind her. An **illegal pitch** is called but R1 continues to run as the shortstop picks up the ball and doesn't make a play. Speedy R1 streaks all the way to third safely. The plate umpire rules that the pitch doesn't count and sends R1 back to first base. Team A's coach argues R1 should stay on third. The defensive coach says the ball is dead on the illegal pitch and only a ball called on the pitcher. Then the two managers argue about how a ball can be called on the pitcher. **Ruling:** In **unusual situations** the umpires have to take charge and confidently enforce appropriate penalties with calm conviction. **In the aforementioned situation only a ball is called and the ball is "live". R1 is allowed to "remain" at third base. Play resumes with a 2-1 count on the batter.** NFHS 6-2-6 Effect.

About Collapsible Fences – Play: Fast pitch. The outfield fence is made up of **portable collapsible fences**. B1 hits a long fly ball to center field. F8 makes the catch while **standing on the fallen fence**. **Ruling:** In NFHS the **catch is not allowed** and B1 is **awarded a home run**. In NFHS if F8 is contacting the ball while the fence is flexing, falling or being displaced and is subsequently legally caught before the fence is lying flat on the ground the catch is allowed. **NFHS 2.9.4**

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