



# AOA CALLS

Winter 2006-2007



Arkansas Officials Association / 3920 Richards Road / North Little Rock, AR 72117/Office: 501-955-2500

**2006-2007  
Arkansas Officials  
Association**

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**Don Brodell, Associate Executive Director**



The sound of basketballs hitting the hardwood marks the end to a great football season. Thanks to those officials who worked this years play-offs and congratulations to those who were selected to work a championship game. This has been an outstanding year for high school football. There were 106 play-off games this season with the new classifications, 14 more than in previous years. Of the 459 eligible officials 354 were chosen to work play-off games. This number continues to increase each year, and I know each of you have a goal to work a championship game. I hope you continue to work toward that goal.

As we keep moving forward with technology, we are exploring different avenues of communication with our officials. We along with the NFHS are looking into online testing and various other ways to cut down on the amount of paper that comes into our office. Online testing will speed the process of grading and recording

test scores and hopefully eliminate the delay in getting results back to you.

Baseball and softball season is upon us, and we look forward to the statewide clinic in Hot Springs in January. Also, in March, Hot Springs will host the state basketball finals. This is our first year in Hot Springs with the finals, and we look forward to three great days of high school basketball.

Please check the AOA Bulletin Board for open dates and schools looking for officials. We will also try to post on the AOA Bulletin Board camp or clinic information received. There are some very good camps each year, and I encourage each of you to take advantage of those.

Professionalism and courtesy is a very large part of high school athletics. We should be officiating for the "love" of the game. Let's continue to work hard to improve each year and help keep high school athletics the wonderful sport it is.

**Austin Z. Hanner, Football Observers Coordinator**



As coordinator of the football observers program, I would like to thank each of the observers for the job that they have done in helping to improve football officiating in our state. We have had as many as 18 observers during my tenure as coordinator of the program.

Based on the coach's game reports during the season, the play-offs, and evaluation of the officials, it appears that vast improvements have been made; and we believe that improvements will continue to be made.

Some of the visible areas of improvement are: appearance, position/coverage, hustle, professional actions, kick-off mechanics, sideline man-

agement including game control and consistency, as well as rule knowledge.

In 2006 we formulated and implemented a revised football official's evaluation rating scale that included nine (9) areas that the observer used in evaluating each official. Those areas are: judgment, game control, position/coverage, rules knowledge, communication, common sense, appearance and fitness/mobility. Many of the officials who have been observed reported that the evaluations have assisted them in becoming better officials.

One of our goals for the 2007 season is to observe beginning officials as well as those officials who have not been observed during the past five (5) years.



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## Baseball Teams with Fewer than Nine Players May Return to Nine

INDIANAPOLIS - Effective with the 2007 high school baseball season, a team playing with fewer than nine players may return to nine players. In addition to this change, 12 other rules revisions were approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee at its June 16-17 meeting in Indianapolis. These rules changes subsequently were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

"Rule 4-4-1f allows a team that had to drop down to eight players to return to nine later during the game," said Greg Brewer, assistant director of the Alabama High School Athletic Association and chairperson of the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee. "This will also help promote participation."

Rule 3-3-1n addresses revised penalties for initiating malicious contact on offense or defense. Transgressions will now result in the ball being immediately dead, and if on offense, the player is ejected and declared out, unless he has already scored. If the defense commits the malicious contact, the player is ejected; the umpire shall rule either safe or out on the play and award the runner(s) the appropriate base(s) he felt they would have obtained if the malicious contact had not occurred.

Other rules pertaining to malicious contact were also revised, as were their corresponding entries in the base-running table and dead-ball table.

"With these changes, we hope to be more definitive on offensive and defensive malicious contact," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee.

In another change, Rule 6-2-1 now states that a ball will be called each time a pitcher brings his pitching hand in contact with his mouth, either without distinctly wiping off the pitching hand before it touches the ball or while in contact with the pitcher's plate.

Rule 3-2-1 was revised to state that one player or coach may occupy each coach's box while his team is at bat. A coach or player occupying the coach's box shall remain in the box from the time the batter enters the batter's box until the release of the ball by the pitcher. If the coach or player steps out of the box during this time, regardless of who violates the rule, the head coach will be restricted to the bench/dugout.

