I. Review and discuss the following 2019 Rule Changes for Softball and the information concerning this change for softball. (Please see comments on the rules change in the Rule Book, pages 84-85, for further information and rationale for each rule change.)

1-1-7, 2-22-4, Table 5-1, 5-1-1o: The media shall be prohibited from being in live-ball area. The home team or game management may designate an area for the media in dead ball territory. **Rationale:** Clarifies that game management may designate a media area in dead ball territory.

1-5-2a: The knob may be molded, lathed, welded or adjustable, but must be permanently fastened. **Rationale:** Clarifies that an adjustable knob is permissible, provided the knob is permanently fastened by the manufacturer.

1-8-4: Defensive players are permitted to wear a shield on their face/head protection in the field but it must be constructed of a molded, rigid material that is clear and permits 100 percent (no tint) allowable light transmission. **Rationale:** In an effort to promote risk minimization, tinted eye shields are prohibited for defensive face/head protection.

6-1-1 PENALTY, 6-1-2 Thru 4 PENALTY, 6-2-1 PENALTY, 6-2-7 PENALTY: in the case of an illegal pitch, the batter is awarded a ball. The penalty that permitted base runners to be awarded one base without liability to be put out is removed. **Rationale:** The new language creates more balance between offense and defense. The batter should receive the award rather than runners already on base.

*Also – MHSA New Rule This Year*

- **Pitcher – 1st Base and 3rd Base Must Wear a Mask (they cannot participate without a mask)**
MHSA softball rule clarification reminder:

In Class AA (or any classification) when the varsity and junior varsity games are played at the same time, players can be listed on both line-up cards however once they leave one game to participate in the other, they cannot go back and participate in the first game. They can only switch once.

Rule Book Reading – please review the great information in the Softball Guide on Rulebook Reading – pages 10-11. Spend some time with your group regarding rule book reading / study / review.

II. Please review and discuss the following information in the NFHS Softball Guide 2019 concerning the new rule changes this year - this study guide was mailed in February with the MOA Official Word:

- Illegal Pitches – No Longer Awarded a Base - pages 1-2
- Media Areas - page 2
- Face Shields - page 2
- Adjustable Knobs - page 3

III. Please review the 2019 Major Editorial Revisions for Softball

2-65-2 - Intentional Walk Clarification (no appeal)

6-1-2a, b - Start of the Pitch - (clarifies what motion constitutes the start of the pitch and when the step back of the non-pivot foot can be taken.

Appendix H - An Appendix regarding DP/Flex rules was added for quick reference

IV. Please review and discuss the following information in the NFHS Softball Guide 2019 concerning the major editorial changes for this year - this study guide was mailed in February with the MOA Official Word:

- Intentional Walk - page 3
- Start of the Pitch - page 3
- Appendix H - page 3

V. Please review the Major Mechanics Changes (2018- 2019 Two Year Manual) - this is the second year of this manual.

There were no major changes to the NFHS Softball Mechanics.

VI. Please review and discuss last year’s rule changes, major editorial revisions and major mechanics revisions. Were there any problems, concerns, or unusual situations caused by these changes?

Rule Changes (Last Year)

2-65-2, 8-1-1c, 8-4-3a, 9-6-2: The coach, pitcher or catcher of the defensive team may request an intentional walk either before or during the pitch count.
3-2-7c: Language was added to address the use and placement of the wristband playbook/play card and defines this item as a piece of equipment. It also addresses restrictions on color.

3-2-15, 10-2-3a: This change removes the responsibility of the umpires to inspect equipment prior to the start of the game. Rule 4-1-2d already requires head coaches to verify that their players are legally and properly equipped.

3-7-1 NOTE, 6-2-5 NOTE 2: Added language provides umpires with the authority to allow a reasonable number of warm-up pitches to an incoming pitcher due to circumstances that require a pitcher to be removed by rule.

Please review the information in the NFHS Softball Guide 2019 concerning the 2018 rule changes - this study guide was mailed in early February with the MOA Official Word:

- Flashback: 2018 Changes – page 4

**Major Editorial Revisions (Last Year)**

3-6-12 & 10-1-6 - Language provides clarity and consistency for restriction of alcohol and tobacco use by participants and umpires

8-1-2 - This change requires the batter to make an attempt to avoid being hit by a pitched ball in the area between the plate and the batter’s box. This portion of the rule had been inadvertently omitted.

VII. The NFHS Softball Rules Committee has identified four points for emphasis this year. These points of emphasis will be discussed during the online Softball Rules Clinic but please review and discuss these points of emphasis as a group.

**Please review the comments for each point of emphasis listed in the Rule Book, page 84:**

1) Pitcher Simulating Taking a Signal
2) Proper Techniques When Sliding
3) Head Coach Listed on Lineup Card
4) Illegal Pitch Penalty

Please review the articles in the NFHS Softball Guide 2019 on these important points of emphasis:

- NFHS Points of Emphasis 2019 – page 3

**Also, please review the Points of Emphasis from last year:**

1) Coaches have the responsibility to verify players are legally equipped including all bats and helmets used in the game.

2) Rules associated with when batter must attempt to avoid being hit by a pitch.

3) Courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher.
VIII. **Concussion Law** – Remember you must view the NFHS Concussion Course before umpiring any scrimmage or game (State Law and MOA Requirement). Review once again the MHSA procedure for MOA officials to follow in regard to these concussions and other injuries (this information is provided in the addendum to these study clubs after Study Club # 4).

IX. Review once again the **DP/Flex Rule** (this information is provided in the addendum to these study clubs after Study Club # 4).

Also, a new Appendix H has been added to the Softball Rules Book – DP/Flex Simplified Reminders on page 95

X. **Bat Information** – Rule 1-5-1d – a legal bat must bear either the 2000 or 2004 certification mark (examples on page 12 of the rule book) and be listed on the USA Softball non-approved bat list with ASA certification marks as found on www.usasoftball.com under the Certified Equipment tab. Please make sure you check with the head coach verifying their players are legally and properly equipped before each game. Also, bats made entirely of wood are permitted and need not bear an ASA mark, but shall not exceed 2 1/4 inches in diameter.

Checking Equipment – **Rule Change** – This change removes the responsibility of the umpires to inspect equipment prior to the start of the game. Rule 4-1-2d already requires head coaches to verify that their players are legally and properly equipped.

XI. Please review and discuss the following 2019 NFHS Softball Rules Interpretations:

**CASE BOOK CORRECTIONS:** (Underlining shows additions; strikethrough shows deletions.)

8.4.3 SITUATION N: Rule reference 8-4-3ed PENALTY; 8.4.3 SITUATION O: Rule reference 8-4-3ae.

**SITUATION 1:** During a game, a bat is brought to the umpire that does not have the 2000 or 2004 ASA certification mark but does have another organization’s marking. The coach of the team at bat claims that since it has been approved by an organization it is acceptable to be used in NFHS play. The umpire rules this bat to be a non-approved bat and penalizes accordingly. **RULING:** This is the correct ruling. For NFHS play, bats must have either the 2000 or 2004 ASA certification mark shown below. (1-5-1d)

**SITUATION 2:** During a game, the umpire notices that the face/head protection of a player on defense has an eye shield attached to it with tape. Upon further inspection, the umpire notices that the edges of the shield are rough and splintered. When asked, the player tells the umpire that her dad modified a motorcycle face shield to fit her face/head protection. The umpire requires the player to remove the shield from the face/head protection, allowing her time to do so before play continues. **RULING:** This is the correct ruling. Shields attached to face/head protection must be designed for use with the face/head protection and be attached as intended by the manufacturer. (1-8-4)
**SITUATION 3:** The pitcher from Team A steps onto the pitcher’s plate, simulates taking a signal, then brings her hands together. With her hands together, she raises her hands up over her head while taking a step backward, separating her hands after the step backward has ended and then continuing to pitch the ball. The umpire calls this an illegal pitch, ruling that any step backward must begin prior to any motion that is part of the windup. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Any step backward must begin prior to the start of the pitch, which is when the hands separate after they have been brought together. (6-1-2a, b)

**SITUATION 4:** With no outs, a 3-2 count and R1 on second base, the pitcher is called for an illegal pitch. B2 swings and misses the ball that is not caught by the catcher. Seeing the ball dropped, B2 runs to first base and is thrown out prior to reaching first base. R1, who was stealing on the pitch, is safe at third base. The umpire awards B2 first base on the illegal pitch and, since R1 was safe on the play, allows her to remain at third base. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since the batter was not safe at first base, on an illegal pitch the coach on offense should receive his or her choice of the play or the penalty (6-1-1 PENALTY EXCEPTION 2). **COMMENT:** In this case, the result of the play would be R1 on third base and B2 being called out. If the coach elects to take the penalty, a ball is awarded to B2, which would result in ball 4, placing B2 on first base and R1 would be returned to second base.

