



### **2015 MHSAA Softball Items & Reminders**

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1. Online rules meetings will launch on February 2 and will close on April 9. The head varsity coach **MUST** complete a rules meeting or the coach is prohibited from coaching at any level in the MHSAA tournament.
2. Bats: For the 2015 softball season, National Federation playing rules again require that all non-wood bats must display the **ASA** certification mark to be a legal bat and not appear on the ASA “banned bat” list.
3. MHSAA tournament sites and groupings are posted at MHSAA.com.
4. Again in the 2015 season, umpires are still required to inspect bats and helmets prior to the game.
5. Health & Safety: Information regarding concussion protocols and heat & hydration policies can be found at the following link: <http://www.mhsaa.com/Schools/Administrators.aspx>
6. Umpires are required to collect, and coaches submit a lineup card to the plate umpire at the pre-game conference. Umpires must maintain a line card throughout the game and all substitutions, including CR must be reported to the plate umpire. If a DP/FLEX is used it must be on the lineup card properly at the time of the pre-game conference when lineups become official.
7. Again in 2015, the season maximum is 38 games for a team and individual during the regular season. The “point system” is no longer in use. A school may not schedule more than 38 regular season games. MHSAA Tournament games do not count toward the 38-game maximum.
8. **2015 MHSAA Tournament Dates**
  - Districts: May 26, May 29, or May 30
  - Regionals: Saturday, June 6
  - Quarterfinals: Tuesday, June 9
  - Semifinals: Thursday & Friday, June 11-12 - Secchia Stadium, East Lansing
  - Finals: Saturday, June 13 - Secchia Stadium, East Lansing

## **2015 NFHS Softball Rules Changes**

**1-6-1:** The batting helmet shall not have a glare or mirror-like surface.

**1-7-1:** The catcher's helmet shall not have a glare or mirror-like surface.

## **2015 NFHS Major Editorial Changes**

**1-6-1:** The exterior warning label may be affixed...or embossed (at the time of manufacture).

**1-6-6:** The phrase, "Meets NOCSAE Standard at the time of manufacture"...

**1-7-1:** The catcher shall wear a catcher's helmet...that meets the NOCSAE standard at the time of manufacture.

**5-1-4:** After a dead-ball situation, the ball becomes live when it is held by the pitcher on the pitcher's plate and the umpire calls and/or signals "Play Ball."

**7-1-1&2 Pen 2:** When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the next pitch (legal or illegal), or prior to an intentional base on balls (S.P.), or before all infielders have left fair territory and the catcher vacates her normal fielding position if a half-inning is ending. The umpire shall declare the batter who should have batted out (not the improper batter). The improper batter's time at bat is negated and she is returned to the dugout/bench area. All outs stand and runners who were not declared out must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. If a runner advances because of a stolen base, wild pitch, passed ball (F.P.) or an illegal pitch (F.P.) while the improper batter is at bat, such advance is legal.

**NOTE:** If any situation arises which could lead to an appeal by the defense on the last play of the game, umpires should not leave the field until all infielders have left fair territory and the catcher has vacated her normal fielding position. If teams line up to shake hands there is little chance for an appeal even if the defensive infielders have not crossed the foul line and umpires can leave the game at this point. No appeal can be made once the umpires have left the field.

## **2015 NFHS Point of Emphasis**

1. Electronic Devices
2. Interference
3. Obstruction



# 2015 NFHS SOFTBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS

**Publisher's Note:** The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

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## PRINTING ERROR

**Rules Book:** Page 47, 5-1-4 should read "After a dead-ball situation, the ball becomes live when the umpire calls and/or signals "Play Ball."

**Case Book:** Page 16, 2=36 Situation A: add rule references 3-6-2, 8-4-3b

**SITUATION 1:** Bases loaded with two outs. The runner at first base takes a big lead and the catcher makes a pick-off throw. The runner goes to second base. The other runners return to their bases. There are now two runners on second base. The defense gets the ball to the pitcher in the circle who is not "ready" to pitch. Nothing else happens for about 10 seconds. **RULING:** Two players may not occupy the same base. If the defense appeals by throwing the ball to second base and tags R3, the trail runner, R3 would be declared out. If no action is taken from the defense, the Look-Back Rule is in effect. R2, who is legally occupying the base, has the right to the base. The umpire shall declare R3 out for a violation of Rule 8-7-1.

**SITUATION 2:** A school photographer has chosen to shoot pictures from the media area. **RULING:** The school photographer is considered a part of the media. He/she would be allowed to shoot pictures from the media area. (1-1-7)

**SITUATION 3:** R1 on first base is stealing second base. The throw to F6, who is covering second base, arrives before R1 and is a little toward first base. The slide by R1 into F6, knocks F6 down, onto the top of R1 and F6 loses control of the ball. F6 reaches for the ball, gains control and tags R1, who cannot get to second base because F6 is on top of her. The umpire signals R1 out. **RULING:**

Incorrect ruling – F6 has committed obstruction. F6 committed obstruction when she lost control of the ball and kept R1 from reaching second base. The umpire should give delayed dead-ball signal and call time at end of play and R1 will be awarded second base since she would have reached that base had there been no obstruction. (2-36; 8-4-3b)

**SITUATION 4:** There have been no substitutes in the first six innings of the game. In the bottom of the seventh inning with the home team behind, B1 hits a single and is then replaced by a pinch runner. The team bats around and B1 comes back up to bat without reporting to the umpire. She hits a grand slam which wins the game. While the teams are lining up to shake hands and before the umpires have left the field of play, the visiting coach brings to the attention of the umpires that B1 did not report back into the game. **RULING:** The game is over with the home team winning. The worst-case scenario would be that the home team is issued a team warning. As this was the only re-entry in the game, there is no penalty. (3-6-7)

**SITUATION 5:** On a possible force play at second base, F6 has the ball in one hand, but touches the base with a) her hat that is in the other hand or b) with her other hand. **RULING:** In a), the runner is safe. F6's hat is considered detached equipment. In b), the runner is out on the forced out. (8-4-3e)

**SITUATION 6:** A runner on third base advances on a wild pitch. The runner steps on the pitcher's foot that is on home plate and the runner does not touch home plate. The pitcher did not have the ball when this happened.

The pitcher realizes that the runner did not touch home plate and then tags the runner and requests an appeal that the runner did not touch the base. What is the ruling? **RULING:** The pitcher is guilty of obstruction and the plate umpire should have signaled a delayed dead ball at the time the runner stepped on the pitcher's foot. When the runner is tagged out, the plate umpire should now signal a dead ball and award the runner home plate. (8-4-3b)

**SITUATION 7:** With the bases loaded and one out, the batter hits a fly ball to short right field. F9 catches the ball and throws to second base. F4 catches the ball and trips over second base: (a) before R2 returns to re-touch second base; (b) after R2, standing on second, leaves the base before F9 touched the fly ball. While lying on the ground, F4 looks at the base umpire or the base umpire hears a coach asking for an appeal from the bench area. **RULING:** These are live-ball appeals. By looking at the umpire, the fielder is, in essence, "requesting" the umpire to rule on whether R2 is out. The umpire should call R2 out. If the base umpire is sure the coach is requesting an appeal, the umpire should call R2 out. Both are timing plays and if R3 has not yet touched home at the time R2 is out, the run does not count. (2-1)

**SITUATION 8:** The defensive players on Team A are wearing face protection that does not carry the NOCSAE seal. **RULING:** Defensive players are allowed by rule to wear face/head protection in the field. Face guards will not have a NOCSAE seal because they are not NOCSAE approved. (1-8-4)