

# OHSAA SPORTS REGULATIONS

## Introduction

Article 5-7-1 of the constitution grants authority to the Board of Directors to determine the contest rules and regulations for each sport.

The Board of Directors has adopted the following contest rules and regulations effective August 1, 2011. The Commissioner is authorized to modify these regulations when it is deemed necessary by the Commissioner, subject to ratification by the Board of Directors.

The OHSAA Board of Directors modified and approved General Sports Regulation 6.3 and 7.3 at its October 21, 2010, meeting.

These regulations apply to all interscholastic teams and contests, including but not limited to varsity, junior varsity, reserve, junior, sophomore, freshman, and 7th & 8th grade teams. The regulations do not apply to intramural teams.

### GENERAL REGULATIONS

#### 1. Official Contest Rules

The official contest rules and rule books as published by the listed organization have been approved by the Board of Directors for all interscholastic athletic contests in the following sports. (Refer to Bylaw 1-4-3 which states “Interscholastic competition shall be conducted using contest rules adopted by the Board of Directors and modifications or changes in sport rules are not permitted except those provided in the rule book and approved by the Board of Directors.”)

FOOTBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BASKETBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BASEBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
BOWLING	UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS
SOFTBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
VOLLEYBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION
TRACK AND FIELD	NATIONAL FEDERATION
SWIMMING AND DIVING	NATIONAL FEDERATION
WRESTLING	NATIONAL FEDERATION
SOCCER	NATIONAL FEDERATION
CROSS COUNTRY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
FIELD HOCKEY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
ICE HOCKEY	NATIONAL FEDERATION
GYMNASTICS	U.S.A. GYMNASTICS
GOLF	UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION
TENNIS	UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION

#### 2. Mandatory Attendance at OHSAA-Sponsored Rules Interpretation Meetings

- 2.1) Any school sponsoring a sport recognized by the OHSAA in which a state tournament is held, must have the head varsity coach or assistant varsity coach in that sport or the athletic administrator attend or participate in an OHSAA-sponsored state rules interpretation meeting in that sport if such a meeting is held in order for teams or individuals from that school to be eligible to enter the OHSAA-sponsored tournament.
- 2.2) Those attending a meeting in person will be responsible to be in attendance within 10 minutes of the start of the meeting and remain until the conclusion of the meeting to receive credit for attendance.

#### 3. Penalties for Failure to Acquire Pupil Activity/Coaching Permit

High school and 7th-8th grade coaches who do not possess the Pupil Activity/Coaching Permit, which is part of the State Board of Education requirements to coach in Ohio, shall not be permitted to coach at any level at an OHSAA member school. Further, high schools shall submit to the **OHSAA on the tournament entry form, the name of each board-approved coach along with the Pupil Activity/Coaching Permit number** in each of the 24 recognized sports. Further, any

high school coach who does not possess this Permit at the first level of the tournament shall not be permitted to coach at any level of the tournament until such time that the Permit is obtained and verification of such permit is provided to the OHSAA. Falsification of this information shall result in a coach's removal from the OHSAA tournament.

**Note:** It is the intention of the OHSAA to perform random audits of these permits throughout the school year and to fine schools that have not complied with the bylaw in the amount of \$250 per coach.

**4. Penalties for Failure to Conduct Pre-Season Meetings**

When it has been verified that the member school has failed to conduct a pre-season meeting(s) in accordance with Bylaw 3-1-4, the member school shall be fined \$500 for each violation.

**Note:** Please be advised that the OHSAA intends to do random audits of compliance with this standard. Please refer to the OHSAA website for a checklist of items that must be covered and sample agendas and other resources to assist with compliance. Each member school shall record on *myohsaa* the date and location of each meeting as well as the person responsible for each meeting.

**5. OHSAA-Sponsored Tournaments Entry/Withdraw Procedures and Draw/Seed Meeting Dates**

5.1) When schools complete the OHSAA participation form online each spring and indicate they sponsor a varsity sport, they will select "yes" for each sport in which they plan to enter the OHSAA tournaments. Those who select "no" after each sport will be withdrawn from the OHSAA tournament. Instructions for filling out the participation form will be provided to the membership.

5.2) Two weeks prior to each draw/seed meeting date for each sport, schools will be given a one-week period to enter or withdraw from an OHSAA tournament should they change their previous decision in that particular sport. **The specific one-week periods for each sport during the 2011-2012 school year are listed below.**

5.2.1) Whether a school selected "yes" for an OHSAA tournament on its participation form or changed its previous decision and entered an OHSAA tournament during the designated one-week period for that particular sport, all schools shall complete all tournament and souvenir program forms (roster, pass lists, schedule, submission of team photo, etc.) online during the same designated one-week period for each particular sport. **The specific one-week periods for each sport during the 2011-2012 school year are listed below.** Instructions for filling out the tournament and souvenir program forms will be provided to the membership. Schools that fail to complete all tournament souvenir program forms online during the designated one-week period for each particular sport will be fined \$150 for each missed deadline.

5.3) After the one-week periods end as outlined in 5.2 above, schools that desire to enter or withdraw from an OHSAA tournament may do so by filing a "Petition Letter of Entry or Withdraw" with the OHSAA office (**not the tournament manager or District Athletic Board**) prior to the particular sport's draw/seed meeting. If entry is approved, schools will be provided instructions on how to complete entry online and complete all tournament and souvenir program forms. Schools will be fined **\$150** for their late entry or withdrawal.

5.3.1) The Commissioner's office shall have the authority to approve or disapprove such "Petitions." Decisions to disapprove an entry may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

5.4) A school coach or administrator shall attend a mandatory draw/seed meeting for each sport. **The specific dates for each sport's draw/seed meeting during the 2011-2012 school year are listed below.** Common tournament draw/seed procedures shall be used as approved by the Board of Directors and listed within each sport's tournament regulations (District Athletic Boards shall determine placement of teams on brackets). District Athletic Boards will provide schools with seeding information, will notify schools of the exact locations and times of the meetings and will notify schools in what sports the meetings will not be conducted.

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5.4.1) Schools that fail to send a coach or administrator to a mandatory draw/seed meeting will be fined **\$150**.

