

Oregon School Activities Association

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“Listening” and “Hearing”

Hearing and listening are not the same. Hearing is sometimes as important as seeing in making calls. *Umpires are taught to employ the “snap-thud” method to determine close plays at first base.*

Ignoring the jeers and taunts of obnoxious fans is tough. The static should be ignored unless it becomes threatening or extremely profane. *In that case the game administrator should be notified.*

Listening to fellow officials is also important. When a plate umpire has to rotate to third base in a two-umpire crew, a simple, **“I have third”** allows the base umpire to be assured that the play is being covered if it occurs.

Hearing, listening, comprehending and reacting are skills that most are born with but they are not always employed properly. *Learning the difference and learning to take full advantage are what often separates good from great officials.*

QUICK TIPS

Many umpires do not see the “money pitch” on the outside corner with both eyes. If you can’t see the dirt of the outside corner or your nose gets in the way you are not seeing the outside corner pitch with both eyes. **Turn your head slowly toward the outside corner until the dirt of the outside corner appears or until your nose is out of the way.** *Then make sure both eyes are open to call the pitch.*

Aside from seldom-made calls such as interference or a missed base, outs cannot happen without the ball involved. **Umpires should always know where the ball is and anticipate where it is going next.** There are always times when an umpire should take their eye momentarily off the ball; ensuring that obstruction, interference or a missed base doesn’t occur, but otherwise, keep an eye on the ball and you won’t be caught off guard.

CASE PLAYS

Batter-Runner Picks Up Foul Ball – Play: Fast pitch. R1 is on third base as B3 bats with a 1-1 count and one out. B3 hits a foul ground ball along the first-base line and intentionally picks up the ball about 10 feet before first base. **Ruling:** In NFHS the ball is dead and is ruled a foul ball unless the umpire judges the ball could have become fair. The batter is out if the umpire judges the ball could have become fair and R1 is returned to third base. **NFHS 8-2-6 Pen; CB 8.2.6 Sit. B.**

Intentional Drop – Play: Fast pitch. What constitutes an intentionally dropped ball by a fielder? **Ruling:** In NFHS, a fielder who manipulates the ball to the ground in any way is charged with an intentional drop. **NFHS 8-2-10 Pen; CB 8.2.10B**

Player Ejected –Play: Fast pitch. After B3 takes a called third strike, she angrily throws her bat toward the dugout. The plate umpire ejects her from the game. Her coach immediately asks if she must leave the dugout/bench area. **Ruling:** In **NFHS** B3 will remain in the *dugout/bench* area. **NFHS 3-6-20**

Two Conferences at Once – Play: When the defensive coach is granted time to confer with the pitcher at the pitcher's circle, an offensive coach wishes to speak to a base runner. ***Should the offensive team be charged with a conference?*** **Ruling:** No, providing the offensive team is ready to play when the defensive conference ends. **NFHS 3-7-3**

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