**SITUATION 5:** With no outs, a 1-1 count and R1 on first base, the pitcher is called for an illegal pitch. B2 swings and misses the ball. R1, who was stealing on the pitch, is thrown out at second base. The umpire rules that since R1 was stealing on the pitch she would remain out, but awards the batter a ball for the illegal pitch. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since the batter was not safe at first base and all runners did not advance at least one base, on an illegal pitch the coach on offense should receive his or her choice of the play or the penalty (6-1-1 PENALTY EXCEPTION 2). **COMMENT:** In this case, the result of the play would be B2 at bat with a 1-2 count and R1 remaining out. If the coach elects to take the penalty, a ball is awarded to B2 (2-1 count) and R1 would be returned to first base.

**SITUATION 6:** With no outs, R1 on third base and R2 on first base, B3 is at bat with a 3-1 count. The umpire calls an illegal pitch as B3 swings and misses. R2 was stealing second base on the pitch and is thrown out at second base, but R1 is safe stealing home. The umpire rules that since R1 advanced safely, the illegal pitch is nullified, R1 scores, R2 is out at second and B3 remains at bat with a 3-2 count. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since the batter was not safe at first base and all runners did not advance at least one base, on an illegal pitch the coach on offense should receive his or her choice of the play or the penalty (6-1-1 PENALTY EXCEPTION 2). **COMMENT:** In this case, the result of the play would be R1 scores, R2 is out and B3 remains at bat with a 3-2 count with one out. If the coach chooses
to take the penalty, a ball is awarded to B3, which would result in ball 4, placing B3 on first base and forcing R2 to advance to second base and R1 returning to third base.

**SITUATION 7:** The coach of the team at bat asks the umpire to examine the left fielder’s mitt claiming that it has three colors, which would make it illegal. Upon inspection it is found that the main part of the mitt is gray with blue in the inner part of the mitt. There is also red piping and lacing, and the manufacturer’s logo is also red. The umpire rules the mitt is three colors and is not allowed to be used. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. This mitt is two colors, gray and blue. Piping is viewed the same as lacing and can be any color other than the color of the ball. The manufacturer’s logo is allowed to be any color. (1-4-1a)

**SITUATION 8:** Following a double by R2, B3 comes to bat with R1 on third base and R2 on second base and no outs. The coach of the team on defense asks the umpire to intentionally walk B3. After B3 is awarded the intentional walk, the coach comes back out of the dugout and asks to appeal R2 missing first base on the previous play. Since a pitch has not been thrown, the umpire rules R2 out on appeal. **RULING:** This is an incorrect ruling. Since an intentional walk is considered a time at bat, for purposes of an appeal it is considered the same as throwing a pitch. No appeal of the previous play can be made after an intentional walk has been awarded (2-65-2). **COMMENT:** All appeals (missing a base, leaving a base early on a caught fly ball, batting out of order, attempting to advance after overrunning first base) are designed to allow the defense to gain an advantage from an infraction by the offense. Throwing a pitch (legal or illegal) or requesting an intentional walk are both actions by the defense that remove its chance to appeal a play. Just as the act of throwing the next pitch has always been, it is also incumbent upon the defense to ensure it does not want to appeal any actions on the previous play prior to requesting an intentional walk.

*Completed outline must be signed by all present and sent to the regional director by May 15, 2019*
I. Please discuss and review the following information on a variety of topics from the NFHS Softball Guide 2019

- Alas, Thou Art Fair - page 6
- Toeing the Lines - page 9
- Spell Interference With 3 P’s - page 10
- Intentionally Dropped Ball - page 11
- Those Catches Can Trap You - page 12
- There’s a Catch - page 14
- Foul Bunt or Slap with Two Strikes? - page 16

II. Pitching Information -

Games hampered with light precipitation can often pose problems for pitchers, who are allowed to use a towel or approved drying agents to dry the pitching hand. An umpire’s judgment comes into play under a few wet-weather circumstances. A pitcher is allowed to use a towel, as long as, in the umpire’s judgment, it is not distracting to the batter. A towel that is tucked in the pitcher’s waist in front facing the batter and flopping around is likely to be more distracting than if it is tucked in her back pocket or in her waist in back. NFHS rules allow the pitcher to use a powdered resin or any comparable drying agent to dry the hands. The resin applied to the pitcher’s hands and fingers does not have to be wiped off prior to throwing a pitch.

❖ Once again, information that has been shared with coaches and umpires for many years regarding pitching is provided the addendum to these study clubs after Study Club # 4.

III. Orally, as a group, take the following 2019 Softball Rules Exam – Part I. Discuss any problem areas and please note the questions that may be affected by this year’s rule changes.
1. Which of the following are appealable plays?
   A. Missing a base.
   B. Batting out of order.
   C. Leaving a base early on a caught fly ball.
   D. All of the above.

2. All of the following statements about sliding are true EXCEPT:
   A. If a runner slides, it may be feet first or head first.
   B. In order to complete a legal slide, a runner must be able to touch the base with either her hand or foot.
   C. In order for a runner to avoid unnecessary contact, she is required to slide if a fielder has possession of the ball and is waiting to make a tag.
   D. On an overslide, a runner may be tagged out if she does not remain in contact with the base.

3. B1 bats out of order and reaches first base. F1 then steps onto the pitcher’s plate and commits an illegal pitch. The defense then appeals that B1 has batted out of order. What is the correct ruling?
   A. B1 is declared out and the next batter comes to the plate.
   B. B1 is replaced by the legal batter at first base.
   C. The defense can no longer appeal batting out of order since the infraction was not discovered prior to the next pitch.
   D. The defense is allowed to appeal since the pitch was illegal and the player that B1 batted in place of is called out.

4. B1 fails to promptly take her position in the batter's box within the 10 seconds after the ball is returned to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch. What is the correct ruling?
   A. The umpire awards an additional five seconds and play continues.
   B. The umpire grants the batter time until she is ready for play to resume.
   C. The umpire declares the batter out for delaying the game.
   D. The umpire calls a strike on the batter.
5. The batter is standing in the batter’s box when an inside pitch hits her in the knee completely in the batter’s box. The proper call is:

A. Dead ball and the batter is awarded first base.
B. Strike on the batter because she needs to make an effort to get out of the way of the pitch.
C. Strike on the batter because the pitcher is entitled to throw over the inner part of the batter’s box.
D. None of the above.

6. A coach cannot have which of the following items in the coaches box on the field?

A. A stopwatch.
B. A cell phone recording video.
C. A tablet device being used as a scorebook.
D. A scorebook.

7. Each team, when on defense, is allowed how many charged conferences without penalty during a seven-inning game?

A. One.
B. Two.
C. Three.
D. Four.

8. Which action is not legal for a courtesy runner?

A. She has not participated in the game.
B. She runs for the pitcher only.
C. She runs for the catcher only.
D. She becomes a substitute in the same half inning she was a courtesy runner.

9. After reaching base legally, a team has the option to use a courtesy runner for:

A. The pitcher only.
B. The catcher only.
C. The pitcher and/or catcher.
D. The team’s slowest player as designated by the coach during the pre-game meeting.

10. A head coach who intends to utilize the DP/Flex option must alert the umpires and opposing team:
A. Before that coach’s team bats for the first time.
B. Before that coach’s team throws its first pitch on defense.
C. During the exchange of lineup cards at home plate during the pregame conference.
D. Before the DP’s first at-bat.

11. The correct pitching distance in NFHS female fast pitch softball is:
   A. 38 feet.
   B. 40 feet.
   C. 43 feet.
   D. 45 feet.

12. Which statement about bats is correct?
   A. Bats should be free of rattles, dents, burrs, cracks and sharp edges.
   B. Materials inside the bat or treatment/devices used to alter bat specifications and/or enhance performances are prohibited and render the bat illegal.
   C. A nick or paint chip in the bat from metal cleats that does not extend into the laminations of the bat should not render a bat illegal.
   D. All of the above.