5.5) Schools that fail to participate in a tournament (individual or team) after indicating that they will enter a tournament will be ineligible to participate in that particular sport's OHSAA-sponsored tournament the following year. Additional penalties may include: 1.) a fine of **\$150**; 2.) payment of officials fees for the missed contests; 3.) payment of the opponent's travel expenses for the missed contests, and 4.) additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the Commissioner. The penalties rendered by the Commissioner may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

FALL SPORTS		Tournament Entry/Withdraw	Tournament Entry/Withdraw (w/ Penalty)	Draw/Seeding Meeting Date
Golf	Sectional 9/26-10/1 & 10/3-10/8	9/5-9/12	9/13	9/18
Girls Tennis	Sectional 10/3-10/8	9/12-9/19	9/20	9/25
Soccer	Sectional 10/17-10/22	9/26-10/3	10/4	10/9 B-2:00 p.m./G-3:00 p.m.
Volleyball	Sectional 10/17-10/22	9/26-10/3	10/4	10/9 2:00 p.m.
Field Hockey	State Qualifying 10/17-10/29	9/26-10/3	10/4	10/9
Cross Country	District 10/22	9/26-10/3	10/4	10/9

WINTER SPORTS				
Girls Basketball	Sectional 2/13-2/25	1/23-1/30	1/31	2/5 2:00 p.m.
Swimming & Diving	Sectional 2/6-2/11	1/16-1/23	1/24	1/29
Boys Basketball	Sectional 2/20-3/3	1/30-2/6	2/7	2/12 2:00 p.m.
Ice Hockey	District 2/13-3/3	1/23-1/30	1/31	2/8
Wrestling	Sectional 2/13-2/18	1/16-1/23	1/24	1/29
Gymnastics	District 2/13-2/25	1/16-1/23	1/24	1/29
Bowling	Sectional 2/11-2/19	1/23-1/30	1/31	2/5
SPRING SPORTS				
Softball	Sectional 5/5-5/12	4/16-4/23	4/24	4/29 2:00 p.m.
Baseball	Sectional 5/5-5/12	4/16-4/23	4/24	4/29 2:00 p.m.
Boys Tennis	Sectional 5/7-5/12	4/16-4/23	4/24	4/29
Track & Field	District 5/14-5/19	4/16-4/30	5/1	5/6

**6. Non-Interscholastic Programs**

6.1) **Definition** – A non-interscholastic program is defined as an organization composed of players in grades 7-12 either in or outside of school in which the primary purpose is to compete in contests no matter whether admission is charged, fees or expenses are collected, or whether or not a coach is present, and regardless of whether instruction is given. Examples of non-interscholastic programs include but are not limited to: church, intramural, Y.M.C.A., C.Y.O., A.A.U., USAVB, USSF, City Recreation, All-Star, Club or any non-interscholastic team or combination of players involved in team play.

6.2) **Member of an Interscholastic (School) Squad** – A student is considered to be a member of an interscholastic squad when the student participates in an interscholastic contest in a sport that is sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board and the sport is one

of the 24 recognized sports as authorized by the Ohio High School Athletic Association. An athletic contest involving participants from another school or any non-interscholastic program is labeled as a game, meet, match, preview, scrimmage or other type of competition.

- 6.3) **Participating in Non-Interscholastic Programs – Team Sports** – A member of an interscholastic squad sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board in a team sport (Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball) shall not participate in an athletic contest, tryouts or any type of team or group training or practices on a non-interscholastic squad in a team sport in the same sport during the school’s interscholastic sports season.
- 6.4) **Participating in Non-Interscholastic Programs – Individual Sports** – A member of an interscholastic squad sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board in an individual sport (Bowling, Gymnastics, Tennis, Golf, Swimming and Diving, Cross Country, Track and Field and Wrestling) shall not participate in a contest on a non-interscholastic squad in the same sport during the school’s interscholastic sports season.
- 6.5) **Participating in Non-Interscholastic Programs Outside the Interscholastic Season – Team Sports** – A member of an interscholastic squad in a team sport sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board may participate in non-interscholastic contests, tryouts, training or practices prior to, and after, the school’s interscholastic season under the following conditions:

- a) The number of interscholastic squad members from the same school on the non-interscholastic squad is limited to a maximum of 50% of the members of a team as defined in the playing rules of the sport. From June 1 through July 31 (in the sports of baseball and softball, the period is the Friday before Memorial Day-May 25 in 2012-through July 31) this restriction is not in effect, provided the squad members have concluded their school season. The 50% limitation is defined as follows for all OHSAA recognized team sports.

<b>50% Limitation on Sport</b>	<b>Number of squad members</b>
Baseball	4
Basketball	2
Field Hockey	5
Football	5
Soccer	5
Softball	4
Volleyball	3

- b) An interscholastic squad member may continue participation with a non-interscholastic squad in a national qualifying tournament after July 31 until the squad is eliminated from the national qualifying tournament but no later than Labor Day.
- c) Graduating seniors who are participating on a non-interscholastic squad after their final interscholastic contest in a season in the same sport are exempt from this limitation.
- d) Ice Hockey shall use a five player limitation.
- 6.6) **Participating in Non-Interscholastic Programs Outside the Interscholastic Season – Individual Sports** – A member of an interscholastic squad in an individual sport sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board may participate in non-interscholastic contests, tryouts, training or practices prior to, and after, the school’s interscholastic season with no restriction except as stipulated in regulation 6.11 – Members of the Interscholastic Coaching Staff.
- 6.7) **Dropping From or Quitting an Interscholastic Team** – A member of an interscholastic squad sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board who is dropped or quits during the school’s interscholastic season may participate in a non-interscholastic program as a team member or individual in the same sport but is ineligible for further interscholastic competition in that sport for the remainder of the school’s interscholastic season.
- 6.8) **Interscholastic Football Squad Members** – After a student becomes a member of an interscholastic football squad, the student may not participate in non-interscholastic football, including contests, tryouts and any type of training or practices, during the school year.

From June 1 through July 31, members of an interscholastic football squad may participate in non-contact football contests, tryouts or any type of training and practices and attend non-contact team football camps or instructional programs.

- 6.9) **Members of the Interscholastic Coaching Staff – Team Sports** – In non-interscholastic participation (contests, tryouts, training and practices) in team sports, members of the school’s interscholastic coaching staff may coach interscholastic squad members from the school district where employed for a maximum of 10 days from June 1 to July 31. The 10-day limitation applies to the entire coaching staff. Each individual coach is not entitled to 10 different days for coaching.

