

Oregon School Activities Association

Baseball SRI Bulletin – Preseason

February 26, 2013

OSAA Baseball Umpires:

The 2013 Baseball season is right around the corner, are you ready? In last year's preseason SRI bulletin, I had you focus on conditioning, healthy eating habits and practicing your plate stance, to prepare for the upcoming season. This year I want to get you to think about your gear and uniform as well. Also I want to offer some tips on making the gear and uniforms we spend a lot of money on, last a little longer.

- Good stewardship of your gear happens after every game. Wipe off dust, dirt and moisture after each game so your gear and accessories will last longer. Don't forget to wipe off excess dirt and mud from washable items (especially plate pants) before placing in the washing machine, or getting dry cleaned.
- Speaking of pants, have you tried them on? Can't bring the clasp together? It may be time to purchase pants that fit, or have seen better days. Check your clothing for loose buttons and threads.
- Shoes. Take a good look at the shoelaces, replace as needed now, and not at pre-game. Always put an extra set in the bag for both plate and base shoes.
- Cold weather gear. Gloves, extra layers, and hand warmers. Early spring games can be downright cold, losing your focus because you are under dressed should not happen if you prepare now.
- Ball bags, brush, and indicator ready to go? (Tad's trick... iron your ball bags, always store them flat in your bag.) New hat?
- Chest protector and shin guard straps. Worn out straps can be inexpensive to replace, and may be in need of being replaced for proper wear and protection.
- Store a dry towel in your gear bag. They are perfect for quick clean-ups. Shin guards are the biggest culprit for dust and moisture but the inside of all umpire gear is susceptible to moisture from perspiration. Face mask pads that have been in the rain should be wiped down before putting them back in your bag.
- Don't leave your gear or uniforms in your car. UV rays can fade fabrics or change them to an undesired color. Pink plate pants are not in style. Don't leave them in a humid place such as a garage, extreme heat and moisture can be harmful to your uniforms and protective gear. Just a little preventive maintenance will go a long way toward keeping your gear and uniforms looking their best. Remember the first pitch is coming up quick, don't get caught unprepared.

2013 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

The NFHS rules committee each year highlights areas it believes need attention. You also can find the points of emphasis in your packet. They are the blue page updates that insert into your Oregon

Baseball Umpires Manual. This 2013 update includes rule changes and mechanic changes as well. The rule committee has targeted the following below.

1. **Pitcher's stance**

The pitcher may begin in one of two positions: the windup or the set.

- ✓ Pitchers in the windup position are required to have their non-pivot foot on or behind a line extending through the front edge of the pitchers plate.
- ✓ Pitchers in the set position shall stand with his entire non pivot foot in a front line extending through the front edge of the pitchers plate and with his entire pivot foot in contact with or directly in front of pitchers plate.
- ✓ Pitchers in the *Hybrid stance* shown in the play pic on page 3 of the 2013 update are illegal in high school baseball. Please review this point of emphasis

2. **Pace of play**

In no particular order, the following issues should be given closer attention in the 2013 season.

- ✓ Reducing the length and amount of times a catcher goes to the mound.
- ✓ Enforcement of the batter's box rule.
- ✓ The length of offensive and defensive conferences.
- ✓ Speeding up the time between innings, by being diligent in counting the warm up pitches.

3. **Compliant bats**

Umpires need to be on the watch for altered bats, in particular noticing if the end cap has been removed. The use of legal equipment is in the best interest of fair play and sportsmanship, and it is a playing rule.

4. **Good sporting behavior.**

Umpires and coaches need to work together.

Let's get ready, Pray for a sunny spring..... baseball is here again.

Tad Cockerill

OSAA State Rules Interpreter

cockerill51@gmail.com