13. A small hole has naturally occurred in front of the pitching plate during the course of the game. On the pitch, the pitcher pushes off the plate with her pivot foot and loses contact with the ground as she drags across the hole. Her pivot foot, however, is no higher than the level plane of the ground around the hole as she delivers the pitch. What is the correct call?
   A. No call. The pitch is legal because in the umpire's judgment, the foot would have been in contact with the ground had the hole not been present.
   B. No pitch, and the game is delayed until the hole can be repaired.
   C. Illegal pitch because the pivot foot is not touching the ground in the bottom of the hole.
   D. No pitch and the pitcher receives a warning. If the pivot foot fails to touch the ground in the bottom of the hole on future pitches, an illegal pitch will be called.

14. It is an illegal pitch if:
   A. F1 is behind the pitcher's plate, takes her signal, steps on the pitcher's plate and immediately brings her hands together.
   B. F1 is on the pitcher's plate, looks to the coach for a signal and then looks to F2 and simulates taking a signal before bringing her hands together.
   C. F1 stands behind the pitcher's plate, takes a signal from the coach, steps on the pitcher's plate and simulates taking a signal from F2 before bringing her hands together.
   D. F1’s shoulders are in line with first and third base, the ball is in her glove or hand and the hands are separated.

15. The game begins when the:
   A. Pre-game conference ends.
B. Home team takes the field for warm-ups.
C. Umpire calls “Play Ball.”
D. First pitch is thrown.

16. When a coach makes a substitution during a game, the home plate umpire should report the substitution to:
A. The opposing team’s scorekeeper.
B. The opposing team’s head coach.
C. The opposing team’s captain.
D. The opposing team’s base coaches.

17. B1 hits a high fly ball down the line to right field. F9, with both feet clearly in fair territory, reaches across the foul line in an attempt to catch the ball. While the ball is still in the air, completely over foul ground, the ball deflects off of F9’s glove and lands in fair territory. The correct call is:
A. Foul ball since the ball was over foul territory when first touched.
B. Fair ball since both feet were clearly in fair territory when she touched the ball.
C. Fair ball because after she touched the ball it landed in fair territory.
D. Fair ball. Any ball touched by a fielder is automatically fair.

18. R1 is caught in a rundown between third base and home. As R1 is attempting to return to third base, she is obstructed by F5 and subsequently tagged while off the base by F6. The correct call is:
A. The call is always an immediate dead ball when a runner is obstructed.
B. When a fielder obstructs a runner the initial call is always a delayed dead ball. Once the obstructed runner is put out, it becomes a dead ball and the umpires shall award R1 the base she would have reached had there been no obstruction.
C. R1 is awarded home.
D. The umpire will issue a warning to F5 and notify her coach.

19. Which of the following situations involving a bunt occurring on a third strike is correct?
A. A batter whose third strike bunt attempt ends up a foul ball will be called out.
B. An attempted bunt can never be ruled an infield fly.
C. A batter whose foot is touching home plate when the bat makes contact with a pitched ball will always be called out (whether the ball is hit fair or foul).
D. All of the above.

20. State associations may, on an individual basis, permit a player to participate while wearing a different style uniform for the following reasons:
A. Inclement weather.
B. Religious reasons.
C. Different styles and colors due to budget restrictions.
D. A and B.

21. With the ball in the circle in F1's possession, and there is no attempt by F1 to make a play on a base runner, when is the runner declared out based on the look-back rule?
   A. The batter-runner is safe at first base on a dropped third strike. She overruns first base and turns to the right. Seeing no fielder near second base, she runs toward second where she is safe.
   B. The batter-runner gets a base hit and rounds first base and comes to a complete stop. She then returns to first base.
   C. The batter-runner who gets an infield hit and overruns first base toward right field turns left, stops and then advances to second base.
   D. The batter-runner gets a base hit and overruns first base toward right field, turns left and moves toward the infield in any direction except toward second base, then returns to first base.

22. Bases are loaded with no outs, with a one-ball, one-strike count. B4 hits a ground ball. As F4 is fielding the ball, R3 collides with her. What is the correct ruling?
   A. The ball is dead and R3 is out. All other runners return to their bases and B4 returns to bat with the same count.
   B. R3 is out. If the interference prevented an obvious double play, the succeeding runner (B4) is also out. R1 and R2 advance at their own risk.
   C. Since R3 was in the baseline there is no interference, and all runners advance at their own risk.
   D. The ball is dead and R3 is out. If the interference prevented an obvious double play the succeeding runner (B4) is also out. If not, B4 is awarded first base. R1 and R2 return to the last base touched at the time of interference.

23. With no outs and R1 on first base, B2 hits a ground ball on the first-base side of the infield. F4 moves into the baseline to make an initial play on a batted ball. R1, using normal movement, alters her base path going either behind or in front of F4 to avoid contact with F4 fielding the ball. The correct call is:
   A. The umpire signals obstruction on F4 for causing R1 to alter her path. Awarding the base to R1 would have achieved had it not been for the obstruction on F4.
   B. If R1 runs in front of F4, the umpire should signal dead ball and call interference because R1 is never allowed to run in front of F4 when she is making an initial play on a batted ball.
   C. R1’s movement is to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to make the initial play on a batted ball, so as long as in the umpire's judgment there is not interference, this is a legal play.
   D. R1 is called out because she is not allowed to alter her base path. She must stop to avoid contacting F4 making the initial play on a batted ball.

24. With one out, R1 on third base and R2 on second base, B4 hits a fly ball on the first-base side of second base almost directly at F4. As R2 takes a couple of steps toward third base, she makes contact with F6, who is moving toward the batted ball.
   A. The umpire signals and verbalizes "dead ball"; R2 is out for interfering with F6's opportunity to
make an initial play on a batted ball.

B. The umpire signals and verbalizes "dead ball"; R2 is out for interfering with F6's opportunity to make a live-ball appeal of R2 leaving early if the fly is caught.

C. The umpire makes no call; this is nothing more than a "train wreck" with both players doing what they were supposed to do.

D. The umpire signals delayed dead ball and verbalizes "Obstruction." F6 is guilty of obstructing R2.

25. In which instance is the runner NOT declared out for interference?

A. The coach near third base runs toward home plate near the baseline while a fielder is making a play on a batted ball and draws a throw to home.

B. The runner interferes with a fielder attempting to make the initial play on a fair batted ball.

C. The runner is struck by a fair untouched ball while standing on second base.

D. The runner is struck by a fair untouched ball while not in contact with a base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher.

26. At the end of the top of the first inning, it is discovered that the pitcher's plate is set at the wrong distance.

A. After the plate is set at the correct distance, the half-inning is replayed.

B. Allow the bottom of the inning to be played before the correction is made.

C. Make the correction immediately.

27. Regarding the taper of a softball bat, which statement is NOT in compliance with the current rules?

A. The taper connects the narrower handle to the wider portion of the bat.

B. The taper of a bat is defined as having a solid surface.

C. The taper shall have a conical shape since it connects the narrower handle to the wider portion of the bat.

D. All are correct statements.

28. Team A's pitcher has a pink digital camouflage arm sleeve on her pitching arm extending from her uniform top all the way down to her wrist. The ruling should be:

A. Legal, sleeves are not covered in NFHS softball rules.

B. Legal, as long as it does not contain any of the opposing team colors.

C. Illegal, the sleeve must be removed or covered. Sleeves must follow the same color restrictions as exposed undergarments. They must be a single solid color: black, white, gray or school color.

D. Illegal, sleeves are not allowed to be worn.

29. A batting helmet shall be worn by offensive personnel while:

A. The ball is live and the player is in live-ball territory.

B. The on-deck batter is in the on-deck circle and the ball is live.
C. Base runners are on base, the ball is live and they are in live-ball territory.
D. All of the above.

30. An intentional walk can be granted:
A. After the first pitch has been thrown to the batter.
B. Before any pitches are thrown.
C. When the defensive coach, pitcher or catcher makes the request.
D. By any defensive player.
E. A, B and C.

31. Wristbands with a playbook/playcard attached:
A. Are considered equipment.
B. Can be worn if a single solid color, other than optic yellow.
C. Are permissible when worn on the non-pitching arm.
D. All of the above.