**Note:** The Board of Directors may further limit the number of contact days during this period as specified in the specific sports regulations.

EXCEPTION 1: The paid or unpaid interscholastic coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board may coach interscholastic squad members from the school district where the coach is employed as coach without limitation from June 1 through July 31 if the 50% limitation is observed. The 50% limitation is defined as a maximum of 50% of the members of a team as defined in the playing rules of the sport. The following chart indicates those limitations for OHSAA recognized team sports.

<b>50% Limitation on Sport</b>	<b>Number of squad members</b>
Baseball	4
Basketball	2
Field Hockey	5
Soccer	5
Softball	4
Volleyball	3

**Note:** Ice Hockey shall use a five player limitation.

EXCEPTION 2: If the 50% limitation is observed, an interscholastic coach may continue participation with a non-interscholastic squad in a national qualifying tournament after July 31 until the squad is eliminated from the national qualifying tournament but no later than Labor Day.

- 6.10) **Members of the Interscholastic Coaching Staff – Football** – Members of the interscholastic coaching staff in the sport of football may coach interscholastic football squad members from the school district where employed in non-contact football only for a maximum of 10 days from June 1 to July 31. The 10-day limitation applies to the entire coaching staff. Each individual coach is not entitled to 10 different days for coaching.

**Note:** The Board of Directors may further limit the number of contact days during this period as specified in the specific sports regulations.

- 6.11) **Members of the Interscholastic Coaching Staff – Selected Individual Sports** – Interscholastic coaches in the individual sports of Bowling, Golf, Gymnastics, Swimming and Diving and Tennis may coach athletes from the school where employed and/or approved to coach outside the interscholastic season of the sport provided the participation in these non-interscholastic programs is not represented as mandatory to the students involved. Interscholastic coaches in the individual sports of cross country, track and field and wrestling shall adhere to the regulations set forth in 6.9.

- 6.12) **Exception to the Squad Member Limitation** – The squad-member limitations set forth in Sports Regulations 6.5 and 6.9 shall not apply if the “members” of the non-interscholastic squad are all siblings (by blood or adoption) and no other player from the same interscholastic squad is a participant on behalf of the non-interscholastic squad.

6.13) **Penalties**

- 6.13.1) The maximum penalty for violation of this regulation for any member of a school squad, excepting a senior, shall be ineligibility in that sport for the remainder of the season or the ensuing season. If a senior, the maximum penalty shall be ineligibility for all interscholastic athletics the remainder of the school year.

- 6.13.2) The penalty for a coach for a violation of this bylaw may include suspension, proba-

tion, public censure, fine not to exceed \$1,000 per occurrence, or such other penalty as the Commissioner may deem appropriate.

- 7. Instructional Programs (Examples include but are not limited to camps, clinics, workshops, practices, etc.)**
- 7.1) These regulations apply to individual members of school squads or teams.
  - 7.2) Instructional programs out of the season of the sport involving team play (any activity of individuals with more than one player opposing one player) may be attended at any time from August-May 31 as long as the 50% limitation expressed in 6.5 is maintained.
  - 7.3) Individual skill instruction may be received in any sport by a squad member at any time in individual lessons provided that these individual skill instructions do not violate any Board of Education, school administrators' or coaches' policies. Notwithstanding the foregoing provision, the coach may not conduct individual or group lessons for a squad member except during June 1 to July 31 and during the season of the sport.
  - 7.4) There is no limit on the number of players from the same school participating on the same team during the period June 1-July 31 (in the sports of baseball and softball, the period is the Friday before Memorial Day-May 25 in 2012-through July 31), provided the squad members have concluded their school season.
  - 7.5) Athletes who violate the instructional program regulations may be penalized not to exceed one year of ineligibility for interscholastic athletics.
  - 7.6) Interscholastic coaches in the individual sports of girls gymnastics, boys and girls swimming and diving, boys and girls golf, boys and girls tennis, and boys and girls bowling may coach athletes from the school where employed outside the interscholastic season of the sport.
  - 7.7) Members of the coaching staff are limited to a total of 10 days in any combination of instructional program days and non-interscholastic days as specified in Sports Regulation 6.9.
  - 7.8) Any coach who violates any of the instructional program regulations may be prohibited from involvement for one calendar year in any instructional programs with athletes from the school where employed.
  - 7.9) It is not necessary for instructional programs to be registered, sanctioned or approved by the OHSAA, but schools are responsible for enforcing the regulations.
  - 7.10) Mandatory attendance at instructional programs is not permitted. A coach, paid or unpaid, violates this provision when the coach suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation in an instructional program.
  - 7.11) Squad members may be used for out-of-season demonstration purposes only if approved in advance by the Commissioner's office.
- 8. Physical Fitness Programs**
- 8.1) Physical fitness programs must comply with all bylaws and regulations of the OHSAA.
  - 8.2) Physical fitness programs may be conducted at any time, indoors or outdoors, and are not a violation of OHSAA bylaws and regulations as long as there is no coaching and instruction of sports techniques and skills.
  - 8.3) Equipment used in playing a sport is prohibited in physical fitness programs, except that mats may be used for safety purposes. In track and field and cross country, participants may be directed in aerobics, in stretching exercises, and to run, but interval training, sprinting and specific drills are prohibited. In both field hockey and ice hockey, sticks may be used.
  - 8.4) Weight machines and indoor weight rooms may be utilized in physical fitness programs.
  - 8.5) Physical fitness programs may not be conducted for a select group of students.
  - 8.6) Mandatory attendance at out-of-season physical fitness programs is not permitted. A coach, paid or unpaid, violates this provision when the coach suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation in a physical fitness program.

**9. Open Gymnasium or Facilities  
Member Schools**

9.1) Regulations

- 9.1.1) A school may open its athletic facilities for unstructured free play provided the activity is supervised by a school employee who may remove participants or spectators for disciplinary reasons.
- 9.1.2) The school may designate the sport or sports that will be played during the free play period, but may not limit participation to a select group of students from within the school. Participation may be limited to students enrolled in the school.
- 9.1.3) There may be no designation of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only the students participating may be involved in selecting or substituting players.
- 9.1.4) The regulation timing of games is not permitted.
- 9.1.5) Written scorekeeping is not permitted.
- 9.1.6) No individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted.
- 9.1.7) A coach, paid or unpaid, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.
- 9.1.8) Mandatory attendance at open gymnasiums or facilities is not permitted.
- 9.1.9) Transporting athletes to a school or non-school open gym is a violation for any member of the coaching staff, paid or unpaid.
- 9.1.10) It is not a violation for the coach or supervisor to participate in unstructured free play in the open gym or facilities.
- 9.1.11) Member schools may restrict individuals from observing the open gym activity.

