

# OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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**To: Media and Football Tournament Contest Press Box Managers**  
**From: Tim Stried, OHSAA Director of Information Services**  
**Re: Space in Press Boxes**

During the regional and state semifinal rounds of the OHSAA football tournaments, game managers and media coordinators are often faced with the challenge of handling more media credential requests than their stadium press box can accommodate. The following set of criteria has been established by the OHSAA to assist game managers and media coordinators, who determine press box access.

Top priority in establishing space in the press box is set in the following manner. It is expected that these first four groups will be given two seats each, if requested.

1. SportsTime Ohio – the OHSAA’s official television partner (if game is selected by STO)
2. The state’s major metropolitan daily newspapers
3. The primary hometown newspaper of both participating teams
4. The primary hometown over-the-air radio station of both participating teams
5. Time Warner Cable TV affiliates and other tape-delayed TV play-by-play telecasts

Secondary priority for granting press box access for media is set as:

6. Additional over-the-air radio stations that have followed a participating team
7. Other newspapers, including those that typically cover events at the stadium
8. Internet play-by-play webcasts (live audio or delayed video)
9. All other media, such as specialty publications, non-broadcast websites, etc.

If the number of media requests exceeds the number of seats available, game managers and their appointed media coordinators should consult with the athletic directors of the participating schools to assist with determining which newspapers and broadcast media should have priority seating.

Game managers and media coordinators shall also take into consideration the order in which the media requests were received. Late requests may receive reduced access.

All college coaches who attend OHSAA tournament contest must purchase a ticket. Game managers have the authority to grant sideline access to college coaches, as well as press box space if there are open seats. At the state championship games, press box access for college coaches shall be determined solely by the OHSAA’s football administrator and the Director of Information Services, who handles media credentials and press box seating assignments.

Media members should be given at least 90 minutes after the game to conclude their work. Media coordinators should ensure that all facility personnel are aware of this.

It is expected that media members will have access to wireless internet access or other means of connectivity to submit their work back to their media outlet.

# Highlights of 2011-12 OHSAA General Media Regulations

- Paying rights fees does not give stations and companies “additional” rights, such as determining kickoff time, having extra seats, etc.. Rights fees are used to help offset tournament expenses.
- All expenses by broadcasters (including telephone line installations, if necessary) shall be handled by the broadcasting entity, **NOT your site or the OHSAA**. If you have phone lines available for media use, you may require them to use an 800 number or have the station call the broadcast crew or have them use a credit card to make the call. If you have just one phone line, it should not be used by a station or web site doing a game broadcast.
- **If your press box cannot accommodate all the media requests**, contact the competing schools’ athletic administrators to help determine which media should be placed outside the press box. A form has been included for schools to fill out to assist you with “expected” media who may cover the game.
- Radio, television and webcast companies that originate broadcasts shall be **limited to two seats** for play-by-play talent. A third seat may be available if space permits but is never guaranteed.
- Newspapers and web sites not originating broadcasts shall be limited to two credentials for reporters and two for photographers unless space at your facility is not a problem. Attempts should be made to be flexible, especially when a major daily newspaper chooses to send two reporters and a columnist to cover a contest, but if space is an issue, you can assign certain media to sit outside the press box. If a writer wants to work from the sideline (same as a photographer), that is permitted.
- Credentials or tickets for spouses, children, friends, etc., will not be provided, and those who attend an event with a media member will be required to purchase a ticket.
- Media members should be provided with programs, rosters and statistics whenever possible. Priority should be given to broadcasters who are still on the air and other media outlets on deadline.
- **Priorities in issuing media credentials shall be based on:**
  1. Outlets that have followed the participating schools regularly.
  2. Circulation size, market size and market penetration.
  3. Space availability.
  4. Previous coverage of OHSAA tournaments.
  5. The date of receipt of the request.
- **Priorities in granting seats in the press box shall be given to:**
  1. Statewide media.
  2. Media covering their hometown school.
  3. Media covering the site of the host facility.
  4. All others.

**Notes: In general, traditional media outlets (newspapers and radio stations) should be given press box space before internet sites and specialty publications. In addition, please accommodate the major daily newspapers in Ohio even if they have not provided much coverage of the participating teams during the regular-season due to the number of teams in their coverage area.** Note that TV sportscasters are typically not given a press box seat.

- Credentials shall **NOT** be issued to representatives from **recruiting or scouting services** and credentials for monthly or other specialty outlets will be granted only as space allows. **College coaches must purchase a ticket and their placement shall be determined by the game manager.**
- One student photographer credential may be provided for each school. School advisors/administrators must submit a written request to the tournament manager. **Student photographers must purchase a ticket** for each tournament contest prior to being issued a photography credential.
- **Freelance photographers** who are affiliated with one of the participating teams (confirm with the athletic director, if needed) may receive a credential to regional or state semifinal contests, but they may not request public address announcements be made, pass out flyers or set up a display table.

Photographers shall be placed in positions in accordance with NFHS national playing rules, which is two or more yards from the sidelines and end zones. Photographers may not shoot within the team boxes between the 25 yard lines.