

To: All Head Softball Coaches
From: Jerry Snodgrass, Assistant Commissioner/Baseball/Softball Administrator
Lauren Prochaska, Program Coordinator
Re: Coaches Memo 1 – March 28, 2016

Though the word will be slow to get to everyone, a recent decision to restructure some of the sport administration at the OHSAA will now find Lauren Prochaska, OHSAA Program Coordinator and Jerry Snodgrass, Assistant Commissioner administering the sport of softball. As you know, Roxanne Price has served in this role the past several years. The change is occurring as we enter the first full week of the season so we are asking your patience as we make this rather abrupt transition. Our tasks will include handling all the administrative duties as well as organizing and conducting the OHSAA Tournament. Our goal is to do as we do in baseball – provide 'weekly' (there may be a few gaps here and there) memos to coaches that are sent directly to their email addresses listed in the school's myOHSAA account. These memos will also be posted the following day on the Softball webpage at www.ohsaa.org

Other Important Resources

As we do with baseball you will soon find a link on the Softball webpage (<http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/sb/girls/default.asp>) that will take you to some helpful topics. The link will be titled "Inside OHSAA Softball". Lauren has put these together on various topics that we often receive the most questions on. They are written from a common sense point of view and you should find them extremely helpful. These should be posted in the next day or two.

The OHSAA's Non-Interscholastic Rule

You will hear it from us repeatedly. Violations of the OHSAA's Non-Interscholastic Rule are the number 1 violation we see day in and day out. So here it is: Once players are members of a school softball team, they are not permitted to tryout, workout, practice, or compete with any NON-school (travel, club, etc.) program of the same sport. Violating this regulation results in immediate ineligibility by the player. The danger of course is extended in the event an ineligible player participates in a contest for the school. If that would occur, any victorious contest would require forfeiture. So, time and time again, we are going to ask and remind coaches to PLEASE remind your players of this each and every week.

College Workouts - Important

This is a major thing – many Div. II, III and NAIA schools often invite HS players to their campus and ask them to workout for them. The OHSAA considers these college workouts as "non-interscholastic" events. This also means that players must comply with the non-interscholastic rule **while being a member of the school team**. In other words, players are not permitted to tryout, WORKOUT, practice or compete with any non-school baseball team/organization **while being a member of the school baseball team**. Here's the key though – a player for your team does not become a member of the school team until she participates in her first scrimmage or game for the school. So, if you have not had a scrimmage or a game – that player does not violate that non-interscholastic rule by going to a college workout. Most people just assume that once practice started on Feb. 22 that they are members of the school team. But, by our definition, they are not until they play in their first scrimmage or game. The more you know....

3 Hour Scrimmage Limitation – Practicing with Other Teams

OHSAA regulations permit scrimmages to be no longer than 3 hours. This limitation is for actual field/game time. In other words, if you have a 3 way scrimmage and you are sitting out a few innings while the other 2 teams are scrimmaging, that time does not count toward your 3 hours. I don't think anyone would exceed that amount of time but it is written that way to permit 'tri-scrimmages' and multi-team scrimmages. And speaking of Scrimmages – teams are wanting to 'practice with/against' other teams (from other schools). By our definition, any **practice** with another school also counts as a scrimmage. And remember, you may use a scrimmage ANY time throughout the season, including during tournament time. A scrimmage simply must be a scrimmage for both schools involved. Many will hold a scrimmage until tournament time.

The "Minimum Temp"

I receive many emails following a cold evening on 'what the minimum temperature is' to play a game. That is impossible for us to ascertain. If we required it to be 40 degrees, we would have no way of monitoring that temp from this office. Likewise, though we hear of some leagues that have a policy on it – it still becomes difficult for one school to accurately provide a temperature to the other school. Common sense has to prevail between coaches. Call ahead.

Player Limitation Reminders

Last year, at the request and cooperation with the baseball and softball coaches' associations, baseball and softball regulations addressing individual playing limitations was expanded to permit an individual player to participate **in contests on 32 dates**. That means of course that a DH would count as **one date** in this regulation. Any adjustment we have made through the years is to help maintain schedules of JV teams, etc. with limited numbers on rosters. Just make sure you DO keep track. Any player that would exceed this number would immediately become INELIGIBLE. And, use of an ineligible player results in forfeiture of any winning contest.

Academic Eligibility

This always presents a little challenge for baseball/softball coaches with most grading periods ending right about the start of the regular season. Players that are currently ineligible remain ineligible until *the fifth scheduled school day following the official end of the grading period*. You can see that if spring break follows the end of your grading period, that player will remain ineligible until the 5th day when you return. Likewise, any athletes that are eligible *remain eligible* for that same period of time if they happen to have the misfortune of becoming ineligible. The bottom line – make sure you are checking with your Athletic Director to insure you are not using an ineligible player during any of your games. Use of an ineligible player in a victorious contest results in forfeiture.