9.2) Penalty for Violation

- 9.2.1) A **squad member** who violates the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be penalized not to exceed one year of ineligibility for interscholastic athletics.
- 9.2.2) A **coach** who violates any of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be prohibited from involvement for one year in any open gymnasium or facilities programs in or out of school.
- 9.2.3) A **school** which permits use of athletics facilities in violation of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

**Non-School**

9.3) Regulations for School Squad Members (Bylaw 4-1-3)

- 9.3.1) A school squad member may participate in unstructured free play at non-school athletic facilities without jeopardizing athletic eligibility providing there are no violations of the following regulations.
- 9.3.2) There may be no designation of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only the students participating may be involved in selecting or substituting players.
- 9.3.3) The regulation timing of games is not permitted.
- 9.3.4) Written scorekeeping is not permitted.
- 9.3.5) No individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted.
- 9.3.6) A coach, paid or volunteer, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.
- 9.3.7) Mandatory attendance at non-school facilities is not permitted.

9.3.8) Transporting athletes to a school or non-school open gym is a violation for any member of the coaching staff, paid or unpaid.

9.4) Penalty for Violation

9.4.1) A **squad member** who participates at a facility where there is one or more violations of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be penalized not to exceed one year of ineligibility for interscholastic athletics.

9.4.2) A **school coach** who is responsible for causing a violation of any of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations by a squad member may be prohibited from involvement in any open gymnasium or facilities program in or out of school for one year.

**10. Mandatory No Contact Periods — Coaches**

10.1) Any coach, paid or volunteer, shall be approved by the Board of Education to coach football, soccer, field hockey, volleyball, basketball, or ice hockey and is prohibited from athletic or athletic-related contact with squad members (i.e., physical fitness, weight training, open gym, etc.) in the same sport for the period of time starting with the **first day after the school's last interscholastic contest and ending 28 days later**. This includes any type of tryouts in or out of school for purposes of non-interscholastic competition. It also includes verbal contact which encourages, discusses or promotes any activity related to the sports named above.

10.2) Any coach, paid or volunteer, shall be approved by the Board of Education to coach basketball, ice hockey, baseball or softball and is prohibited from any athletic or athletic-related contact with squad members (i.e., physical fitness, weight training, open gym, etc.) in the same sport for the period of time ending with Labor Day and beginning four weeks prior to Labor Day. This includes any type of tryouts in or out of school for purposes of non-interscholastic competition. It also includes verbal contact which encourages, discusses or promotes any activity related to the sports named above.

**EXCEPTIONS** — Examples of activities which may be conducted by a coach with athletes from his or her team sport during the mandatory no-contact period include: all-star contests, awards ceremonies, verbal contact with a senior athlete for the purpose of facilitating the college recruitment process, contact as a faculty member assigned to teach in the regular curriculum (ex.: physical education courses such as weight training, fitness, etc.), contact as a certified athletic trainer involved with athlete rehabilitation and treatment, pick up school-issued equipment, attendance at OHSAA tournaments.

**PENALTY** — Any coach who violates the mandatory no contact periods regulations may be prohibited for one calendar year from out-of-school season contact with athletes from the school where employed. A school whose coach violates the mandatory no contact periods regulations is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

**11. Cheerleader Pyramids and Acrobatic Routines**

**11.1) Regulations for OHSAA Tournaments:**

11.1.1) Pyramids and mounts by cheerleaders are prohibited. Individuals may not stand on another's shoulders or support another individual in any type of mount.

11.1.2) Mini trampolines are prohibited.

**11.2) Penalty**

In OHSAA-sponsored tournaments, individual cheerleaders violating the regulations shall be removed from the floor immediately.

**11.3) Recommendation**

It is recommended that schools adopt the same regulations for cheerleading activities at regular season contests sponsored by schools.

**12. Ejection of Coach (Disqualification for unsporting conduct or flagrant violation)**

A school (coach, athletic administrator or principal) must file a written report with the OHSAA, within 10 days, any time a coach is ejected from a contest, home or away. If a coach is ejected/disqualified from a contest and no other coach or a person authorized by the Board of Education from that school is present (Bylaw 3-2-1), the contest shall be forfeited. A coach who has been disqualified shall be ejected from the vicinity of the playing area and is prohibited from further

contact, direct or indirect, with team members, managers and other coaches during the remainder of the contest. The coach must return to the locker room or team bus or leave the premises. The coach shall not go to the spectator area.

The penalty for failure of the coach to comply with the ejection regulation shall result in the forfeiture of the contest.

Note: When national playing rules refer to a disqualification for unsporting conduct or a flagrant violation, this is considered an ejection as referenced in this regulation.

### 13. Ejection for Unsporting Conduct (Disqualification for unsporting conduct or flagrant violation)

#### 13.1) Players

Any player ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all contests for the **remainder of that day**. In addition, the player shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification. When ejection or disqualification of a player results from illegal substitution in baseball, softball or basketball, the two contest suspension does not apply.

In the sport of ice hockey, any player ejected for unsporting conduct during a scrimmage or preview shall be ineligible for all scrimmages or previews for the remainder of that day. If a scrimmage occurs prior to the season, the player shall also be ineligible for the first regular season contest (previews are only permitted prior to the first regular season contest). If a scrimmage occurs after the first regular season contest, the player shall be ineligible for the next regular season or OHSAA tournament contest. In addition, any second ejection in a scrimmage, preview, regular season contest or OHSAA tournament contest will result in the student being suspended for the remainder of the season.

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the student shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the next sport in which the student participates. A student under suspension may not sit on the team bench, enter the locker room or be affiliated with the team in any way traveling to, during or traveling after the contest(s).

A student who is ejected or disqualified a second time shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport. A student who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time in the season during the last contest shall be ineligible for a period of time/number of contests subject to the discretion of the Commissioner. The period of ineligibility shall commence during the next sport in which the student participates.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Commissioner as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

#### 13.2) Coaches

Any coach ejected or disqualified from an interscholastic contest for unsporting conduct shall be suspended from coaching in all contests for the **remainder of that day**. In addition, the coach shall be suspended from coaching for all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification and shall be fined \$100.00. In addition, the coach shall take the National Federation of State High School Association's "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course, which must be completed within 30 days of the ejection and can be taken at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the coach shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the same sport during the following season in the next school year.

