

PHOTOGRAPHY REGULATIONS

The Ohio High School Athletic Association has developed the following policies to serve photographers, contest managers and officials during preseason, regular-season and OHSAA tournament contests.

SPORT-SPECIFIC NOTES

Golf

Photographers are not permitted to take photos while a player is addressing his/her ball and during his/her swing unless the photographer is at such a distance away from the player that no audible noise can be heard by the player. No flash photography is permitted during the swing (see below).

Basketball, Bowling, Diving, Gymnastics, Swimming and Volleyball

See flash photography notes below.

Baseball, Cross Country, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field and Wrestling

No restrictions other than positioning.

FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY

Note that flash photography – which includes both strobe lights and flashes mounted to cameras – is permitted anywhere except in the following situations:

Basketball

Not permitted in the free throw lane area along the baseline.

Bowling

Not permitted at any time during competition, including warm-ups.

Diving

Not permitted at any time during competition, including warm-ups.

Golf

Not permitted during the swing.

Gymnastics

Not permitted at any time during competition, including warm-ups.

Swimming

Not permitted immediately before the start of a race so as to not interfere with the starter's signal.

Volleyball

Not permitted at any time during OHSAA tournament contests. Permitted during regular-season contests only in gymnasiums that do not meet the minimum lighting standards of 1600 ASA (film speed) at 500th of a second at an aperture of f2.8. If those lighting conditions apply, flash photography may be used, but not when a student-athlete is serving.

PHOTOGRAPHY REGULATIONS, CONT.

POSITIONING

Photographers shall respect and adhere to the media boundaries established by each sport's official rule book.

In baseball and softball, a "dead ball" area inside the field of play may be designated for photographers by the contest manager (typically with a white chalk line), but the umpire has the authority to disallow use of that area. In the sports of bowling, track & field and swimming, contest officials have additional authority to decide where photographers may position themselves based on the layout of the facility or competition area.

In addition to the flash photography regulation in basketball, photographers may not position themselves directly under the rim.

PHOTO SALES

Newspapers, radio stations and television stations may sell photos from any OHSAA tournament contest.

School officials have the authority to permit or deny freelance photographers and parents from having sideline access at their athletic contests. Access is never guaranteed, and school officials have the authority to decide who is granted sideline access.

School officials also have the authority to permit or deny the sale of photos from regular-season contests. Freelance photographers may also sell photos from OHSAA sectional, district and regional tournament games (and state semifinal games in the sports of football and soccer) as long as they are affiliated with a specific school and can produce a written or on-site verbal show of support from that school's athletic director.

At OHSAA tournament contests, photographers may not set up booths/tables, distribute flyers or request that public address announcements be read that advertise their services.

Freelance photographers who are not affiliated with a bona fide media outlet, which includes school photographers and parents, will not be credentialed for state tournament contests. Photos taken from spectator viewing area at state tournament contests are for personal use only and may not be sold.

In the future, the OHSAA may initiate a system to register freelance photographers for the purposes of obtaining an annual rights fee in exchange for permitting photo sales at OHSAA tournament contests.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHERS

One student photographer per school can be credentialed for state tournament contests in the sports of field hockey, volleyball, soccer, football, wrestling, ice hockey, basketball, baseball and softball, but photos taken by students at those state tournament contests are to be used only for school publications (i.e. newspaper, yearbook, website) and may not be sold or given away.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

THE OHSAA'S GUIDE FOR COACHES, STUDENT-ATHLETES, ADMINISTRATORS AND TOURNAMENT MANAGERS



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THE VALUE OF WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Positive exposure in the news media is not simply a by-product of having a winning program. It is often the result of preparation, good communication and providing the media with the information they need to do their jobs.

That is true in any sport, any time of year, regular-season or tournament, win or lose.

When an interscholastic athletic program or tournament site has positive relationships with the media, the value is immeasurable, both in terms of “positive press” and building relationships with the media that could last for years. It also plays an integral role in influencing public opinion.

Professional teams, colleges and university athletic programs and various conferences spend large sums of money to publicize their particular teams or sport. Ohio is blessed to not only have a rich tradition of successful and talented interscholastic athletic programs, but also a large media following.

While media coverage continues to evolve, it has not changed the need for coaches and tournament site administrators to know the basics of working with the media and strive to create positive working relationships for the benefit of all.

BE ORGANIZED – PLAN AHEAD

The first step to an effective program in working with the media is the same first step necessary in having an effective athletic program – organization.

Too often, working with the media is a hit-and-miss proposition. Some coaches do a great job and understand what is needed, while others don’t deal with the media unless they have to. As a result, some schools receive excellent coverage and others very little, regardless of the won-loss record.

The best thing coaches can do is organize their approach. Designate one person whose responsibility it is to telephone in results after contests. Every time a game is played, that person should contact the appropriate media. Develop a list of those media outlets you work with regularly.

