• The season is almost upon us. We have all done the state meeting and should be wrapping up the four local meetings that are required. It has taken some time to get the online state meeting attendance posted so please be patient but check to make sure you have gotten credit.

• I want to send out special thanks to the men who orchestrated the three state two-person mechanics clinics this year. Don Reuss - Cincinnati, John Rock - Massillon and Donny Madzia-Cadiz. Without their efforts and those of the instructors these would not be possible. The time and effort they put into setting up these clinics to provide instruction for umpires to improve is unmeasurable.

• As mentioned in the Blue Book and the state meeting, all three mechanics, 2, 3 and 4 man have been redone in PowerPoint and PDF form. There are no changes in the 2 man mechanics but with the 3 and 4 man there have been numerous. All three can be found going to this link and the Blue Book is also included: [http://www.ohsaa.org/Officiating/DOD](http://www.ohsaa.org/Officiating/DOD)

• There will be a 3-4 person mechanics clinic on Saturday May 13th at Grove City High School. Weather permitting there will be an inside review of both mechanics followed by live scrimmages. More information will be available in future bulletins.

• **One special note on the AMP program which is discussed in the state meeting.** I need to make sure that we know that if neither team has balls with the AMP logo printed on them, the game is to go on and you need to notify the OHSAA office that the teams did not have conforming baseballs. Apparently not everyone got the first bulletin that went out late January and I have had numerous calls asking about this issue.

• The new pitching rule with regards to pitch count. It is the coach’s responsibility to monitor the pitches and to manage their pitching staff. **We do not count pitches.**

**Behind the Mask**

• As we get ready for the upcoming season make sure that you go over the proper two man mechanics.
  
  • We are emphasizing that on a triple where the base umpire comes into the infield, he will take the BR around to third. This is the only change in the two man mechanics.
  
  • **Hybrid pitching position. It is either a ball or a balk.** This is the rule, not an option.
• At the pre-game conference, make sure that you mention to the coaches that all non-adult shaggers must have a helmet on when retrieving ball within the confines of the playing field. Yes players are non-adult shaggers.

• A player with a glove protecting the catcher in the bull pen does not need helmet, they have a glove!

• Wrist bands are to be worn on the wrists. Not the belt. Period.

• Yes the third to first move is still legal in high school baseball

• When in the B or C position at the time of the pitch, hands on knees.

• Remember we are on video, answer the coaches’ questions when asked, you are not going to change their minds.

• With potential bad weather coming in, make sure you enforce the lightning and thunder rule. Thirty minutes after the last lightening or thunder. Leave the field and go to your car or locker room. Safety is job 1.

• Hustle while on the field. Going from A to B after a walk, jog to B.

• Between innings, plate goes down and stands on the line, base umpire go to outfield.

• Base umpire counts pitches on a pitching change.

• Keep the batter in the box! They must have one foot in....

Situation: Runner on first, batter pops one up to the first baseman. Runner on first bumps into first baseman as he turns to make a catch.

Runner is out for interference, if in the judgment of the umpire the catch could have been made, we get two.

Situation: One out runner on 2nd. Pitcher warming up in bullpen located inside fence playing area along left field fence. Ball gets by catcher and rolls to fence behind the catcher at the backstop. Pitcher comes to set and throws a wild pitch that goes by catcher and the catcher goes to fence and picks up wrong ball and throws a strike to the pitcher to retire the runner.

Safe; he must get the right ball. Only the game ball can get an out. That is probably the only way to keep this fair. About the only way I would allow the out is if both balls were in about the same position and no one knew what ball was the correct one. In that case the defense got no advantage. I would think in most cases the balls would not be near each other and most people would know which is the game ball.
Situation: One out, men on first and second. Batter hits a foul ball and runners return to their bases but do not touch base! Some discussion was around that the runners were out for not touching the base. 8-2-9 Each runner shall touch his base after the ball becomes dead...

*The discussion was around if the player does not touch the base the umpire can call them out any time! By rule, 8-2-2 this cannot happen. “The umpire will not make the ball live until the runner returns to the appropriate base.”*