



Oregon School Activities Association
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March 6, 2012

TO: Athletic Directors and Head Softball Coaches
FROM: Cindy Simmons, Assistant Executive Director
SUBJECT: 2012 Softball Reminders

Included within this memo are reminders regarding OSAA policies and NFHS rules specific to softball that I would like you to review with your staff as we begin a new season. Remember that each school offering softball should have received one copy of the NFHS Softball Rules Book from the OSAA. If your school didn't receive your copy, please let me know. Feel free to contact me if you have questions. Email: cindys@osaa.org

1. **OSAA Softball Plan:** The 2012 OSAA Softball Plan is available on the OSAA website at osaa.org/softball/2012/sbplan.pdf. This plan contains information regarding important season dates, the state championships, NFHS rule changes and points of emphasis, OSAA softball policies, participation limitations, etc.
2. **Field Markings and Game Preparation:** A reminder to schools to have fields properly marked before a game begins. This includes all appropriate lines for batters boxes, coaches' boxes, the catcher's box, foul lines, etc. It is recommended that all outfield fence signs are properly secured to the fence and off the ground. Follow this link for the NFHS field diagram: osaa.org/softball/softballfielddiagram.pdf
3. **Courtesy Runners:** When a player enters a game as a courtesy runner, it counts as an inning played for that individual.
4. **Batting Practice During Games:** Reports came in last year from coaches and officials associations about teams taking various forms of batting practice during games. Some were using batting cages or bullpens and others were hitting wiffle balls. No team involved in the game may take batting practice of any kind, even in a batting cage, once the game has started. Other teams not involved in the game cannot interfere or impede the game in progress. If the sounds of batting in the cage simulate the sounds of the game, (i.e. batted balls) it is not to be allowed. If the facility has doors that can be closed and/or the game umpires are in agreement that the sounds don't interfere with the game in progress, it is permissible.
5. **Confines of the Field / NFHS Softball Rule 2.15:** "The confines of the field includes the field of play, the designated dugout/bench area, and any enclosed or clearly marked area designated as a warm-up area that is adjacent to the field and within the view of the umpire(s)." All warm-ups must take place within the confines of the field.
6. **Lineup Cards / NFHS Softball Rule 3.1.3:** "The team's lineup card shall include first initial and last name, jersey number, position and batting order of each starting player and should include each eligible substitute. Lineups become official after they have been exchanged, verified and then accepted by the plate umpire during the pregame conference.
 - a. **PENALTY:** After the lineup card has been submitted to and verified by the umpire and a change is subsequently made to a player/substitute name or number, or if a player/substitute is added to the lineup card, the umpire shall issue a team warning to the head coach of the team involved. Any further changes made to a player/substitute name or number results in the head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench area for the remainder of the game."
7. **NFHS Softball Rule 3.2.5:** "Headwear (caps, visors, headbands, ribbons, etc.) may be mixed. If worn, they must be white, black, beige or school colors (the colors are not required to be the same for team members). The logo may be



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any color. Flat items, no longer than 2 inches, used to control the hair, such as bobby pins, barrettes and hair clips,, are permitted. Plastic visors, bandannas and hair-beads are prohibited.”

8. **Illegal Bat / NFHS Softball Rule 7.4.2 PENALTY:** A more severe penalty was added when a batter has used an altered or non-approved bat. In addition to an out being called on the batter, the batter and head coach will be ejected from the contest.
9. **Officials -- Host School Responsibilities:** Remember that a game manager shall be designated by the host school for all varsity contests. It's a good idea for the game manager to introduce themselves to the umpires upon arrival. A member of the coaching staff of the home team is not eligible to serve as game manager during a contest at which he or she is coaching. The game manager shall wear easily recognizable identification, and shall be responsible for:
 - a. Designating reserved parking for officials as close as possible to the contest site;
 - b. Designating dressing facilities for officials where available if requested by the commissioner of the Local Association providing the officials;
 - c. Monitoring and responding to inappropriate crowd conduct during and after the contest; and
 - d. Providing an escort to the designated dressing facilities or vehicle for officials following each contest unless that offer is declined.
10. **Lightning Safety Guidelines:** The OSAA has made a concerted effort to educate member schools and officials associations regarding NFHS Lightning Safety Guidelines. Once thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, all personnel, athletes and spectators should evacuate to available safe structures or shelters.
 - a. **Proactive Planning:** osaa.org/publications/handbook/1112/06ExecutiveBoardPolicies.asp#_Toc298932547
 - 1) Assign a staff member to monitor local weather conditions before and during events.
 - 2) Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby shelters.
 - 3) Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a) **Recognition.** When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.
 - b) **Thirty-minute Rule.** Once play has been suspended, wait at least thirty minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - c) Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count should reset the clock and another thirty minute count should begin.
 - 4) Hold periodic reviews for appropriate personnel.
11. **Ejections:** Multiple ejection reports came through the OSAA office last season where a player or coach had been ejected in the first game of a doubleheader. A reminder that when this happens, the player or coach is done for the rest of the day (**Ejection Period**) and is also suspended through the next contest at that level of competition (**Suspension Period**). Some schools have mistakenly thought that the 2nd game of the doubleheader counts as the suspension period.
 - a. **Example #1 – A varsity coach** is ejected in the first game of a doubleheader. The coach is done for the rest of the day (**Ejection Period**). The coach is also suspended through the next varsity contest (**Suspension Period**).
 - b. **Example #2 – A JV player** is ejected in a game on Friday (single game that day) and the JV team has a doubleheader the next day on Saturday. The player is done for the rest of the day on Friday (**Ejection Period**). The player sits out the 1st game of the Saturday doubleheader (**Suspension Period**) but is eligible to play in the 2nd game of the doubleheader on Saturday.
12. **OSAA Line-up Cards:** The OSAA, in conjunction with the OAOA, created new line-up cards a few years ago. These line-up cards are recommended, but not required for use by the OSAA. Follow the link below to purchase a package with 35 forms. Cost is \$6 per package and shipping is included. osaa.org/forms/orderform.asp



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13. **ScoreCenter Reminders and Tracking Out of State Opponents:** Varsity teams are required to update their schedule and results through the OSAA ScoreCenter throughout the season. As part of a change to the rankings for this year, schools are now required to track records of out of state opponents. Each Oregon school is ultimately responsible for making sure their own schedule and results are accurate, including the records of their out of state opponents. *(See the attached ScoreCenter Spring Reminders memo for details and instructions)*

14. **OSAA Softball Website:** Page includes OSAA Softball Plan, NFHS Softball rules info and 2012 changes, ASA bat information, Health and Safety info, etc.: <http://osaa.org/softball/>