"A player or coach standing outside the box gains an unfair advantage as to where the opposing pitcher intends to pitch the ball," Hopkins said. "The box-bound player or coach does not have the same angle or disadvantage. This rule seeks to correct these unfair advantages and prevent distractions the pitcher may experience during his delivery."

Another rule change (Rule 3-3-4) stipulates that whenever team members are loosening up in an area that is not protected by a fence or other structure, another member of the team with a glove must be positioned between them and the batter to protect them from a batted or thrown ball.

"This is a risk minimization initiative to protect individuals who are not watching the activity in the field," Hopkins said.

In another effort to minimize risk, Rule 10-2-1 was revised to specify that when behind the plate, the umpire-in-chief shall wear proper safety equipment including, but not limited to chest protector, face mask, throat guard, plate shoes, shin guards and protective cup (if male).

A new signal was adopted that uses the point motion for the start of the game. This will align NFHS officials with other rules codes to begin a contest and put a ball back in play.

In an effort to make baseball compatible with other NFHS sport rules, Rule 1-4-4 now states that a commemorative or memorial patch, not to exceed 4 square inches, may be worn on jerseys without compromising the integrity of the uniform.

In addition to the rules changes, the committee identified Points of Emphasis for the 2007 season. Among those are malicious contact, concussions, good sporting behavior, face protection, umpire's professionalism, non-adult bat/ball shaggers and game management.

Baseball is the fourth-most popular sport among boys at the high school level with 459,717 participants during the 2004-05 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It also ranks third in school sponsorship across the nation.

## 2007 Softball Rules Changes

2-36; 2-47-2,3; 8-4-3b; 8-6-10a: Established guidelines for interference and obstruction when contact occurs between a base runner and a fielder on a non-controlled batted ball. A new definition for an "Initial Play" was also created.

3-6-17 Penalty: Penalty changed for intentionally removing a boundary line after a team warning to now include the subsequent offender.

### 2007 MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES

2-15 New: New definition for "Confines of the Field" created.

3-6-18 Penalty: Clarified penalty for malicious contact by a

fielder.

7-3; 7-4: Articles relating to a batter being out moved from section on Batting Infractions to Batter is Out.

8-2-5: Clarified location of the batter-runner as it relates to the running-lane interference.

8-6-10d: Clarified that any intentional interference by a runner will result in an out.

8-10; 1-2-1 Note: Double first base section and note expanded and clarified.

## 2006-07 Soccer Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1: May a soccer game be played on a football field where all markings are in white? RULING: Yes; however, the NFHS recommends that the soccer markings contrast in color to the football markings. (1-2-1)

SITUATION 2: Many school districts are building multi-use artificial turf facilities primarily for soccer, football and track. May soccer goals be placed on the end line of the football field even if they are not two yards in front of the football goal posts? RULING: No. COMMENT: Rule 1-4-1 states that "portable goals if used on football fields should be anchored at least 2 yards in front of the existing football goal posts."

SITUATION 3: Can schools purchase nets with the name or mascot of the school stenciled on it? RULING: Yes. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 4: If the required team area markings are absent, should the coach be restricted to the area directly in front of the team bench? RULING: Yes. (1-5-3)

SITUATION 5: A player from Team A has a violent collision with an opponent when attempting to play the ball, is knocked down, and in the judgment of the official was apparently unconscious. The player is removed from the game and after being checked by the school's athletic trainer, is sent to the table by the head coach to re-enter the game. RULING: Incorrect procedure. When this player was determined by the official to possibly be unconscious, the player may not return to play that day without written authorization by a physician (MD/DO). (3-3-2-b-3)

SITUATION 6: Both teams have players checked in at the scorer's table prior to a dead-ball substitution opportunity (injured player). Once the dead-ball substitution opportunity occurs and the referee beckons the players onto the field, must these players enter the field of play? RULING: Yes. (3-4-1-a)

SITUATION 7: Must shinguards bear the NOCSAE logo for the 2006-07 soccer season? RULING: No; however, effective with the 2007 fall season, shinguards must meet NOCSAE specifications and bear the NOCSAE seal. (4-1-1)

SITUATION 8: May a team use a navy and white striped jersey as both home and away uniforms? RULING: No. COMMENT: There is no predominant color, and the home jersey must be light and away jerseys dark. (4-1-1)

