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• The deadline for state meeting attendance online was March 8. Those umpires who have not completed the state meeting may do so but must first call the OHSAA office to make arrangements to pay the $50 late meeting fee.

• Four local meetings are required for all softball umpires – you can check your meeting attendance credits on your myohsaa profile. If you have not received credit for a meeting you attended contact the local association secretary to resolve the discrepancy. Do not call the OHSAA office for this. Umpires who work both baseball and softball are reminded that you must receive four meeting credits for each of these sports.

• There are no changes to Rule 8-10 which covers the double first base. It is the same rule as it has been in the past. **What is new about this topic is that the double base is required for all OHSAA contests – grades 7 through 12.** Study this rule and be prepared to answer questions about it. It has been an OHSAA Point of Emphasis for the last two years and the information provided in the coaches’ online meeting was identical to the information provided in the umpires’ online meeting. If a school does not have the double base – play the game and **immediately report to the OHSAA by going to your dashboard on myohsaa, selecting “Submit New Game Report”, and completing the report using “Equipment” as the report topic.** **PLAY THE GAME – UMPIRES WILL NOT BE PENALIZED FOR PLAYING THE GAME BUT ARE SUBJECT TO PENALTY IF THEY FAIL TO FILE REQUIRED REPORTS.** **If there are extenuating circumstances such as “our new base is arriving air freight later today” FILE THE REPORT AND INCLUDE THE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.** This powerpoint on this rule was included in on the disk provided to all of our association interpreters so know the unique circumstances that allow the defense to use the foul side and when the base becomes a single base -15” X 30”. If you have any questions contact your local interpreter now. Many schools will be using this base for the first time and it is our responsibility to help them.

• In the coming weeks the OHSAA office will be issuing contracts for the 2017 State and Regional Tournament games. We’re pleased to let you know that there is one important change to the assigning process this year. Each four umpire crew assigned to work a state game will also be assigned as a four umpire crew for a regional game as well. This will allow that crew to work
two weeks in a row as a crew of four with the umpires working the same positions each week. While twelve regional games will be worked by four umpire crews the remaining thirty-six regional games will continue to be worked by crews of three. By the way, this means that we will have 156 (versus 144 in the past) umpires working regional games.

• The OHSAA will be holding its annual clinic for softball postseason umpires on Sunday, May 7. This year’s meeting will be at:

THOMAS WORTHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
300 W GRANVILLE RD
WORTHINGTON, OH 43085-3527

Registration will be at 12 Noon with the clinic starting at 1230PM and ending by 4PM. While umpires being invited to this clinic are those working the three umpire system in our tournaments, any of our umpires are welcome to attend. There is no charge and no pre-registration is necessary. **Attendance at this clinic is optional.** There is no OHSAA meeting attendance credit. We look forward to our usual good turnout of tournament officials.

• Questions from Local Association Meetings –

1. Question - We had some confusion on Rule 7-4-4, when there is two outs, as to who is called out on batter interference with the catcher, the batter or the runner being played on. The case book situations all involve batter interference with less than two outs. In these cases, it clearly states that the batter is out and the runners return to the last base touched at the time of the interference. With two outs, there was disagreement as to who is called out, the batter or the runner being played on. We could not find a case book situation that covered this situation. Since the batter committed the interference, we feel that the batter is out as stated in Rule 7-4-4 (the baseball rule may be different). We want to make sure that we would have the correct batter hitting to start the next inning when that team comes to bat again. **Ruling - Under Rule 7-4-4 the batter is out regardless of the number of outs.** You’re correct that some baseball codes are different but in the softball the rules have been simplified so that the person who commits the interference is almost always the one who is out. There are exceptions such as a runner who has already been retired or scored or an on deck batter and in those cases someone else is out. The key is whenever it is possible the violator is out.

2. A question came up at our local meeting in regards to the age of people in the media area. If a student who may be doing a feed for the schools web page or something like that, do they need to wear a helmet if they are under 18? **Ruling - The umpires don’t have any jurisdiction over this, nor do the playing rules. So the answer is that it is up to game management or the school program. That said, I strongly discourage media areas - they open the school up to a liability for those in them and those in the field of play who may enter them.**

3. Question - Where can I find the USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List? **Answer - Go to this link: [http://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/play-usa-softball/certified-usa-softball-equipment](http://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/play-usa-softball/certified-usa-softball-equipment) Then click on bats in the dropdown box and go to the bottom of the next page for the lists.**

4. Question – There are some places in the rule book and case book (Play 3.3.9B) that refer to players removed by coaches or umpires due to head injuries returning to play the same day. The state meeting said this was not legal. **Answer – OHSAA regulations in this area comply will Ohio state law which is more restrictive than the NFHS rules. A player removed in these**
circumstances can never return the same day. Please review page 14 of the Pre Season Guide for more details.

5. It seems like we are getting more and more questions on appeal plays. This is an item that was on the NFHS presentation for 2016 and like so many rules the first thing to understand is the definition. Under NFHS Rule 2-1-1 this play is simply the one we wait for – no call can be made until a ruling is requested by a manager, coach or player. Since all appeal plays are offensive violations that request would be from the defense. Appeals include missing a base, leaving early on a caught fly, batting out of order, and attempting to advance second base after overrunning first base. This question was received this week - In a recent meeting, mention of a play that occurred last year, lead to a discussion, with no real resolution. The play involved a runner missing a base, and the appeal that follows. We all agreed on the aspects of a dead ball appeal, but the question is on live ball. The plays were as follows, runner going from 1st to 3rd, misses 2nd. There is a play at 3rd, runner slides in at 3rd, is tagged, but is ruled safe. 3rd baseman keeps glove on runner in case she over slides base. After runner secures the base, fielder returns ball to pitcher. Does the fact that the fielder touches the runner with the ball at 3rd, after the runner has missed 2nd, qualify as an appeal or must the fielder state her intention, then touch runner? The 2nd play is similar, only occurs at home plate. Runner comes home and misses the plate, catcher is not aware she misses, steps on the plate while returning the ball to the pitcher. In both these situations, has the fielder has made the appeal by either touching the runner or touching the missed base? I have checked the case book looking for an example of what a fielder must do or say, for a live ball appeal, but have not found an answer. Ruling - Of course the answer to both your plays is going to be the same. Under Rule 2-1, the definition of an appeal play states that the umpire does not make a ruling until requested by a coach or player. Therefore, you can't have what I would call an accidental appeal where a fielder touches a base or tags a runner without the intent to appeal. While an appeal usually involves words there are no specific words required and at times words are not even needed but the words or actions of the defense must make it apparent that an appeal is being made. For instance, when a runner is caught off base on a line drive in the infield and a throw to that base is made for a double play the second out is an appeal play. Nothing is said but the actions of the defense make it apparent that an appeal is being made. The runner is actually out for leaving too soon on a batted ball caught in flight. In your two plays above words are needed to go along with the actions as these actions are not clearly part of an appeal play. There are a number of case book plays on appeal plays for a missed base. Please refer to Page 56 of the case book and Play 8.3.1G is one that we should all specifically review. We had some lively discussion at a preseason local meeting on this one. When a runner misses first base and the throw arrives after she has passed the base the runner should be called safe and then could be out if the defense appeals before she returns to and touches the base. This could happen more easily with the double base so we should all be ready for this possibility.