

"TWIB" . . . This Week in Baseball



Weekly News and Information
The Ohio High School Athletic Association

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This is the last of this season's "TWIB's" and it has been one of the most interesting seasons I recall in 34 years of education. I hope this weekly posting has been a benefit to you and serves the purpose of improving communication with coaches. There are many references to off-season regulations in this issue, as well as a look ahead to changes for 2012. I encourage you to go to the different links referenced as further help with common Q & A's. I continue to encourage you to send questions my way for future use. I also hope you are able to take in a day of games at this year's State Championships at one of the best baseball parks in America; Huntington Park. Each year has set new attendance records and an \$8.00 ticket for 4 games in a day is a great bargain.

Jerry Snodgrass, Ass't. Commissioner

Looking Ahead to NEXT Season

First and foremost, we can only hope next spring finds a better weather scenario than this season. Patience was tested more than ever. No doubt high school baseball coaches may have had the most challenging job of any team sport in Ohio.

Each year, the OHSAA's Board of Directors passes **Baseball Sport Regulations** that determine the administrative rules governing baseball specifically; start dates, number of contests, etc. The OHSBCA represents the baseball coaches in Ohio and does a *great* job of promoting items that benefit baseball in general while also keeping the best interests of all schools in perspective. Annually, the OHSBCA makes recommendations for changes to these regulations. Often times, since I administrate the sport for member schools, I will often make recommendations to the Board to change/alter regulations for the same reasons, as well as to better and more efficiently administrate baseball on a state-wide basis. The OHSAA's Board has approved the following **changes** for the 2011-12 school year/baseball season:

Change in START DATE for Practice!

As all coaches know, there has been a staggered start date with Pitchers/catchers beginning 2 weeks before everyone else. Effective the 2012 baseball season, **the start date for practice will be the SAME for all players.** This start date will be on the start date previously given for pitchers/catchers. There will no longer be a staggered start for baseball practice. That start date for 2012 is: **2/20/2012.**

"50%" Limitation Ends Earlier Next Year

Sports Regulation 4.5 limits non-school teams to **4** players from the same school outside the season of play **except** during June & July. Effective 2012, this exception will actually be extended to the **Friday prior to Memorial Day.** With the number of Memorial Day tournaments, this will teams comprised of any number of players from any one school to play without penalty. Again, this begins in 2012.

Game Start Date moved to Allow Additional Saturday

This was passed previously by the board at a recommendation of the OHSBCA. This will now permit games to be played beginning **Saturday, March 24, 2012** freeing up another possible Saturday for doubleheaders.

Future Scheduling Note

In 2013 and 2014, the first game date falls **AFTER** Easter. This could have an impact on teams that normally take "spring trips" to non-bordering states if your spring break does not align with those various events. Current OHSAA regulations do not permit teams to miss school for travel or competition to non-bordering states. Keep this in mind for future scheduling.

Off-Season Regulations Made Easy!

The off-season regulations create more questions than just about any other topic for school baseball coaches. In a nutshell, here are a few details regarding the various off-season regulations as well as a few "Q & A's" and other resources. Ultimately, players eligibility is affected by violations of off-season regulations so it is prudent to know these. They are also covered at each year's Rules Interp Meetings that are required of all high school head baseball coaches.

All School Coaches, Paid OR Volunteer MUST be approved by a Board of Ed.

Since this is the case, it explains that ALL COACHES are bound by the same regulations.

All Coaches are prohibited from coaching players from their own school anytime outside the season of play EXCEPT for 10 days during June and July.

That is right...the **ONLY** time a school coach (in any team sport!) can coach players from their own school is during 10 days permitted during June & July.

Q: Does that mean that EACH coach is permitted 10 days?

A: No. The regulation **clearly** states that the 10 days are permitted **per staff.**

Non-School Teams are limited to 4 players from any one school EXCEPT for June/July

A fundamental rule for off-season team sports limits non-school teams to a '50% of a school's starting lineup' on the off-season team's roster. In baseball, this means that any non-school team is limited to 4 total players from the same school. This limitation is NOT in effect during June and July. The 'danger area' is obviously during the month of May as well as increasingly popular "Fall Ball". YOU have the ability to communicate this with players AND protect their eligibility. This is referenced in the General Sports' Regulation 4.5 (see inset box below).

Q: My school has a "fall team" made up of 4 players that played for our JV team and 9 others that did not play. Can they do this?

A: Yes. The 50% limitation identifies only those that played for a school team the previous year.

Q: Do Junior High players fall under this regulation?

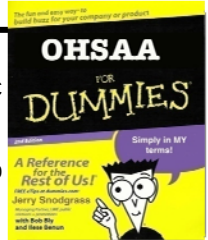
A: They do IF they play for the school sponsored Junior High teams.

Players may not try-out, practice OR play with non-school teams until their season is over

Another fundamental regulation strictly prohibits players from association with non-school teams during their season of play. This is clarified in Sports Regulation 4.3.

Q: Must JV players wait until the VARSITY season is complete to play for their summer team?

A: No. They can begin play with their summer team as soon as THEIR season is complete, however, they are ineligible to RETURN to dress/play for the Varsity at that point.



Resources for Off-Season Q & A's

General Sports Regulations: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/rqlls/GenSportsReg10-11.pdf>

Baseball Regulations: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/rqlls/BB10-11.pdf>

Off-Season Q & A's: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bb/boys/2010/BaseballSummerQuestions.pdf>

"Fall Ball" Q and A's: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bb/boys/2011/FallBaseballTWIB.pdf>

State-wide Tourney Brackets: <http://brackets.ohsaa.org/baseball/boys/tournament11/default.htm>

OHSBCA's SEI Winner to throw out First Pitch

Jeff Mielcarek, coach at Toledo Central Catholic, will throw out the ceremonial first pitch at the Division II State Championship game on Saturday, June 4 (4:00 p.m. start). Jeff was honored as the OHSBCA's "Sportsmanship, Ethics & Integrity Award" winner for 2011. Jeff was honored last year by throwing out the first pitch at a Cleveland Indians game.

Statistically Speaking

How Coaches Completed Rules Mtgs.

67% OHSBCA Clinic
17% Online
8% Face to Face
8% Other

How Umpires Completed Rules Mtgs.

84% Online
16% Interpreters Clinic

Would Coaches Favor the Competitive Balance Proposal

62% Yes
38% No
(This failed by vote of member schools)

Would you favor a 1 week "Shutdown" in the summer

63% Yes
37% No

Would you favor unlimited coaching days during summer

58% Yes
42% No

State-wide Survey Results from the May 11 "TWIB Survey"