32. Which of the following is not a responsibility of the umpire during pregame?
A. Verifying the field is properly marked.
B. Reviewing the lineup cards.
C. Reviewing the ground rules.
D. Checking all equipment.

33. When a pitcher is removed from the pitching position by rule or injury, her replacement who has not yet pitched in the game may have how many warm-up pitches?
A. No warm-up is permitted.
B. She is entitled to eight warm-up pitches.
C. The pitcher determines when she is properly warmed up.
D. The umpire is authorized to determine how many warm-up pitches are permitted.

34. Which of the following would be an illegal pitch?
A. A step backwards is taken after the hands have come together but prior to the start of the pitch.
B. Once the pitch has started, the pitcher takes no more than one step forward.
C. The hands come together and apart, then together again while standing on the pitching plate.
D. When the hands are apart and come together off the pitching plate as long as the hands are separated prior to stepping onto the pitcher's plate.
35. A batter may be awarded first base when:
   A. A fair batted ball strikes the person, attached equipment or clothing of an umpire or a runner.
   B. A pitched ball entirely within the batter's box strikes her clothing.
   C. A pitched ball not entirely in the batter's box, not swung at nor called a strike, hits the batter when she attempts to get out of the way.
   D. All of the above.

36. What factors should umpires consider in determining when to leave the field at the end of the game?
   A. Leave the field before all fielders have left fair territory and the catcher has vacated her normal fielding position.
   B. Return to the field after they have left to make every attempt to get the call right.
   C. When teams line up to shake hands following the completion of the game.
   D. Umpires should remain on the field to watch for unsporting behavior by either team in the handshake line.

37. If an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and the defense appeals to the umpire before the next pitch (legal or illegal), or before the infielders have left the infield and the catcher has left her normal fielding position in that half inning, the correct ruling should be:
   A. The umpire shall declare the batter who should have batted out.
   B. All outs stand and runners who were not declared out must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
   C. If a runner advances because of a stolen base, wild pitch, passed ball or an illegal pitch, while the improper batter is at bat, such advance is legal.
   D. All of the above.

38. There are how many types of appeals?
   A. Two.
   B. Three.
   C. Four.
   D. Five.

39. Which situation is not an appeal play?
   A. The batter-runner legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second and is legally touched while off base.
   B. An offensive team member, other than another runner, physically assists the runner.
C. The runner fails to touch home plate.
D. The runner leaves a base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball, provided the ball is returned to the infield and is properly appealed.

40. A base runner establishes her own base path when she is not being played upon.
   A. True
   B. False

41. R1 is on first base when B2 hits a ground ball. R1 crashes into F4, in the base path, as she attempts to gain control of a batted ball which is within a step and a reach of the spot of initial contact. The correct call is:
   A. R1 has committed interference.
   B. When F4 fails to gain control of the batted ball, the umpire will give the delayed dead-ball signal and wait to see what happens.
   C. Because F4 was in the runner’s base path, F4 is always charged with obstruction.
   D. There is no call since R1 and F4 could not reasonably avoid contact. If judged unintentional the play is allowed to continue.

42. Starting at first base, R1 overruns second base on a hit by B2. In the ensuing rundown, both runners end up on second base. F6 tags both runners. The correct ruling is:
   A. R1 and B2 are both out.
   B. B2 is out.
   C. R1 is out.
   D. Neither runner is out.

43. The offense or defense are allowed to use either the white or colored portion of first base for all situations EXCEPT:
   A. Any force out attempt from the foul side of first base.
   B. A base on balls awarded to the batter.
   C. An attempted pickoff play.
   D. A double play attempt resulting from a ground ball to the shortstop.

44. There are two outs and R1 is on second base. B4 strikes out but F2 drops the ball. B4 is able to reach first base while F2 chases down the ball. F2 then overthrows third base as R1 is advancing and the ball bounces over the fence in foul territory. What is the correct procedure for advancement of the runners?
   A. R1 is awarded home and B4 is awarded second base.
B. R1 is awarded home and B4 is awarded third base.
C. R1 is awarded third base and B4 is awarded first base.
D. R1 is awarded third base and B4 is awarded second base.

45. Which statement about baserunning is NOT correct?

A. R1 was stealing second when B2 hit a deep fly ball to left field. R1 rounds second before she realizes she needs to go back and tag up. She re-tags second and gets back to first, after F7 touches the ball, R1 may legally attempt to advance.
B. B4 hits a clean extra-base hit to the left field fence. B4 misses third base while rounding and advances toward home and scores. While B4 is heading to her dugout, F5 tags third for a live-ball appeal. The base umpire calls B4 out on the appeal.
C. All runners must remember to re-touch bases in reverse order, even when returning after a foul ball.
D. Bases loaded, no outs, B4 hits a double and all runners score. After the play, the defense makes a verbal dead-ball appeal that R3 missed second. The base umpire calls R3 out. Result of the play is two runs, one out and a runner at second.

46. Which statement is NOT an example of interference?

A. Batter-runner running outside the 3-foot lane interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base.
B. The batter-runner makes contact with a fair batted ball before reaching first base.
C. The batter-runner stops between home plate and first base to delay being tagged out.
D. The batter-runner remains in the batter’s box on a play at home plate in order to prevent an obvious out.

47. B1 bunts a ball that bounces off the plate and rolls in front of the plate. As B1 runs toward first base she has one foot partially touching the foul line and the other foot completely in the running lane. F2 fields the ball and her throw to first base contacts B1. The correct call is:

A. F2 is ejected for unsporting behavior.
B. B1 is out for interference.
C. B1 can choose to use either the white or orange base.
D. This is a legal play. B1 is safe at first base if she reaches the base before being put out.

48. B1 bunts the ball. The first baseman fields the ball and prepares to tag out B1 as she runs toward first base. B1 stops and steps back toward home plate to avoid the tag. The correct ruling is:

A. Live ball. This is a legal play.
B. Dead ball. The batter is out and runners return to the last bases touched at the time of the infraction.
C. Live ball. The batter is out but runners can advance.
D. Dead ball. The batter is out and runners are awarded the closest base at the time dead ball is called.

49. B1 hits a dribbler in front of the plate and a few feet down the first-base line. F2 fields the ball
and doesn't throw because B1 is outside the running lane and in the way of a potential throw.

A. The plate umpire calls dead ball and B1 is out for interference.
B. The plate umpire lets the play stand as there is no interference on B1.
C. The plate umpire lets the play stand and signals obstruction on F2.
D. The plate umpire calls dead ball and obstruction on F2.

50. B3 erroneously bats out of order in place of B2. The error is discovered by the opposing team while B3 is at bat with a 3 ball-2 strike count. The correct ruling is:
A. B3 is declared out.
B. B2 replaces B3 and assumes the 3 ball-2 strike count.
C. B3 is allowed to finish the at-bat.
D. B2 replaces B3 and starts with a new count since she hasn't received any pitches.

51. In which of the following situations is the batter out?
A. The batter attempts to confuse the pitcher by stepping out of the box on one side of home plate to the box on the other side while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch.
B. A bunt on the third strike is foul.
C. The batter throws her bat and interferes with a defensive player attempting a play.
D. All of the above.

52. R1 is on first base. B2 hits a pitch to F6 with one foot touching the ground completely outside the batter's box. F4 obstructs R1 advancing to second base. The correct ruling is:
A. Delayed dead ball. B2 is out but R1 is awarded second base for F4 obstructing.
B. Dead ball. B2 is out and R1 must return to first base.
C. Delayed dead ball. B2 is out and R1 advances at her own risk.
D. Dead ball. B2 is out. R1 is awarded second base if F4’s obstruction occurred before B2 contacted the ball.

53. R1 is at third base. B2 hits a ground ball to F6 who throws to first base. B2 touches the white portion and collides with F3 who is standing on the white portion about to receive the ball. The correct ruling is:
A. B2 is out but R1 will advance on the play.
B. B2 may run to the white base and is safe if she beats the ball.
C. Since B2 was running to the white base, F3 must use the colored base.
D. The ball is dead, B2 is out, and R1 must return to the last base touched at the time of infraction.
54. R1 is on third base and the infielders are playing in for a potential play at the plate. B2 hits a ball sharply down the third-base line that passes F6 before striking R1, while she is standing on third base. The correct call is:
   A. An immediate dead ball for hitting R1. Award B2 first base and leave R1 on third base.
   B. An immediate dead ball for hitting R1. Award B2 first base and call R1 out.
   C. An immediate dead ball for hitting R1. Call both R1 and B2 out.
   D. Make no immediate call because the ball is live.