A coach who has been suspended from coaching may attend the contest, but must be seated in the spectator area and may not give instructions to the players or to the individual who has been

assigned to coach the team any time prior to or during the contest including halftime or any intermission. A suspended coach shall not travel with the squad to an away contest.

A coach who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time shall be suspended indefinitely and required to attend a mandatory conference with the Commissioner at the OHSAA headquarters. The principal of the school shall be required to attend this conference as well. Any penalty shall be determined in accordance with Bylaw 11.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When a suspended coach is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Commissioner as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

**14. Participants Leaving The Playing Area**

No member of any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the ‘playing area’ in which a contest is being conducted and enter the ‘spectator area’ of the facility to engage in any type of conflict—verbal or physical. If a student-athlete leaves the ‘playing area’ and enters the ‘spectator area’ of a facility to so engage a person, the minimum penalties shall be:

- 14.1) The student-athlete’s privileges to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be revoked and the student-athlete shall be ineligible for the remainder of the school year.
- 14.2) The school shall be immediately placed on probation pending an investigation (and report) into what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what ‘safeguards’ have been implemented by the school to prevent future happenings.

**15. Tournaments**

**15.1) Recognition of Sports**

The Board of Directors shall not accord “Recognition” to any additional sport unless a minimum of 150 schools sponsor teams or individuals in the sport.

**15.2) Regulations for Sponsoring and Conducting**

OHSAA tournaments will be sponsored and conducted in divisions according to the number of schools sponsoring a team in the recognized sport.

**Team Sports**—Those that require a certain number of players to form a team. Presently, those sports are boys baseball, boys and girls basketball, girls field hockey, boys ice hockey, boys and girls soccer, girls softball, and girls volleyball.

**Individual Sports**—Those that involve primarily participation and scoring by individuals and in which team scoring could be obtained by totaling the efforts of individuals. Presently, those sports are boys and girls bowling, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls golf, girls gymnastics, boys and girls swimming and diving, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls track and field and boys wrestling.

The minimum number of individuals required for a team designation follows:

Bowling	5	Swimming and Diving	7
Cross Country	5	Tennis	4
Golf	4	Track and Field	9
Girls Gymnastics	3	Wrestling	8

**Divisions Determination**—The number of divisions in OHSAA tournaments in a sport shall be determined by the number of school teams that participated in the tournaments the preceding year.

<u>Number of Teams Participating in Tournaments</u>	<u>Divisions</u>
250 or less	I
251-500	I, II
501-750	I, II, III
751 or more	I, II, III, IV

Sports tournament changes relative to adding a division or discontinuing a division or adding a tournament or discontinuing a tournament may be made only after the number of schools has been higher or lower for two successive years.

**EXCEPTION**—In all sports, except football, a school sponsoring a sport is eligible for tournament participation regardless of regular season performance. In football, the Board of Directors may schedule tournament play in divisions other than specified in the table above.

**15.3) School Assignments—Divisions**

After the number of divisions is approved by the Board of Directors, schools are assigned to divisions based upon their enrollment as specified in Bylaw 2-1-1.

The number of schools assigned to each division shall be determined by the number of school teams that participated in the tournament the previous year with each division to have an equal number of teams as possible.

**15.4) Failure to Appear**

Please refer to the specific tournament regulations for each sport for rules that pertain to a team or individual that fails to appear for a contest.

When national playing rules do not address failure to appear, the following regulations will apply:

**15.4.1) Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball**

If a team fails to appear or is not ready to play within 30 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the tournament game, the space on the bracket may be declared vacant. A “no contest” shall be declared, and the opposing team shall advance to the next round of competition. See *No Contest* under Section 32 of the General Sports Regulations.

*All decisions relative to this regulation shall be made by a member of the respective district athletic board or the OHSAA Commissioner’s office.*

**15.4.2) Bowling, Cross Country, Golf, Gymnastics, Swimming & Diving, Tennis, Track & Field, Wrestling**

If a team or individual participant fails to appear or is not ready to compete at the time of their scheduled competition, the team or individual participant shall be disqualified and removed from the event or tournament competition.

*All decisions relative to this regulation shall be made by a member of the respective district athletic board or the OHSAA Commissioner’s office.*

**15.4.3)** The OHSAA, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors, and the tournament manager, may delay or reschedule a tournament contest/competition provided it is *practical* to delay or reschedule such contests/competitions.

**16. Athletic Uniforms**

Uniforms worn by participants in a high school athletic contest must conform to the playing rules adopted by the OHSAA for that sport. Any lettering or emblems on uniforms must pertain to the school name, school nickname, individual’s name, the sport, drug use prevention, sportsmanship, ethics or integrity or be of a patriotic nature and provided it does not violate the rules of the sport in regard to location. Any visible manufacturer’s logo on a uniform or undergarment must conform to the rules adopted by the national rules committee for that sport. However, if there is no specific rule, the maximum size is 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> square inches with no dimension exceeding 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>”.

**17. Individual Non-Interscholastic Competition Date**

In all sports, an athlete who has not participated for a school in a given sport that season must cease all non-interscholastic competition in a given sport six weeks (42 days) prior to the Monday of the week of the state tournament in that sport in order to be eligible for OHSAA tournament competition provided applicable bylaws and regulations have been followed.

In addition, an athlete who has participated for the school in an individual sport (bowling, cross

country, golf, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, and wrestling) and who violates this non-interscholastic competition date by participating in a non-interscholastic contest shall be ineligible for OHSAA tournament competition in that sport in addition to any other penalties that may be prescribed.

**Note:** See Golf Regulation 5.2 for an exception to this regulation.

**18. Non-Recognized Sports**

The bylaw (former 1-6-1) which required a school to comply with all OHSAA bylaws and applicable sports regulations when conducting interscholastic athletics programs in sports which are not recognized, (not recognized means a sport that is not one of the OHSAA tournament sports – See Bylaw 1-5-1 for a complete list of the current Board of Directors adopted “recognized” sports), has been eliminated.

Therefore, it is no longer necessary to register a non-recognized sport with the OHSAA. Nor is it required that the school comply with eligibility standards for students in those sports. A local school district could, however, require participants in non-recognized sports to meet certain eligibility standards and conform to certain sports regulations.

