

Administrating Soccer

Communication is a key in the successful administration of any of our sports. I encourage you to ask questions or seek assistance, but *please* consult with your Athletic Administrator FIRST. With the extremely high volume of calls and emails, it truly is the most efficient way for us to meet the needs of our schools. Additionally, nearly all informational items can be found on the web at www.ohsaa.org and navigating to the 'Boys or Girls Soccer' site. *Please* take the time to review the materials provided. At the beginning and the conclusion of the season we receive such a high volume of calls from sub-varsity coaches and "club" coaches. We encourage YOUR communication with them to help us operate as efficiently as possible. As with last season, I will be posting "Ohio Soccer Weekly" to address current issues and reminders for coaches. I continually update the "Off-Season Q and A's" to address the number of questions involving off-season regulations; all with the idea of HELPING coaches.



Coaches are reminded that every coach that coaches school soccer is responsible for understanding and knowing the regulations affecting them and their sport. Since this manual is done in concert with the State Rules Interpretation Meetings, it is encouraged that ALL coaches attend. We have put meetings online (see later in this manual) to make it more convenient for coaches to be aware of the regulations that affect them AND the eligibility of their athletes. Ignorance of the rule is no defense for consequences that occur as a result of rule/regulation violations.

Officials are reminded that school administration is responsible for administrating the various OHSAA Regulations (follow-up on ejections, game and match limitations, crowd control, etc. The official's jurisdiction lies within the enforcement of the NFHS Playing rules. Though attendance at Soccer contests is not required by OHSAA Bylaws, most school have administrative oversight simply to prevent issues from occurring. No doubt there are many areas that overlap such as inclement weather issues but we continue to strive to improve our communication with administrators AND coaches to help them with game management.

What Can Coaches Do Between August 1 and August 6?

This may be one of the most misunderstood 'regulations' that exists in Ohio High School Soccer. The period of time from August 1 to the **start of practice on August 6** obviously falls outside the June 1 – July 31 window in which coaches are permitted to instruct players from their own school for a total of 10 days (per staff). So, the period of time from August 1 – August 6 falls into the same category as any other time OUTSIDE THE SEASON OF PLAY. So what can you do? The same thing you can do any other time outside the season of play (except during June and July). You can have Physical Conditioning. You can have "Open Field". You can have Weight Lifting. You **cannot** instruct. You **cannot** conduct Physical Conditioning and/or Open Field under a *disguise* to start practice early. OHSAA Regulations even exist to prevent this from happening based upon the definitions of "Physical Training" and "Open Gym/Facilities". August 1 – August 6 is NOT a 'dead period' or a no-contact period'. But, I emphasize again...you cannot COACH and INSTRUCT during this time.

To **BEST** understand this, it is best to look at the different periods of time throughout the year: I will categorize those periods this way:

- During the Season
- No Contact Period
- Outside the Season (except during June/July)
- June and July

Where do "Camps" fit in the Regulations during August 1 – August 6?

Many 'team camps' exist out of state during early August. Attending these **during the August 1 – August 6 period (2012) would be a violation of the OHSAA's Sports Regulations**. Camps that offer **INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION** are permitted anytime outside the season of play and those WOULD be legal, however, these team camps typically do not offer strictly individual instruction. Keeping in mind that "individual instruction" is defined as nothing more than '1 vs 1'.

During the Season

This is probably the easiest to understand (and certainly EXPLAIN on my part). You and all Board approved coaches may COACH your team. Coach them up! A few common Q and A's here:

Q: When can we begin practice?

A: Monday, August 6, 2012

Q: Though practice does begin on August 6, when are we permitted to have TRYOUTS?

A: Tryouts and practice are 'one in the same'...and you may begin those on Monday, August 6, 2012 also.

Q: How many days do I have to give before making 'cuts' or 'team selections'?

A: The OHSAA does not regulate this. But, common sense is always urged and I STRONGLY recommend you ask this question to your Athletic Director prior to making any 'cuts' or team selections (JV-A, JV-B, etc.)

Q: Can we practice on Sunday?

A: That is entirely up to your school. The OHSAA has no restriction prohibiting Sunday practice, like many regulations, we leave it up to the individual school district.

Q: Can kids from a middle school travel team practice or train with us?

A: No. OHSAA Regulations do not permit 7-8 graders to practice or train with 9-12 graders anytime during the defined soccer season.

Q: Can we practice along with a neighboring school?

A: You may, but it must count as a scrimmage. Anytime two different schools practice together, it must be counted as a scrimmage.

Q: Can I, as the school coach, coach a travel team during my school season?

A: Yes. There are no regulations that prohibit this. I always remind coaches doing this they are NOT exempt from any "Recruiting Bylaws" within the OHSAA's Bylaws.

Q: During the season, a player is invited by a college to 'workout' for them to determine if they might get athletic grant-in-aid money. Is this permissible for the player?

A: **NO**. This is a growing concern and any participation violates the Non-Interscholastic Regulations and will result in **ineligibility** for the player.

Q: There continues to be a reference to "non-interscholastic" soccer. What is considered 'non-interscholastic' soccer?

A: **ANYTHING** that is not the school sponsored team. This includes but is not limited to 'club', 'travel', 'Rec.', collegiate tryouts/workouts, and includes any training, practicing, competing or even 'trying out'.

