



### **2023 MHSAA Softball Items & Reminders**

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1. Online rules meetings will launch on February 6 and will close on April 20. The head varsity coach MUST complete a rules meeting or the coach is prohibited from coaching at any level in the MHSAA tournament. Assistant varsity coaches and subvarsity coaches must also complete the rules meeting requirement, or have their Athletic Director attest to them doing so.
2. Bats: For the 2023 softball season, National Federation playing rules again require that all non-wood bats must (1) display the **ASA** certification mark from 2000 or 2004 or the USA Softball All-Games Certification Mark to be a legal bat and not appear on the USA/ASA “banned bat” list and (2) must not appear on the list of the [USA Softball Non-Approved Bats with Certification Marks](#).
3. MHSAA tournament sites and groupings are posted on [www.MHSAA.com](http://www.MHSAA.com)
4. Umpires are no longer required to inspect bats and helmets prior to the game. Head coaches shall attest at the pregame conference that all players are legally equipped.
5. Health & Safety: Information regarding concussion protocols and heat & hydration policies can be found by [Clicking Here](#).
6. Umpires are required to collect, and coaches submit a lineup card to the plate umpire at the pre-game conference. Umpires must maintain a line card throughout the game and all substitutions, including CR must be reported to the plate umpire. If a DP/FLEX is used it must be on the lineup card properly at the time of the pre-game conference when lineups become official.
7. Again in 2023, the season maximum is 38 games for a team and individual during the regular season. A school may not schedule more than 38 regular season games. MHSAA Tournament games do not count toward the 38-game maximum.
8. **2023 MHSAA Tournament Dates**
  - Districts: June 3 or June 2
  - Regionals: Saturday, June 10
  - Quarterfinals: Tuesday, June 13
  - Semifinals: Thursday & Friday, June 15-16 - Secchia Stadium, East Lansing
  - Finals: Saturday, June 17 - Secchia Stadium, East Lansing

## **2023 NFHS Softball Rules Changes**

**Rule 1-4-1:** Removes the number of color restrictions on a glove, including laces and seams, and does not allow any panels of the glove to match the color of the ball.

**Rationale:** Gloves and mitts are manufactured in variety of designs and multiple colors. As long as the color of the ball is not one of the colors used, does not have markings that give the appearance of the ball or are made in a manner that is judged distracting by the umpire it is permitted for use in NFHS Softball.

**Rule 2-20-1g:** A fair ball is a batted ball that while over fair territory, an offensive player interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a batted ball.

**Rationale:** The ball's status is determined at the point of interference. If an offensive player interferes with the defensive player while the ball is in fair territory, the ball is dead. Adding this language to the definition section mirrors the foul ball definition in Rule 2-25-1e.

**Rule 3-2-12, 3-6-11:** Removes language prohibiting the wearing of jewelry.

**Rationale:** Removing the language prohibiting jewelry places the softball rules in line with other NFHS sports that have removed the restriction. Umpires still have the authority to rule on anything that is considered a distraction or increases risk to any player.

**Rule 4-2-1:** Defines the protocol for when a fair batted ball clears the home run fence to end the game. All runs are allowed to score before the game is terminated.

**Rationale:** Allows for all runs to be counted when a fair batted ball clears the home run fence to end the game. All runs scored by virtue of the home run will be included in individual and team statistics.

**Rule 8-2-7:** New language clarifies batter-runner interference on a fly ball over foul territory.

**Rationale:** This has always been the enforcement but was not listed in the section covering batter-runner. The language is consistent with the rule covering interference on an initial play on a fair-batted ball and aligns with Rule 8-6-10.

## **2023 SOFTBALL EDITORIAL CHANGES**

2-25-1e, 7-1-2 PENALTY 1, 7-4-1, 7-4-11, 8-1-1 EFFECTS 2, 8-4-3d

## **SOFTBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS**

1. Sportsmanship
2. Time Between Innings
3. Jewelry and Electronic Communication
4. Comparable Drying Agents