Catastrophe insurance under the OHSAA plan for recognized sports will not be available for non-recognized sports. Schools are offered an opportunity to purchase catastrophe insurance coverage for non-recognized sports under a separate plan.

**19. Regular Season Participation Limitation Penalty**

An athlete who exceeds the regular season participation limitation (periods, quarters, halves, or contests) as specified in the individual sports regulations becomes an ineligible athlete. The athlete is ineligible for further regular season competition if the violation occurs prior to the end of the season or tournament competition if the violation occurs during the last regular season contest in the sport concerned. The forfeiture bylaws apply as written in Bylaw 10.

**20. Transportation To and From Interscholastic Contests**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Education or other governing board of a member school to provide for the safe transportation of student-athletes and other contest participants to and from athletic events. The OHSAA Catastrophe Accident Insurance Policy covers team or group travel directly to and from a covered event. A covered event is defined by the OHSAA (the authorized policy holder) as any regular-season (includes scrimmages and previews) or tournament competition in an interscholastic athletic event in an OHSAA-recognized sport, sponsored by the Board of Education or governing board of a member school. Travel must be supervised by staff members or designated representatives of the member school.

Therefore, it is recommended that schools require student-athletes and other participants in interscholastic athletic events to travel with their school squads in school-authorized carriers. It is not recommended that students be released to travel with parents or other persons; however, permission to make alternative travel arrangements remains the purview of the Board of Education/governing board of the member school. In the event that such alternative arrangements are approved, it is strongly recommended that the Board of Education secure proof of insurance from those who will be providing the transportation.

**21. Interscholastic Scrimmage**

- 21.1) An interscholastic scrimmage is defined as a contest in sports in which the rules of the sport are not followed in all respects. The length of the scrimmage is limited to a maximum of three hours per squad or individual per day for grades 9-12, and two hours per squad or individual per day for grades 7-8.
- 21.2) A scrimmage may involve any number of teams from various schools. A scrimmage does not count in the won/lost record for any school involved in the scrimmage.
- 21.3) No admission of money, materials or supplies may be charged for a scrimmage. Voluntary donations of supplies or money may be accepted at a scrimmage but cannot be required for admission.
- 21.4) This regulation prohibits two or more school teams from practicing together unless it is a scrimmage.
- 21.5) A scrimmage must be considered the same for all schools involved.

**22. Preview**

- 22.1) A preview is an athletic contest played according to the adopted rules for a sport except that one-half the length of a regular season contest is permitted. Previews are permitted only in those sports in which scrimmages are allowed. Refer to the specific sport relative to length of preview and when it may be scheduled.
- 22.2) A preview may be scheduled and played only during the period of time beginning with the Friday before the season begins and ending with the date of the first regular season contest of the teams involved. A preview does not count in the won/lost record.
- 22.3) When a preview is scheduled, admission may be charged.

**23. Athletic Contest**

Any type of athletic activity involving participants from a member school and another school, or non-interscholastic team or individuals including organized adults. Such activity is categorized as a game, meet, match, preview, or scrimmage. A practice involving two or more school squads is also an athletic contest. A game, meet or match must follow the rules as written in the game rules adopted by the Board of Directors. Athletic contests may be scheduled and conducted only during the time periods as specified in the individual sport regulations.

**24. OHSAA-Sponsored Tournaments Curfew Regulations**

The first priority when making the decision to delay, suspend, continue or postpone a contest is the safety of the student-athletes, coaches/school administrators, parents/fans and officials.

- 24.1) No tournament contests/events shall start later than 11:00 p.m.
- 24.2) When deciding whether or not to delay, suspend, continue or postpone a tournament contest/event, the tournament manager must consult with the school administrator/designee. Items to consider in the decision:
- 24.21) The estimated time to complete the contest.
- 24.22) The travel time of all schools involved.
- 24.23) The current and expected weather conditions.
- 24.24) The availability of the officials.
- 24.25) Other events scheduled at the host site and the participating schools.
- 24.3) In the case of unforeseen circumstances or an emergency, the following factors shall be used to develop a tournament contest/event contingency plan:
- 24.31) Overnight accommodations.
- 24.32) A list of all parties involved and local emergency telephone/cellular numbers.
- 24.33) Plans established by the participating schools' emergency plan.

**Note:** A sample tournament contest/event contingency plan is posted on the OHSAA web site ([www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org)).

**The OHSAA recommends that all member schools develop an athletic contest/event contingency plan for use during the regular season.**

**25. All-Star Games**

There are many directors of non-interscholastic competitions that use the term "All-Star" in describing their events. Student-athletes in team sports who wish to participate in one of these "all-star" competitions outside the interscholastic season of their sports may do so without jeopardy to eligibility provided the students maintain compliance with Sports Regulations 6.3 and 6.5.

The purpose of this special "All-Star" regulation is to provide an opportunity for the interscholastic team sport coach to coach players from his or her own school in a competition that has the following components:

- 1) Participants shall be selected from at least four schools.
- 2) All participants shall be graduating seniors or students completing their athletic eligibility at the end of the semester.
- 3) Participants shall play in no more than two All-Star games.

- 4) Participants shall not participate until after they have participated in their final contest for their school (Sports Regulation 6.3).

**Penalty:** For a senior, violation of this regulation may result in the loss of athletic eligibility for the balance of the school year. For all other students, the penalty may result in loss of eligibility for the ensuing season in the sport in which the student participated in the All-Star contest.

**26. Sunday Contests**

Sunday contests are permitted by the Board of Directors. Local Board of Education policies and administrative decisions will be determining factors.

**27. Exhibition Competition**

Any event or competition involving students representing member schools may involve only students who are eligible in all respects insofar as age, enrollment and attendance, scholarship, residence and individual sports limitation. So-called “scratch” or “exhibition” competition permitted or conducted by any school could result in ineligibility for athletes and suspension of the school.

**28. Forfeiture**

An athletic contest in which the winner is determined to have used an ineligible participant or committed other rules infractions. Forfeiture can occur only after a contest is started, completed or the contest official’s jurisdiction has begun.

**29. School Teams**

Member schools may sponsor more than one varsity or sub-varsity teams for interscholastic competition, but each team must have its own schedule and roster and is limited according to specific contest limitations for that sport. No school may enter more than one team in any OHSAA-sponsored team tournament.