Q: Does a volunteer helping just 1 day a week have to have a Pupil Activity Permit?

A: YES. Ohio Administrative Code requires ALL coaches, whether paid OR volunteer, to possess the "PAP" before doing any coaching.

The “No Contact” Period

*The No-Contact period for soccer runs from the end of each team's last contest for 28 consecutive days. The No-Contact period is designed to provide student-athletes an opportunity to participate in winter sports without undue influence to start training right away for the next soccer season. ALL team sports have a 28 day no-contact period at the end of their sports. Currently there are several sports that have a **second** no-contact period for 28 days prior to Labor Day to protect FALL sports. A few common Q and A's regarding this period of time:*

Q: Can players meet to turn in equipment and be provided an evaluation of the previous season?

A: Yes. That is permitted as long as it is done during the equipment turn-in time. You can provide them information for your season-ending awards program, etc.

Q: Can players attend Awards Banquets during this time?

A: Yes.

Q: Are players permitted to meet regarding college plans or with a college recruiter that may come?

A: Yes.

Q: Can players 'weight lift' in the school's weight room during the no-contact period?

A: Yes, but the supervision cannot be from a Board approved Soccer Coach. Your weight room must be supervised by another individual other than a board approved soccer coach. Many schools have supplemental contracts for a separate strength coach for this very reason.

Q: Does the No-Contact Period apply to someone that was just a volunteer on my staff?

A: Yes. All coaches, whether paid or volunteer must be approved by your board of education, must have a ODE issued Pupil Activity Permit and are under all regulations of the OHSAA just as the paid coaches are.

Outside the Season

*This period of time has some of the complexities that coaches often WANT to interpret in their own way. During this time, there are limitations currently defined in the OHSAA's Sports Regulations. It is important to keep in mind that while many coaches want to develop their teams during the off-season, the OHSAA's mission is not to permit year-round coaching. The age old argument of 'that is the only way these kids will get to the next level (college scholarships), is NOT the mission of the OHSAA. While many strive for that college scholarship and to play professionally, the facts remain that nearly 98% of the 350,000 student-athletes in Ohio will **not** continue their athletic careers at 'the next level'. OHSAA Regulations are built with this in mind. And, it is important to note that ALL regulations of the OHSAA are voted upon and approved by the member schools and/or those elected (the OHSAA Board of Directors) by the member schools with this mission in mind.*

Q: Can I coach athletes from my school's team in the off-season?

A: No. Current regulations prohibit you from coaching individuals from your school in TEAM or INDIVIDUAL instruction anytime outside the season of play (except of course during June and July).

Q: Can I coach athletes from other schools in the off-season?

A: Yes. There is no regulation that would prohibit you from coaching athletes at any level from another school. In fact, we would encourage it.

Q: How many players from our school are permitted to be on the same NON-school team (such as club or travel)?

A: No more than 5 players that played for the 9-12 school team(s) are permitted to be on the same NON-school team anytime outside the season of play except during June and July.

Q: When are players from our school team permitted to play for their 'club' or 'travel' team (non-interscholastic team)?

A: As soon as their season is complete.

Q: If a player is a JV player only, do they have to wait until the Varsity team is out of the OHSAA Tournament before playing in club or travel soccer?

A: No, however, once a player DOES play in club or travel soccer (non-interscholastic), they are not eligible to dress or compete on the tournament roster.

Q: Are players from our school team permitted to play "Futsal" in excess of the 50% limitation?

A: Yes. Since Futsal is played on a 'unique' surface AND a different ball is used, it does not fall under normal OHSAA Soccer Regulations.

Q: If players are permitted to play Futsal outside the season of play in excess of the 50% limitation, does that mean I can coach my own players in Futsal?

A: No. It is still not permissible to coach players that played on your own school team the previous season (except graduating seniors).

During June and July

Years ago, the OHSAA 'listened' to coaches requests to be able to spend time out of the season of play with their teams. Hearing this, the OHSAA's Board of Directors approved a regulation that would permit coaches from schools to do this (now identified in Sports Regulation 6.9) but contains the following restrictions:

- *All instruction, whether TEAM or INDIVIDUAL must occur between June 1 and July 31*
- *All members of a coaching staff are limited to 10 total days of instruction (team OR individual) per staff*
- *No instruction (team or individual) is permitted to be mandatory*
- *Any part of a day is counted as a day*
- *No activity that occurs during this time is considered an OHSAA event; it is considered Non-Interscholastic*

Q: Does each of our coaches have 10 days? In other words, if I have 3 coaches, does that mean we have 30 days total to coach?

A: No. The regulation clearly states that all combined coaches get a total of 10 days per staff.

Q: Is an incoming freshman permitted to compete along with any of our 9-12 graders in a summer tournament?

A: Yes. Any 'event' you participate in during the summer is not considered an 'inter-scholastic' event and therefore is not regulated by any OHSAA Regulations. The regulation prohibiting 7-8 graders from participating with 9-12 graders is only during the season of play.

Q: Is a player from another school permitted to play with 'our school team' during June and July?

A: Yes, we do not consider anything in the summer (or anytime out of season) as an OHSAA sponsored school event, so there are no restrictions on 'who' plays for a team during this time.