55. The batter is out when:
   A. She hits the ball fair or foul while either foot is touching the plate.
   B. She bunts on the second strike.
   C. Any strike is caught by the catcher.
   D. With a 1-1 count, she fails to enter the batter’s box within 10 seconds after the ball is returned to the pitcher and the pitcher is on the pitcher’s plate.

56. The on-deck batter shall not commit interference with the defensive team. Which statement is correct?
   A. When the interference is with a thrown or pitched ball, the runner closest to home is out.
   B. If no play is obvious then no player is out, but the runners must return to the last base touched at the time of interference.
   C. When interference is with a fair batted or foul fly ball, the batter is out.
   D. All of the above.

57. The plate umpire notices that B1 steps into the batter’s box with an altered bat.
   A. The umpire shall wait for an appeal from the defensive team.
   B. The umpire shall penalize a strike on the batter.
   C. The umpire shall declare B1 out and remove the bat. B1 and the head coach are both ejected.
   D. There is no penalty until B1 hits the ball.

58. There are four criteria that an umpire uses to judge whether a batter attempted to hit or bunt the pitched ball. Which statement is NOT correct?
   A. Rolling the wrist and swinging through the pitched ball is considered an attempt.
   B. If the bat is drawn back before the pitch gets to the bat, it is not an attempt.
   C. Holding a bat in the strike zone is not a strike nor an attempt to swing.
   D. The batter makes an attempt to hit the pitch.

59. Which of the following would result in a coach being in violation of bench and field conduct rules?
   A. Entering behind the catcher while the opposing pitcher and catcher are in their positions.
B. Being outside the dugout while his/her team is on defense.
C. Having objects other than scorekeeping and stopwatch devices in the coach's box.
D. All of the above.

60. A fair batted ball is wedged into the fence. The umpire should:
A. Call a dead ball and award the batter two bases.
B. Call a dead ball and award the batter a home run.
C. Call a dead ball and award the base the umpire judges she would have reached had the ball not become wedged in the fence.
D. Award the batter the base she was closest to when the ball became wedged in the fence.

61. The NFHS Authenticating Mark shall be on each softball.
A. True
B. False

62. During the pregame conference with coaches and umpires, a team may take its turn at infield practice.
A. True
B. False

63. Batter A approaches the batter's box and the defensive team's head coach requests that she be “intentionally walked.” At that time, the home plate umpire indicates that she advances to first base. The defensive coach now appeals that Batter A has batted out of order.
A. This appeal may not be made until Batter A reaches first base.
B. The appeal may not be made after the home plate umpire awards the intentional walk.
C. The appeal may be made at any time after the home plate umpire awards the intentional walk and before a pitch to the next batter.
D. All of the above.

64. When a double-first base is used, the batter-runner or runner may touch the white or colored base:
A. When advancing on a fair ball hit to the outfield with no play being attempted.
B. When returning to first base.
C. When returning on an attempted pick-off play.
D. When advancing on a base on balls.
E. All of the above.
65. A strike is charged to the batter when:

A. A pitch is swung at and missed.
B. A pitch contacts the batter while swinging at the ball or the batter is hit by the pitch that is in the strike zone. (dead-ball strike)
C. A member of the offensive team intentionally removes a line.
D. All of the above.

66. B1, identified on the lineup card as the pitcher, reaches base in the top of the first inning and a courtesy runner is used. As B1 goes to take the pitcher’s plate in the bottom of the first inning, she is injured and unable to pitch to the first batter. The result is:

A. The team must play with only eight players.
B. The courtesy runner becomes B1’s substitute retroactively and B1 has left the game.
C. B1 may move to a different defensive position.
D. B1 is ejected for unsporting conduct.

67. With R1 on second base, B2 is at bat with a count of two balls and one strike. The next pitch is completely in the batter’s box and barely grazes the jersey of B2 while R1 breaks to steal third base. The catcher throws to third base and R1 is tagged out. What is the correct ruling?

A. The ball is live, R1 is out and B2 has a 3 ball-1 strike count.
B. The ball is dead, B2 is awarded first base. The play at third base stands, R1 is out.
C. The ball is dead, B2 is awarded first base. R1 returns to second base.
D. The ball is dead, B2 remains at bat since the umpire judged B2 did not make an attempt to get out of the way of the pitch.

68. All of the following are true statements regarding the designated player (DP), EXCEPT:

A. The DP is one of the nine hitters in the batting order.
B. The DP may be substituted for at any time by a legal substitute.
C. The DP may play defense only for the FLEX.
D. The DP has left the game if the FLEX bats.
E. The DP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.

69. The FLEX may be substituted for at any time by:

A. A legal substitute.
B. The DP, who may play defense for the FLEX.
C. Anyone else in the batting order.
D. A and B only.
E. A, B and C.
70. Which statement is correct in regard to the FLEX player?
   A. The FLEX player is listed in the 10th position in the batting order.
   B. A head coach who lists the DP/FLEX on her starting lineup can go from 9 to 10 players as long as she doesn’t violate re-entry and substitution rules.
   C. The FLEX can bat or run bases for the DP. Either the head coach or the FLEX player can report the change to the plate umpire. The DP has left the game.
   D. All of the above.

71. A defensive player takes the field with an eye shield connected to her face/head protection. What material is legal for an eye shield?
   A. Mirror-like material.
   B. Material that is shaded.
   C. Material that is tinted.
   D. Material that is clear and permits 100% allowable light transmission.

72. All lines on the field shall be marked with what color material?
   A. Green.
   B. White.
   C. Yellow.
   D. Pink.
   E. All of the above colors are permitted.

73. Defensive players may wear face shields provided that:
   A. The shield is attached to face/head protection.
   B. The shield is made of rigid material.
   C. The shield allows for 100% light transmission with no tint.
   D. All of the above.

74. In a contest within a state that requires the use of a double first base, a coach indicates he does not want to play the game with a double first base. Which statement is correct?
   A. If both coaches agree, the double first base may be removed.
   B. The double first base rule must be used in all contests.
   C. Any type of base is permissible in states that adopt the double first base.
   D. The contrasting color portion of first base can be removed when the aforementioned coach’s team is on defense.

75. In fast pitch softball, all bats shall meet the ASA Bat Performance Standard and have what certification marks?
D. None of the above.

76. Team A is wearing blue and red uniforms with red exposed undergarments. Which of the following is true about a playcard being worn by Team A’s players:
   A. F1 can wear a solid green playcard on her non-pitching arm.
   B. F3 can wear a solid black playcard.
   C. The team's playlist is multicolored and is visible through a window in its solid orange playcard sleeve. This is legal, as the only limitation is that the playcard sleeve is a solid color and not optic yellow.
   D. All the above.

77. The knob of the bat may be:
   A. Molded, lathed and welded.
   B. Adjustable, if permanently fastened.
   C. Covered with grip tape.
   D. All of the above.

78. All the following are legal apparel except:
   A. All players are wearing a white arm sleeve.
   B. All players are wearing a black knee sleeve.
   C. Some players are wearing camouflage arm sleeves in the school colors.
   D. Some players are wearing gray tights.

79. If worn, headwear (caps, visors, headband, ribbons, etc.) must be which of the following:
   A. All the same color.
   B. White, black, beige or school colors.
   C. The same color for all team members.
   D. The same style for all team members.

80. An umpire should declare a “no-pitch” on which of the following occurrences?
   A. The pitcher pitches during a suspension of play.
   B. The base runner is called out for leaving the base too soon.
C. The pitcher pitches before the base runner has returned to the base after a foul ball.
D. All of the above.

81. When an illegal pitch is called with a runner on base:
A. All runners advance one base.
B. The batter is awarded a ball.
C. A warning will be issued to the pitcher.
D. Both a and b.

82. Who can a pitcher take a signal from while on the pitcher’s plate?
A. The coach.
B. A play card.
C. The catcher.
D. All the above as long as the pitcher pauses and simulates taking a signal from the catcher prior to bringing her hands together.