**30. Squad Member**

A student who has participated in an interscholastic athletic contest representing a school.

**31. Team Play**

Any activity of individuals with more than one player opposing one player (2-on-2, 2-on-1, 3-on-2, 3-on-3, 4-on-4, 5-on-5, etc.).

**32. Pick-up Games**

Unsupervised, unstructured contests in which there is no adult planning, scheduling or organization involved.

**33. Interrupted Contest**

If an interscholastic contest (game, match, meet, etc.) is interrupted for any reason beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority, the contest shall be resumed from the point of interruption. EXCEPTION: Those sports which have a specific procedure for determining the outcome of an interrupted contest: e.g., baseball, football, soccer and softball.

**34. No Contest**

Any scheduled regular season contest which is not started due to unforeseen circumstances, such as failure of team to arrive, strike, school closing. No contests are not included in won-lost statistics.

**35. Grades 7 & 8**

35.1) A student shall not participate in more than one interscholastic contest on any one day unless permitted by specific sports regulations. EXCEPTIONS: baseball, basketball, softball, volleyball, tennis. (See specific sport regulations.)

35.2) Sports Season Waiver — Schools, leagues or conferences may adjust seasons to accommodate school teams because of the lack of availability of physical facilities or personnel. Proposed changes in seasons shall be submitted in writing to the Commissioner and include the proposed dates of the 7th & 8th grade season not to exceed the length of the interscholastic season for the sport concerned. All other regulations regarding contest limitations, required practice time and coaching requirements shall be followed.

35.3) 7th & 8th grade students may not practice with, participate on the same team with or compete against 9th through 12th grade students.

35.4) Students below the 7th grade may not practice with or participate with 7th through 12th grade students.

35.5) It is strongly recommended that the coaches of 7th & 8th grade sports attend the OHSAA rules interpretation meetings for the sports they are coaching.

**36. Penalties**

PENALTIES for violations will be administered in accordance with Bylaw 11 if not otherwise stated.

**CONCUSSION REGULATIONS**

**Implementation of NFHS Playing Rules Changes Related to Concussion and Concussed Athletes and Return to Play Protocol**

It is important for all adults involved in interscholastic athletics to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions. Thus it is extremely important that each coach, administrator, contest official and medical support personnel review their responsibilities in protecting students.

**Note:** It has always been the ultimate responsibility of the coaching staff, in all sports, to ensure that players are only put into practice or contests if they are physically capable of performing. However, all adults involved in the conduct of interscholastic competition have responsibilities in this endeavor.

The OHSAA Board of Directors has adopted a sports regulation which incorporates the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules. This regulation reads:

“Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared with written authorization by an appropriate health care professional. In Ohio, an ‘appropriate health care professional’ shall be a physician, as authorized under ORC Chapter 4731 and includes both doctors of medicine (M.D.) and doctors of osteopathy (D.O.) and an athletic trainer (A.T.), licensed under ORC Chapter 4755.”

In January 2011, the OHSAA Board of Directors further defined the following parameters to guide OHSAA licensed officials, medical personnel and member school representatives in implementing this change.

1. What are the “signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion?” The National Federation rule lists some of the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion. The U.S. Department of Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published the following lists of signs, symptoms and behaviors that are consistent with a concussion:

SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appears dazed or stunned</li> <li>Is confused about assignment</li> <li>Forgets plays</li> <li>Is unsure of game, score or opponent</li> <li>Moves clumsily</li> <li>Answers questions slowly</li> <li>Loses consciousness</li> <li>Shows behavior or personality changes</li> <li>Cannot recall events prior to hit</li> <li>Cannot recall events after hit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headache</li> <li>Nausea</li> <li>Balance problems or dizziness</li> <li>Double or fuzzy vision</li> <li>Sensitivity to light or noise</li> <li>Feeling sluggish</li> <li>Feeling foggy or groggy</li> <li>Concentration or memory problems</li> <li>Confusion</li> </ul>

2. Who is responsible for administering this new rule?

All adults who have responsibilities and duties in the interscholastic athletics environment are responsible: coaches, contest officials, administrators and medical personnel.

3. What is the role of coaches in administering this new rule?
  - Coaches are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to prohibit any athlete who displays these signs or symptoms from participating in a practice or a contest.
  - Coaches are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The coach is responsible for insuring that the student's parents are notified and the student is referred to a medical professional.
4. What is the role of contest officials in administering the new rule?
  - Officials are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to direct immediate removal of any athlete who displays these signs or symptoms. When informing the head coach about removal of an athlete, the official shall be accompanied by a fellow (second) official.
  - An official shall not permit the athlete who has been removed under this rule to return to competition without written medical authorization presented to the head official.
  - If a contest official is aware that a student has been permitted to return to competition without written authorization from a physician or licensed athletic trainer, that official shall immediately stop play and remove that student from competition and report the incident to the OHSAA.
  - Note that officials are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The official is responsible for directing removal when he or she observes signs and symptoms that may indicate a student is concussed.
5. Who decides if an athlete has not been concussed and/or who has recovered from a concussion?
  - **Only** an M.D. (Medical Doctor), D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathy), or A.T. (Athletic Trainer) is empowered to make the on-site determination that an athlete has **not** received a concussion.
  - If any one of these individuals has answered that "yes" there has been a concussion, that decision is final.
6. Can an athlete return to play on the same day as he/she receives a concussion?
  - No, under no circumstances can that athlete return to play that day. When in doubt, hold them out.
  - If the event continues over multiple days, then the designated event physician has ultimate authority over return to play decisions.
  - However, if the health care professional (M.D, D.O. or A.T.) has evaluated the athlete, who has been removed from competition due to exhibiting the signs and symptoms of a concussion, and has determined that the athlete did not sustain a concussion, that student may return to play with the submission of the written authorization by the health care professional.
  - The written authorization shall be submitted to the school administration, and the head official shall forward a copy of the written authorization form within 48 hours to the OHSAA office, retaining a copy for himself/herself. However, if there is no administrator on site at the competition, the authorization may be held by the host site manager or the head coach.
7. Once the day has concluded, who can issue authorization to return to practice / competition in the sport?
  - Once a concussion has been diagnosed by one of the above listed on-site providers, only an M.D., D.O. or A.T. can authorize subsequent return to play (RTP),

and such authorization shall be in writing to the administration of the school. This written RTP authorization shall be kept at the school until the statute of limitations expires, which is seven years from the date of the student's 18th birthday.