SITUATION 9: The contest officials notice in their pregame inspection that some members of Team B are wearing visible, red compression shorts under their uniform shorts and others on the same team have visible, white compression shorts under their uniform shorts. Is this acceptable? RULING: No. Team B may wear compression shorts under the uniform shorts, but all team members must wear the same single, solid color. (4-1-1)

SITUATION 10: (a) Player No. 1 on Team A is wearing sport eyewear and (b) player No. 2 is wearing non-prescription sun glasses. Are these pieces of equipment legal? RULING: Legal in (a) and not legal in (b). (4-1-1)

SITUATION 11: Can schools put players' names on the backs of their jerseys? RULING: Yes, as long as the names don't obstruct the players' numbers. (4-1-1-j)

SITUATION 12: May players other than the goalkeeper wear gloves? RULING: Yes; however, if in the opinion of the referees the gloves are dangerous or confusing, they are illegal. (4-2-1)

SITUATION 13: Are padded headbands made of soft material legal for field players? RULING: Yes, as long as the product does not contain any hard or unyielding material. (4-2-3)

SITUATION 14: A player is wearing a protective face mask that is molded to the face with no protrusions. The player, who does not have a facial injury, has a medical release signed by a physician that suggests she wear the mask to prevent possible future injuries. RULING: Illegal. Only players with facial injuries are permitted to wear a protective face mask. (4-2-8)

SITUATION 15: A state association defines "immediate surroundings" to include that area between the field of play and the entrance to the parking lot. After the game, the referee is verbally assaulted by a coach (a) somewhere between the field of play and the parking lot; (b) in the parking lot. The referee gives a red card to the coach in both situations. RULING: Legal in (a), Illegal in (b). A report to the proper authority must be filed in both situations. (5-1-2)

SITUATION 16: During the pregame inspection just prior to the kickoff, a player dissents to the referee. The referee issues the player a caution. RULING: Legal. (5-1-2)

SITUATION 17: Is it permissible for officials to wear a shirt with the USSF logo on it? RULING: Only if permitted by the state association. (5-1-3)

SITUATION 18: Is it mandatory for the head referee to address coaches and players prior to the game about good sportsmanship? RULING: Yes. COMMENT: The NFHS has instituted this practice in all sports. (5-2-2)

SITUATION 19: Are officials mandated by rule to use the official NFHS Soccer Signals in a contest? RULING: Yes. (5-3-1-b)

SITUATION 20: If a game is terminated by the referee due to fighting, regardless of the score at the time, does the official have the authority to declare a winner? RULING: No. The matter must be reported to the state association, which will declare a winner. (7-1-3)

SITUATION 21: Under NFHS rules, must the player actually touch the ball to be judged offside for "interfering with play?" RULING: No. COMMENT: Although other rules bodies may interpret this way, the high school game does not require that the player touch the ball in this situation. (11-1-3, Diagrams 8, 12, 13)

SITUATION 22: A player from both Team A and Team B are involved in misconduct at the halfway line while Team A is in

## 2006-07 Soccer Rules Interpretations, cont.

possession of the ball on the 18-yard line near Team B's goal.

**RULING:** Allow the play to exhaust its momentum and then assess a card to both players for their actions. **COMMENT:** Since it is an on-the-field infraction, by rule there would be a restart with a drop ball at the spot of the fouls. (12-8-1, 2, 3)

**SITUATION 23:** The coach from Team B complains to the referee that the coach from Team A is text messaging his assistant coach who is in the spectator stands. **RULING:** Illegal. The coach must be cautioned for unsporting conduct. (12-8-1-e)

**SITUATION 24:** A head coach is assessed a second yellow card for unsportsmanlike conduct. What should the official do? **RULING:** The proper procedure for a coach or bench personnel receiving a second yellow card is to disqualify that individual from the contest by displaying a red card (for second caution/yellow card) and request them to leave the immediate surroundings of the contest. (12-8-3)

**SITUATION 25:** If an assistant coach is awarded a subsequent (second) caution for unsportsmanlike conduct, must he/she leave the field? **RULING:** The issuance of a second caution to a coach or bench personnel results in the display of a red card and the coach/bench personnel is disqualified for the remainder of the contest and must leave the immediate surroundings of the field. (12-8-3)

**SITUATION 26:** A player from Team A is guilty of spitting at (a) an opponent and (b) a game official. The restart shall be a direct free kick in both situations. **RULING:** In (a) a direct free kick; in (b) an indirect free kick. (12-8-3 d and e)



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