83. With a runner on first base and one out, R1 leaves the base prior to the pitcher releasing the ball. B3 proceeds to hit the pitch over the center field fence. The umpire should:
A. Wait for the defense to appeal the runner leaving early. If no appeal, both runs score.
B. Give the delayed dead-ball signal. After all runners touch home plate, call time and rule R1 out for leaving early. Since there were less than two outs, the batter's run counts.
C. Signal time and declare "no pitch." The R1 is out for leaving early and the batter's count is the same as before that pitch.
D. Do nothing, the play is legal.

84. A team’s lineup card must include all of the following, EXCEPT:
A. First initial and last names.
B. Jersey numbers.
C. Position being played.
D. Batting order of starting players.
E. All of the above are required.

85. After an initial warning to the head coach, any subsequent change to the lineup card for an inaccuracy will result in:
A. The head coach being restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game.
B. The head coach being ejected.
C. The player/substitute who is being changed/added being restricted to the dugout/bench for the remainder of the game.

D. A and C only.

E. B and C only.

86. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall not return to play until cleared by:

A. The head coach.
B. A parent or guardian.
C. The athletic director.
D. An appropriate health-care professional.
E. None of the above.

87. The umpire shall immediately remove a player from the game who exhibits the following signs or symptoms of a concussion:

A. Dizziness.
B. Confusion.
C. Headache.
D. Loss of consciousness.
E. All of the above.

88. Umpire jurisdiction begins:

A. Upon the arrival of one umpire within the confines of the field.
B. Upon the arrival of two umpires within the confines of the field.
C. When the pregame conference begins.
D. Upon the conclusion of the pregame conference.
E. Upon the arrival of one umpire to the facility/park/school.

89. Which statement about the concussion rule is correct?

A. A player exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion is immediately removed from the game.
B. If an appropriate health-care professional determines that the athlete has not suffered a concussion, the athlete may return to play.
C. This is a health and safety issue, since an athlete should not return to play or practice on the same day of a concussion.
D. All of the above are correct.
90. R1 is on first base when B2 hits a ground ball to F4. F4 is in the baseline between first and second when she misplays the ball. R1 crashes into F4 as she attempts to recover the ball. The correct call is:
   A. If the misplayed ball is within a step and a reach of where F4 initially contacted the ball, R1 has committed interference.
   B. When F4 misplays the ball, the umpire will give the delayed dead-ball signal and wait to see what happens.
   C. Because F4 was in the baseline, F4 is always charged with obstruction.
   D. None of the above.

91. R1 is on first base with one out. B3 hits a long fly ball to left field. The ball is over foul territory as it is first touched and then dropped by F7. On the fly ball, R1 advanced and touched second base and was moving to third as the ball was dropped. R1 shall:
   A. Retrace the path retouching second base before returning to first base.
   B. Be awarded second base, as it was legally achieved while the ball was over fair territory.
   C. Return to first base with or without retouching bases since it is ruled a foul ball.
   D. Move back to first base before the ball gets to the pitching circle.

92. Which statement about a catch is correct?
   A. The fielder must have control and the release of the ball must be voluntary.
   B. If a ball strikes anything or anyone other than a defensive player while it is in flight, it shall be ruled a ground ball and not a catch.
   C. If a fielder catches a ball but drops it while transferring it to the throwing hand or in making a throw, the umpire shall still rule it a catch.
   D. All of the above.

93. Which statement is an incorrect ruling of interference?
   A. If a retired runner impedes a fielder making a play on another runner, the runner closest to home is always declared out.
   B. If a runner has not yet been put out and interference occurs to break up a double play, the immediate succeeding runner is out.
   C. Interference is only awarded in situations where the runner physically contacts a fielder.
   D. B4 hits a fair ground ball but R2 hinders F6 making an initial play. The batter-runner is never called out as a result of the interference. If there is less than two outs she is always awarded first base.

94. With the bases loaded and less than two outs, F4 is using ordinary effort to catch a pop-up. The correct call is:
   A. Infield fly is called by the umpire and the batter is out.
B. Runners may not advance at any time.
C. Only an infielder can catch an infield fly.
D. If the ball is ruled foul, it still is an infield fly.

95. A fair ball is a batted ball that first falls or is first touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second or third base.
   A. True
   B. False

96. B1 enters the batter’s box on the right side while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch. B1 disconcerts the pitcher by moving to the left-hand batter’s box. The correct ruling is:
   A. Allow the pitcher to reset and continue to play.
   B. Allow the pitcher to reset and warn the head coach the next infraction would result in an out on the batter.
   C. The ball is dead immediately and batter is called out.
   D. An illegal pitch is called on pitcher.

97. A coach may never make a baserunning appeal; only players on the field may appeal.
   A. True
   B. False

98. Any fielder, with or without the ball, may make a dead-ball appeal by verbally stating that the runner missed the base or left too soon.
   A. True
   B. False

99. A batting helmet is considered legal if it has:
   A. A surface with no dents or cracks.
   B. A non-glare surface.
   C. A mirror-like surface.
   D. Both a and b.

100. A coach is not permitted to project a substitution.
    A. True
    B. False

Completed outline must be signed by all present and sent to the regional director by May 15, 2019.
MOA SOFTBALL STUDY CLUBS
2019
LESSON #3

I. Please review the following articles from the NFHS Softball Guide 2019 regarding Umpiring Mechanics. These articles provide excellent information regarding specific NFHS mechanics for softball:

- Double (or Triple) Trouble - page 5
- Practice Proper Popup Protocol - page 7
- Quick Tip - Working the Plate - page 7
- What’s Your Angle - pages 8-9
- It’s Just About the Right Time for a Time Play - page 13
- Quick Tip - Pre-pitch Planning - page 13
- Quick Tip - When to Take a Set Position - page 14
- That Rundown Feeling - page 15

II. Umpires Uniforms Requirements

- Reminder - Softball officials may wear a jacket. The required jacket shall be a standard navy blue pullover with powder blue and with trim (NFHS) or a navy blue pullover with powder blue trim (ASA) to be worn for varsity contests. Both jackets are to be unadorned.
- Softball umpires’ hats must be unadorned.
- Navy blue shirts are allowed. All members of a game crew must wear the same color shirts
- Navy blue slacks had been added as a uniform option. Montana will allow for the use of either navy blue or heather gray slacks but all umpires on the crew must wear the same color.
- Review Umpires Uniform in the 2018 and 2019 Umpires Manual on page 16

III. MECHANICS AND MORE MECHANICS - Please review the following information on mechanics and information that has been included in previous study clubs over the years regarding umpiring mechanics:

- Take time to access the information on the MOA Central Hub regarding softball mechanics training - you can access the Hub through - https://moa.arbitersports.com/front/106278/Site.
- Please review and discuss your pregame meeting and what will be discussed and what is required (team equipment legal and uniforms properly worn) - remember head coaches must attend this meeting and the game cannot continue until the head coach is present.
- Review and discuss your procedures for communicating ground rules to each team at the pregame conference. Discuss with pool members the ground rules associated with each field your group works at during the season. Please review Rule 4-1-3 - Ground Rules in the 2018 NFHS Softball Rules Book on page 41.

Please review the information on Unnecessary Signals contained in the Addendum after Study Club # 4.

And: Please always take time to review and discuss all areas in the Umpires Manual -- dealing with proper mechanics – proper mechanics are critical and yearly review is necessary for rookie umpires but also very valuable for veteran umpires. The manual breaks down specific areas including responsibilities of the plate umpire and the field umpire and contains detailed explanations of different umpire systems.

Also, please review once again the plate mechanics information (this information is provided the addendum to these study clubs after Study Club # 4).

IV. The MHSA office continues to receive concerns from umpires and teams regarding difficult weather conditions. Rain and impending darkness are two major culprits. High winds, lightning and thunder can be troublesome. Please review as a pool your procedures for determining when a game should be suspended or called for any condition. Especially review the rules adopted last year that are listed below where regular season games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings will be resumed from the point of interruption and do not start over:

- Games suspended before 4-1/2 or 5 innings because of weather (resume from the point of interruption).
- Games suspended before 4-1/2 innings that are tied (resume from the point of interruption).
- Games suspended before 4-1/2 or 5 innings because of darkness (resume from the point of interruption).

Please review the Guidelines on Handling Contests During Lightning Disturbances - on page 92 - Appendix E in the 2018 NFHS Softball Rules Book.

(Montana state adoptions regarding ending a game are listed in Study Club # 4).

