

THIS WEEK IN BASEBALL

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Baseball Season is Here!

Best of luck to all baseball programs across the state with opening weekend—sending lots of sun your way!

Baseball Coaches Manual

The 2019 Baseball Coaches Manual is now available on the Baseball page on our website. This manual is a great reference for all coaches and administrators, with information on the NFHS rules, explanation and reminders on OHSAA administrative rules, FAQ's, etc! This can be found at <https://www.ohsaa.org/sports/baseball>.

Baseball Rules Meeting

As a reminder, the State Rules Meeting is a mandatory requirement for every head baseball coach to view in the state of Ohio. If the Baseball State Rules Meeting is not viewed prior to **Thursday, March 21 at 11:59 pm**, there will be a \$50 late fee to view the Baseball Rules Meeting. The FINAL deadline to view the Baseball Rules Meeting is **Monday, April 29 at 11:59 pm**. Please view the meeting prior to March 21 to avoid paying a late fee, but once the April 29 deadline has passed, the Baseball Rules Meeting will no longer be available. The penalty for not completing the Baseball Rules Meeting by the final deadline is removal from the OHSAA Baseball Tournament.

From January 30 at 9:00 am until April 29 at 11:59 pm, you may view the Baseball Rules Meeting by logging into your myOHSAA profile, clicking on Rules Meeting tab and then Find a State Meeting.

Important Baseball Dates

March 23	1 st Game Permitted
May 11-18	Sectional Tournament
May 20-25	District Tournament
May 30-31	Regional Tournament
June 7-9	State Tournament

BASEBALLS

After addressing the NOCSAE stamped NFHS baseball requirement for January 1, 2020 in the Winter Issue of TWIB and at the Baseball Coaches Clinic, I have received several questions on the baseball requirement for practice. As you all are aware, the OHSAA follows NFHS rules in the sport of baseball; however, the NFHS does not address any use of baseballs during practice—they only address competition. The purpose of the NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) stamp is due to the safety of the ball (see more in the Q&A below), so while we recommend using it for practice, we have not set a mandate requiring the use of it in practice. We realize this would be a large financial burden on the schools. Therefore, we cannot mandate that you use them in practice, but want to emphasize the reasoning behind the requirement of the stamp, as it meets the safety standards. But, beginning in January of 2020, you must use the baseballs with the NOCSAE and NFHS stamp on them for competition.

Q: After this rule goes into place on January 1, 2020, are we allowed to use our old baseballs during practice?

A: Yes—we realize that your school(s) have a surplus of baseballs and the OHSAA and NFHS do not have a mandate on using the NOCSAE stamped baseballs in practice, only in competition.

Q: At the Baseball Coaches Clinic, you said that coaches are liable for the safety of their players regarding equipment. Is that true?

A: I apologize for any misinterpretation of this comment and if my original statement came off as alarming! I am no way a legal expert, I simply meant to reemphasize that we follow the NFHS rules and the NFHS rules require a NOCSAE baseball to be used in competition starting in the 2020 season—this is the same rule that is in place now, requiring the NFHS mark on the baseball. This is not a new rule, other than the baseball needing an additional stamp in 2020.

Q: What is the purpose of the NOCSAE stamp?

A: The rationale behind the decision from the NFHS to require NOCSAE stamped baseballs, is the NOCSAE baseballs have all been tested and meet the performance and safety standards for high school athletic equipment through NOCSAE and the Safety Equipment Institute (SEI). If a certain baseball does not have the NOCSAE stamp, it means that it either has not been tested or does not meet the safety standards.

HELMET ATTACHMENTS

With the increase in popularity of helmet attachments (c-flap) and the address of them in the Baseball Rules Meeting, I have received a few questions and wanted to provide some clarity. Stated in NFHS Rule 1-5-2, *a face mask/guard specifically designed for a particular helmet model may be attached after manufacture, provided that procedure is approved by the manufacturer and meets the NOCSAE standard at the time of manufacture*. With that said, there are two c-flap options—1. the ones that are already installed on the helmet at the time of manufacture and 2. those that are sold as an addition to a helmet. For option #1, if the helmet has the NOCSAE stamp on it and the c-flap was installed at the time of manufacture, it will be compliant. For option #2, the main key to a compliant attachment is to make sure there is absolutely NO modification done to the helmet to attach the c-flap. Examples of this would include adding adhesive, drilling new holes in the helmet or any type of alteration done to the helmet to install the c-flap. Once there is any type of modification applied to the helmet, the NOCSAE standard is void.

For option #2, the purchaser (parent/player) of the helmet will need to determine that the attachment was made for the helmet for it to remain compliant. For example, the Wilson XVT face shield can be used with the Wilson Evoshield XVT batting helmet without modification; the Easton Markwort c-flap can be worn with Eaton's Z7, Z6 and Z6 Elite batting helmets without modification, and so on. For options #1 and #2, the purchaser of the helmet/c-flap should be able to determine this information with the manufacturer.

Q: There is a NOCSAE stamp on the helmet, but not on the c-flap itself—is this compliant?

A: The NOCSAE stamp, at this time, will not appear on the actual c-flap, but will only appear on the helmet. This is because NOCSAE does not publish any standard for c-flaps on a stand-alone basis. As long as there was no modification done to the helmet to attach the c-flap, it should be compliant.

Q: To attach the c-flap to the helmet, it appears I need to drill a hole in the helmet—is this permitted?

A: No—as soon as there is any type of modification done to the helmet, the NOCSAE standard is void and the helmet is not compliant.

Q: Could I install an Under Armour c-flap to an Easton helmet?

A: No, because an Under Armour c-flap would not be designed for an Easton helmet at the time of manufacture.

To repeat a statement from the NFHS, “It is critical that coaches understand their responsibility regarding being knowledgeable about the equipment that their players possess and use for game competition”.

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Respect
THE
GAME