The single most important rule in media relations is to “be consistent.” Win or lose, home or away, contact must be made regularly. This will do more than anything else to help establish a working rapport with the media, which will pay off for your school or tournament site in the long run.

This means not waiting until a favor is needed from the media or a great story needs told. Regular communication will often lead to that.

TIPS ON EFFECTIVE MEDIA RELATIONS

Just as there are tried-and-true techniques which are effective in coaching, so are there some fundamentals about working with the media in all areas.

Cooperation and a positive attitude are the cornerstones of developing relationships with the media and getting good exposure for athletic programs and tournament sites. That means more than just being cordial when a reporter calls or being ready to do an interview. Being prompt, following through on scheduled interview times, providing statistics or access to student-athletes go a long

way to having a positive relationship with the media. That should result in cooperation from the media when help is needed for such things as making public announcements or getting exposure for a good story.

Media Needs

Understanding deadlines and specific needs of the media, based on whom they represent, will go a long way toward creating good cooperation.

Availability

Eliminate some problems and interruptions by simply letting media personnel know when you’re available. Perhaps it’s prior to homeroom, during a planning period, or just before practice. Most reporters will at least try to funnel their calls to you when they know you can get to the phone.

Mailings and School Web Sites

When schedules are finalized, send a copy to your local media or let them know it is posted on your school web site. Rosters, including positions and jersey numbers, should be mailed or posted on your web site. Statistics can be a tremendous help. If you keep stats for your team, sending them to the local media or posting them on the school’s web site can cut down on the number of requests to receive that information.

Banquets

It is often a positive gesture to invite media to postseason awards banquets and recognize them if they come. Often times, a positive story comes out of it. After a banquet, it is helpful to send out a list of award winners to those media members who were not in attendance.

Photo/Media Days

These provide the opportunity for the media to take pictures of your players and team for future publicity. Coaches could consider devoting an early season practice session to photographers and arrange to have players in game uniforms. Devote additional time for media members to conduct preseason interviews with coaching staffs and players.

Consistency in Results Reporting

Coaches and tournament managers should not contact the media only when “their team” wins or wait until the next day. Nothing can damage your program and its credibility with the media any more than this. Your media list should be contacted regardless of a win or loss as soon as possible after the contest, and complete information is necessary (first and last names, updated won-loss records, etc.)

Consistency in Sports

Coaches and tournament managers should be consistent among sports, too. When schedules for football are distributed, don’t forget all the other fall sports programs.

Advance Notice Helps

When possible, give reporters as much advance notice about events. And be sure to call when there are rainouts, postponements and cancellations.

Negative News

Sometimes there will be negative news about an athletic program. Deception, denial or dishonesty will never help ease negative news, and it is much better to deal with it right away because it will pass. Never say “no comment” since the worst response is often no response. In addition, assume that everything you say will be quoted. At no time is any statement “off the record.”

EXPECTATIONS FOR TOURNAMENT MANAGERS AND REPORTING OF RESULTS

1. Be available during the week via telephone and e-mail to correspond with media regarding credential requests, their specific needs, parking information, your specific policies, etc.
2. Establish a “press row” for media members as well as an overflow area if press row is full.
3. Assign seats if needed, giving priority to those media that have followed a team for the majority of their season and larger regional or statewide media outlets. Two seats per media outlet are expected unless space permits additional seating.
4. Be sure that electrical outlets are available for the media and set out power strips, if needed.
5. Explain to media if wireless internet access is available. A complimentary phone line should be available near the field for media use as well.
6. Provide media with programs, rosters, statistics, etc., and any other information you have been able to assemble prior to the game. Please make efforts to have this kind of information available to the media (and at no charge), although information such as statistics is not always available.
7. Explain to photographers shooting locations, including any “dead ball” areas inside the playing field fence that have been agreed to by the umpires.
8. Explain postgame interview procedures to coaches and media before the game.

POSTGAME RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Ensure that interviews take place per the procedures you explained prior to the game.
2. Allow media members a minimum of **90 minutes** after the game to work at press row.
3. If inclement weather is an issue and you have an indoor space available for media to work, explain where it is located and any important details associated with that space.

REPORTING OF RESULTS

For bracketed tournaments, contest managers are required to enter final scores into the myOHSAA system so that the brackets can be automatically updated. Contact the OHSAA for myOHSAA login information and instructions well in advance of hosting a tournament contest.

In addition, it is **imperative** that you contact both the Associated Press and the OHSAA with results **as soon as possible** following your regional games. Here is the contact information:

- AP by phone* 1-800-300-8340
- AP by fax 1-800-832-0338
- AP by e-mail apscores@ap.org (indicate 'Ohio' and sport and your region)
- OHSAA by phone 614-267-2502, ext. 124
- OHSAA by fax 614-267-1677
- OHSAA by e-mail* webmaster@ohsaa.org
tsried@ohsaa.org
bmurray@ohsaa.org
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* Indicates preferred methods