V. Communicable Disease and Skin Infection Procedures - with the emergence of MRSA and other blood borne infectious diseases please review the NFHS policy listed on page 91, Appendix D in the 2018 NFHS Softball Rules Book.

VI. WHAT'S THE CALL? Umpire's Quiz 2018 - Referee Magazine

In each of the following, you are given a situation and at least two possible answers. You are to decide which answer or answers are correct according to NFHS rules.

Page 46 – Solutions page 81
Completed outline must be signed by all present and sent to the regional director by May 15, 2019.
I. The National Federation allows states to alter certain rules - Review the following alterations that the MHSA Executive Board has approved for adoption by our state:

1. Double first bases are mandatory - rules for utilizing the double first base have been moved back into the body of the rules. Please review rule 8-10 on page 73 of the Rules Book.

2. (4-2-3) Game ending procedures:
   a) Employ a minimum 1 ½ hour time limit to end games at invitational tournament. Using a maximum time limit of 1 ½ hours can end games played at invitational tournaments. The game can be called if there is five minutes or less before the maximum time limit or officials should not start a new inning after one hour and twenty minutes of play, except if a tie exists where NFHS Softball Rules for tiebreaking would be followed.
   b) Varsity and Sub-varsity games may end after three (3) innings if a team is leading by (15) runs. (With mutual agreement of coaches)

3. (4-2-6) Tie Breaker - Invitational tournaments which use a tie breaking procedure shall follow the NFHS rules - beginning in the top of the eighth or at the time limit the last batter from the previous inning will be placed on second base at the beginning of each half inning with the game then proceeding in a normal manner until a winner is decided.

II. Review how your group will recommend (rank) umpires to the MHSA office for the state tournaments. (Class AA - Butte, Class A - Polson, Class B-C - Belgrade). Review the selection process for state tournament hiring, which is found on page 125 - Letter H of the MOA Handbook.

III. Are there any specific problems in your area schools which should be addressed i.e. field concerns - especially safe playing surfaces and proper field markings, checks given late, security, game times, poor sportsmanship, etc.

IV. What issues does your group believe are important universal issues that need to be addressed by all officials’ pools throughout the state? (Including rule or mechanics changes, MOA policy changes, etc.) Please submit to the MHSA/MOA office any issues or any particular areas of concern that you would like included in clinics or study clubs.

V. Discuss your methods of evaluating fellow MOA members. Are the methods working properly and positively? Should you start a method if you are not evaluating at the present time? Do these methods work for “upgrading”?

VI. How many prospective officials did you have in your pool this year? Discuss and evaluate your methods of recruitment and retention. There have been two different posters sent to each official as a part of our “Respect Officials Campaign”.

MOA SOFTBALL STUDY CLUBS
2019
LESSON #4
VII. You have an obligation to read your MOA Handbook. All officials should be aware of the
governing body’s rules and regulations. Any changes you would like to see should be directed to
your regional director for their Board meeting in June.

VIII. In evaluating your own (and possibly your pool’s collectively) performance this season and in
preparation for umpiring high school softball next year review the following from your season:

- Judgment
- Mechanics and Technique
- Knowledge of the Rules
- Physical Conditioning
- Making Decisions Positively and Promptly
- Umpire Crew Cohesiveness
- Proper Mechanics
- Keeping the Game Moving
- Keeping a Dignified Attitude
- Making Decisions Based on Fact
- Rule Knowledge

IX. **Have a great summer!**

*Completed outline must be signed by all present and sent to the regional director by
May 15, 2019.*
Officials, coaches and administrators are being asked to make all efforts to ensure the safety of athletes who participate in MHSA activities. In regard to players experiencing possible concussions or other serious injuries during MHSA contests or practices, the following procedures will be immediately implemented:

**Officials’ Responsibilities:**

- Officials are asked to use their best judgment in observing the signs, symptoms and behaviors of a concussion and other possible serious injuries. If there is a player that exhibits signs and symptoms of an injury (listed below from the NFHS Rule Book), officials will make coaches aware of the injured player and call an injury time out.
- The official should notify the coach by making the following statement:
  - “Coach, you need to take a look at this player; he/she is exhibiting signs and symptoms of an injury.”
  - Emphasize the notification statement to coaches – “Coach, you need to take a look at this player; he/she is exhibiting signs and symptoms of an injury.”
- Once the official notifies the coach, it is now the coach’s responsibility.
- The official does not need written permission for an athlete to return to play nor does the official need to verify the credentials of the licensed health-care professional.
- Ultimately, the decision to return an athlete to competition rests with the coach, after the affected player is evaluated by a licensed health-care professional.

*Remember, when in doubt, sit them out!*

**Coaches’ Responsibilities:**

- After the official has notified the coach of the injury and has sent the athlete off of the field/court, or if a coach witnesses an incident in practice, the coach must then make the initial determination of the injury. For instance, if the coach knows that a player is diabetic, and may be experiencing a diabetic episode, the coach should have the student treated appropriately and then return the player to play or practice.
- If the coach suspects the athlete is exhibiting the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (listed below from the NFHS Rule Book), then the coach must have the player evaluated by a licensed health-care professional.
- If an appropriate health-care professional on the sideline determines that the athlete HAS NOT suffered a concussion, the athlete may return to play.
- If an appropriate health-care professional is not available to evaluate the athlete, the athlete SHOULD NOT be allowed by the coach to return to play.
In game situations, the official does not need written permission for an athlete to return to play nor does the official need to verify the credentials of the licensed health-care professional. Ultimately, the decision to return an athlete to competition or practice rests with the coach, after the affected player is evaluated by a licensed health care professional.

Remember, when in doubt, sit them out!

Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion (NFHS Rule Book)
A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (be "knocked out") to have suffered a concussion.

Discuss “Signs, Symptoms and Behaviors” consistent with identifying an injured athlete.

- Common Symptoms of Concussion Include:
  - Headache, Fogginess, Difficulty concentrating, Easily confused, Slowed thought processes, Difficulty with memory, Nausea, Lack of energy, tiredness, Dizziness, poor balance, Blurred vision, Sensitive to light and sounds, Mood changes- irritable, anxious, or tearful

Suggested Concussion Management:
1. No athlete should return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional that day.
3. Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
4. After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms.

For further details please see the “NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion” at www.nfhs.org.

Administrators’ Responsibilities:

- Administrators must require all coaches to review and implement this procedure.
- Administrators should have regular reviews with their coaching staffs concerning these procedures.
- Administrators should require coaches to report all incidents to the administration immediately following the practice or contest. All incidents should be documented.
- Administrators must understand the responsibilities that coaches have in the decision to return athletes to play. MHSA Rules and Regulations item (4) states: A participant in any MHSA sanctioned sport who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) or other serious injury shall be immediately removed from the game, evaluated by the coaching staff in regard to the nature of the injury, and if it is determined to be a possible concussion or other serious injury, the player shall not return to play until cleared by an licensed health-care professional.
- Ultimately, the decision to return an athlete to competition rests with the coach, after the affected player is evaluated by a licensed health care professional.

Remember, when in doubt, sit them out!

Concussion Resource Information

Various information and resources are available on the MHSA website. Visit www.mhsa.org and proceed to the Sports Medicine page from the link on the home page.
DP/FLEX Rule - Designated Player (DP) / FLEX Rule - with this rule taking effect eight years ago there still is some confusion with the rule that led to misapplication of the rule. It is imperative that all umpires have an understanding of this rule to answer questions and enforce the rule properly. Please Review the DP/FLEX Rule on pages 32-33 of the 2012 Rules Book (3-3-6) and please Review all the Case Book Plays dealing with the Designated Player (DP)/ FLEX rule.

Please take time to review the information on the MHSA website in regard to the DP/FLEX rule. There are actual examples illustrated by the use of a line up card including the new examples used this year in the online clinic. The site is [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org), then click on softball on the left and then on DP/FLEX Rule at the bottom of the softball page under links and clinics. Also information is available on the National Federation website nfhs.org under the softball tab.

**Pitching Information**

Pitching continues to be a NFHS Point of Emphasis and has been a point of emphasis for the MHSA/MOA for many years – Please review and discuss this information that has been sent to each coach and included in the study clubs for the past few years:

The Leap, The Crow Hop and The Creep (this information was provided in the last seven study clubs but is well worth reviewing again especially as pitching continues to be a national point of emphasis).

