

Oregon School Activities Association

Softball SRI Bulletin / March 16, 2015

START THE GAME ON THE RIGHT FOOT

BE PREPARED FOR YOUR GAME:

1. Make sure you know the starting time also being familiar with the game site.
2. Have your uniforms cleaned and pressed and your equipment in good condition.
3. Double check the items you should have in your equipment bag.
4. **CONFIRM YOUR GAME ASSIGNMENT WITH YOUR PARTNER.**

GET A GOOD START:

1. If possible arrive at the site well before game time.
2. When appropriate, inform the home management of your arrival.
3. Take a quick look at the field. (*Noticing any problem areas*).
4. Use the opportunity to briefly observe the starting pitchers as they warm up.

ENTER THE FIELD PROFESSIONALLY:

1. Be businesslike and stride confidently with your partner to the field.
2. Leave cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, chewing gum and beverages behind. (*Taking a small water with you will help with hydration*).
3. Don't stop to talk to spectators or players. If you are acknowledged, give a polite "**Hello**" and keep walking to your destination.
4. Check each team's equipment (*bats, helmets and balls*) for legality.
5. After completing your duties, move to neutral area. (*Never sit on a team bench or carry on lengthy conversations with the manager, coach, player or other person*).

HAVE A GOOD PREGAME: (**PLATE TALK**)

1. **Five minutes (5)** before the game, ask the head coaches to meet at home plate. (*Team captains may participate*).
2. The umpire-in-chief (plate umpire) will open the meeting with greetings and introductions. (*If the team has two coaches, ask them who the "head coach" will be*).
3. Inform everyone if there are any special game provisions. (*Time limit, run rule or curfew*).
4. The "**plate umpire**" carefully examines each lineup card. (*Inadvertent errors can be discovered preventing serious problems from developing after the game has started*).

KNOW WHAT TO DO AFTER THE PREGAME MEETING:

1. If the national anthem will be played, the base umpire should remain with the plate umpire, standing at attention during the anthem without conversation. Otherwise, the base umpire should hustle down the first base line and move to a neutral position 15 feet off the base line into fair territory (**on the grass**) observing the players.
2. It's good practice for the plate umpire to watch a few warmup pitches to get the feel for the speed and movement of the pitcher's throws and how the catcher sets up behind the

plate. (Allow the pitcher and catcher to work together of the first pitch, the watch either or all of the **second, third and fourth** pitches. Do the same for the opposing pitcher).

KEEP THE GAME MOVING:

1. Start the game on time.
2. When working the plate carry an extra ball or two in your bag, it helps to keep the game moving when there are an abundance of balls going out of play. (You can also **keep a couple of extra balls behind the backstop to avoid delays**).
3. Good plate umpire management makes the base umpire's job easier.
4. Manage and control what you can (**number of pitches allowed for a new pitcher, conferences, time in between innings, substitutions, lineup card changes, yourself and etc.**).

LEAD BY EXAMPLE: (HUSTLE)

1. On the bases, hustle to your next position.
2. As a plate umpire, be snappy when brushing the plate. (**Do not, call time or make a big production of dusting the plate during a batter's time at bat. It's better to brush the plate during delays during the game**).

QUICK TIP

If you have to go to the pitcher's circle to end a conference, walk briskly and then make an easy jog back to the plate (**with the catcher**). Also, jogging back to the plate after trailing the batter-runner up the line on a ground ball is a way to show everyone that you are hustling and working to keep the game moving