- School administration shall then notify the coach as to the permission to return to practice or play.
8. What should be done after the student is cleared by an appropriate health care professional?
- After a clearance has been issued, the student's actual return to practice and play should follow a graduated protocol.
  - The National Federation has included the following graduated protocol in its Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports: (**Note:** This is simply a suggested protocol. The appropriate health care professional who issues the clearance may wish to establish a different graduated protocol.)

### **NFHS Suggested Medical Clearance Return To Play Protocol**

1. No exertional activity until asymptomatic.
  2. When the athlete appears clear, begin low-impact activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
  3. Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to specific sport such as running or skating, and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
  4. Begin non-contact skill drills specific to sport such as dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.
  5. Full contact in practice setting.
  6. Game play/competition.
    - Athlete must remain asymptomatic to progress to the next level. (It is often suggested that an athlete not be allowed to progress more than one level per day.)
    - If symptoms recur, athlete must return to previous level and should be reevaluated by an appropriate health care professional.
    - Medical check should occur before contact. (Final written clearance from the medical professional shall be obtained before the athlete engages in any unrestricted or full contact activity.)
9. Other Resources
- The NFHS has developed a 20-minute online coach education course, *Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know*, the NFHS *Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports* brochure and the NFHS *Sports Medicine Handbook*; there are materials from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) "Heads Up" program, and there are other materials that schools are highly encouraged to make available to officials, parents and students.
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has a publication entitled "Heads up to Schools: Know your Concussion ABC's" – A Fact Sheet for Teachers, Counselors and School Professionals," available on its web site. Go to [www.cdc.gov/concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion) to obtain this valuable publication that will assist teachers and other school personnel in making accommodations for students who were concussed and returning to school, an important aspect of concussion management that is often overlooked.

## **TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS AND STEROIDS**

### **1. Tobacco**

School participants (coaches, players, trainers, managers, statisticians, scorekeepers, cheerleaders, etc.) and contest officials in an athletic contest are prohibited from using any form of tobacco at the

playing site of an interscholastic contest. Penalty for violation by school participants is disqualification from that contest. Violations by contest officials shall be reported to the OHSAA.

## 2. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

The sale of, the distribution of, or the consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs is not permitted at the site of any contest involving OHSAA member schools.

## 3. Steroids

A student who uses anabolic steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs is ineligible for interscholastic competition until such time as medical evidence can be presented that the student's system is free of anabolic steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs.

**Note:** At its September 1998 meeting, the OHSAA Board of Directors endorsed the position statement issued by the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the National Federation of State High School Associations on the use of drugs, medicine and food supplements in interscholastic sports. The statement is as follows:

“School personnel and coaches should not dispense any drug, medication or food supplement except with extreme caution and in accordance with policies developed in consultation with parents, health-care professionals and senior administrative personnel of the school or school district.

“Use of any drug, medication or food supplement in a way not prescribed by the manufacturer should not be authorized or encouraged by school personnel and coaches. Even natural substances in unnatural amounts may have short-term or long-term negative health effects.

“In order to minimize health and safety risks to student-athletes, maintain ethical standards and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend or permit the use of any drug, medication or food supplement solely for performance-enhancing purposes.”

## LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

### Recognition

Coaches, athletic trainers, athletes, administrators and contest officials shall be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately two to three miles, ANYTIME that lightning can be seen or heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:

- **Monitor Weather Patterns** – Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity.
- **National Weather Service** – Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area, and everyone should take proper precautions. Any thunderstorm poses a risk of injury or death even if it does not meet the criteria for severe weather. Therefore, anytime thunderstorms are in the forecast (even if it is only a 20 percent chance), event organizers shall be at a heightened level of awareness to the potential danger of lightning.

### Management

- **Evacuation** – If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
- **Thirty-minute rule** – Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. **Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.**

**MEDIA REGULATIONS**

The Ohio High School Athletic Association develops the regulations for media coverage of all OHSAA tournament contests. Some policies shall also be in effect for regular season contests. General media regulations shall be approved annually by the Board of Directors and published separately from the *OHSAA Handbook*.

**A. Videotape Regulations****Section 1. — Regular Season Contests**

- a. It is permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape or photograph regular season contests in which the school team is participating, but such videotapes or photographs may not be used for coaching purposes until after the contest is completed.
- b. It is not permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape or photograph regular season contests of other school teams without the written consent of all schools participating in the contest(s).

**Section 2. — OHSAA Tournament Contests****Videotaping by Participating Schools**

- a. Videotaping OHSAA tournament contests by one or more schools participating in the contest is permitted provided prior arrangements are made with the tournament manager, and it is done at the expense of the school involved. A maximum of one individual per school is permitted to videotape.
- b. It is not permissible for a school or a school representative to videotape tournament contests of other school teams without the written consent of all schools participating in the contest(s).

**Videotaping and Photographing by Spectators**

- a. Spectators taking videos or photos at OHSAA tournament contests shall not interfere with the view of a contest by other spectators, nor will spectators or their equipment take additional space in seats that have been purchased. No spectators shall be provided “media” access to videotape or photograph an event, nor will spectators and/or their equipment be permitted in any playing area. In addition, no sources of power will be provided for spectators’ video or photo equipment.
- b. All photographs and videos taken by spectators at OHSAA tournament contests are for personal use ONLY. The use of photographs or videos for commercial, scouting or coaching purposes is strictly prohibited. Videotaping of one’s next opponent is strictly prohibited regardless of the personal use/purpose of the taping.
- c. The tournament site accepts no liability for damage or theft of spectator equipment or injury as a result of privately owned equipment.
- d. The OHSAA reserves the right to remove violators of these policies from a tournament contest, invoke additional penalties and seek maximum legal recourse.

**B. Coaches’ Comments to the News Media**

OHSAA Bylaw 8, Section 2, reads in part, “Great care shall be exercised in the selection of officials, well in advance of the contest and agreed upon by schools involved. When the contest begins each school waives all of its rights so far as objecting to the officials.” Public criticism of officials is a direct reflection upon those who were responsible for assigning the officials to the game. Officials are trained and expected to make no derogatory comments regarding the players, coaches, or schools. Coaches are expected to follow the same procedure. Failure to follow this request will result in penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.