The leap is an illegal act that results in the pitcher becoming airborne on the initial push-off from the pitcher’s plate. When using the leap, the pitcher pushes up and away from the rubber, and both feet are simultaneously off the ground during the delivery. The rules mandate that the pitcher’s pivot foot must remain in contact with the rubber or must drag on the ground away from the rubber on the delivery motion. It’s legal if the pivot foot turns or slides as the pitcher pushes off the rubber, providing there is no loss of contact with the rubber. The pitcher may also legally slide the pivot foot across the pitcher’s plate. If contact with the rubber is maintained, that sliding is not considered a step and is allowed.

The crow hop is, and for many years has been, a blatant violation in fast pitch. With the crow hop, the pitcher steps, jumps, hops or slides the pivot foot off the front of the rubber while maintaining body weight on the pivot foot. The pitcher then replants the pivot foot in front of the rubber. That replant establishes a new impetus for the pitch in front of the rubber. The pitcher then pushes off illegally from in front of the rubber when delivering the pitch. A pitcher who raises the pivot foot off the rubber and then returns the foot to the rubber did not crow hop but is illegally pitching.

Many pitchers pitch with the stride foot in front of the body but kick up some dirt as the pivot foot stabs the ground or turns as the ball is released. That stabbing action is usually an ending segment of a legal delivery or recovery step, not a crow hop. **The key is whether the body weight is moving forward (legal) or on the pivot foot (illegal) when the pivot foot stabs the ground.** A real crow hop affords a tremendous advantage for the pitcher.
The “CREEP” – With leaping outlawed, many pitchers concentrate intently on keeping their pivot foot on the ground to comply with the “drag” rule so they aren’t called for leaping. However that attentiveness to keeping the pivot foot on the ground resurrected an old-time style of pitching called the “creep”. With the creep, the pitcher slides the pivot foot off the front of the rubber to comply with the drag rule but keeps the body weight on the rear foot. By creeping forward off the rubber with the pivot foot and keeping the body weight back, the pitcher can push off anew with a forward motion not related to the original pitching motion. This method is difficult for umpires to recognize. That pitch is also known as the “crow drag” or the “slide.” The creep can result from a pitcher’s honest attempt to keep the pivot foot on the ground, or it can be an intentional act to disguise that form of the crow hop. Either way, the pitch is illegal.

Plate Mechanics Information

Please review the following information from Referee Magazine - “Working the Plate”

Mechanics - Please discuss the following information on “plate work” for fast-pitch softball. Give demonstrations on these techniques for review and for new officials.

a) Choosing a stance
All plate umpires must master the box stance. After perfecting the box, some umpires elect to use the scissors or one-knee method of umpiring.

**Box stance** – (right handed batter) – With the box, your feet are wider than shoulder width apart. Place your right foot flat on the ground six inches to one foot behind the catcher’s midpoint. The foot is pointed toward the second baseman’s normal position. The toe of the left foot is flat on the ground and pointed toward the pitcher. The lead foot is lined up with the heel of the catcher’s left foot. The toe of your right foot is lined up with heel of your lead foot. Flare your knees out so your knees are closely aligned with your ankles. Bend at the knees, not at the waist, and keep your buttocks above your knees. Your body weight will be about 80 percent forward. Keep your shoulders square to the pitcher. Position your elbows inside your upper body frame with your hands in loose, relaxed fists in front of your crotch. Avoid folding your arms behind your back.

**The scissors** - your legs are fully open like a pair of scissors. Position your feet one full stride apart. Your front foot, nearest the batter, is flat on the ground between the batter and the catcher and about six inches behind the catchers left foot. Your lead foot is bent at a 90-degree angle at the knee to support most of your body weight. Your rear foot is fully extended with knee straight. The ball of your rear foot is on the ground with your heel elevated. Your head is well forward, between the batter and the catcher.

**The one-knee** – this stance is similar to the scissors. However your rear knee is resting completely on the ground, your feet about one-half stride apart and your back straight. For smaller batters, it may be necessary to lean forward to keep your eyes at the top of the strike zone.

**Setting up** – Work in the slot between the batter and the catcher. Your head position is critical. Your head must be at least one full head above the catcher’s head, at least one full head to the side of the catcher’s head and at least one full head behind the catcher’s head. Your eyes must be level and your head outside the perimeter of the strike zone as you look down and through the zone. Line up your right ear with the black border of the inside corner.

**Staying down** – Avoid tunnel vision with your eyes fixed ahead. Track the pitch with your eyes. Follow the pitch all the way to the batter’s bat or the catcher’s glove. On a ball not batted, stay down until after the catcher receives the ball. Train yourself not to bail out, duck or flinch behind the plate.
Infield Fly Information

Two Unwavering Philosophies – absolute guidelines
1) Is an infield-area pop up a batted ball that could enable the fielders to execute an underserved double play if the ball isn’t caught?
2) Is a fielder in the infield area settled comfortably underneath the ball? Note: An infield-area pop up can sometimes include part of the outfield if the two guidelines are met. That depends, of course, upon the level of play of the participants.

Don’t call an infield fly until both of those requirements are met. An infield fly should not be declared before a fly ball reaches its apex, but it may be called seconds later when an umpire judges the ball is an infield fly.

Questions to ask:
1) Who are infielders regarding infield fly situations? All infielders, including the pitcher and catcher and any outfielder stationed in the infield at the time of the pitch or an outfielder who enters the infield area playing a batted ball are considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.
2) What are the infield fly signals? Crew members must place their open palmed hand across the opposite chest in an umpire-to-umpire confirmation signal. Other signals can include the touching of the bill of the hat with index finger extended, double tap of the hand on top of the cap and showing a thumbs up-closed fist signal or using both thumbs up signal. You need to talk before to agree on the signal. When an infield fly is judged the umpire will extend his or her arm overhead with the index finger pointing upward. After verbally declaring the infield fly, the umpire will clinch the extended hand into a fist. When the infield fly is no longer in effect, an umpire-to-umpire signal is used with a wiping motion on the forearm from the elbow to the wrist.
3) Who calls an infield fly? Shared coverage mechanics – either umpire can initially declare an infield fly except a fly ball hit near a foul line – that should be the plate umpire making the call.
4) Ask yourself – can this ball be caught by a fielder with ordinary effort? However, avoid thinking – “should this ball be caught by a fielder with ordinary effort?"
5) Runner’s rights – runners have the right to run at their peril on a declared infield fly or they may tag and attempt to advance on any caught infield fly.
6) What happens when infield fly drops? The calling umpire should dramatically and assertively confirm the call by loudly calling, “That’s an infield fly! The batter is out! Bunts or line drives cannot be an infield fly.
7) Umpires erroneously fail to call the infield fly - the infield fly should be retroactively declared after the fact.
8) Intentionally dropped infield fly - the rule takes precedent – the batter is out and ball is live and in play.

Did You Know? – History of the Infield Fly – the rule was instituted in 1895 to prevent the defensive team from employing shenanigans and unsporting schemes to gain an undeserved double play on routine pop flies in the infield. The rule was only in effect when there was one out but was revised in 1901 to also be in effect with no outs.
• **Unnecessary Signals** - Referee Magazine ran an article “Give Unnecessary Signals the Heave Ho.” Please review the following information from that article -

1) Never use hand motions to indicate that a pitch is high, low, inside or outside. If the pitch is a strike, call a strike and use a strong hammer signal - hand and arm out to the side of the body to a 90-degree angle with a closed fist - be strong and crisp (don't use baseball mechanics turning an pointing to one side with one finger). If it is a ball, call a ball and prepare for the next pitch.

2) Never pound your fists together to indicate a full count.

3) Never say, “Ball four take your base.” And don’t point to first base.

4) Never say, “Strike three, you’re out.”

5) When the batter swings and misses for a third strike, give a non-verbal, strike signal for strike three.

6) No verbal call is necessary on obvious foul balls back to the screen or over the fence.

7) Mechanics Quick Tip - Umpires communicate through the use of signals. The less a signal is seen, the more effective it is when used. If there is no play, a call or signal is not needed. Do not draw attention to yourself by overusing, misusing or needlessly using any signal. Except for the infield fly, there is no need to echo a partner’s signal.

Signals are designed to emphasize an umpire’s ruling on a play as well as communicate with his or her partner, coaches, players, scorekeepers and spectators. Poorly executed and unauthorized signals serve only to confuse.