

THIS WEEK IN BASEBALL



The Ohio High School Athletic Association

Issue #2 – April 24, 2013



It's been that kind of start in Ohio baseball, especially in the northern half of the state. Please make certain you are aware of lightning/inclement weather policies. I have included my first (of many) reminder about players and their participation with their summer teams. You will notice on the "TWIB" page there are documents posted to help coaches of summer/non-school teams and I reference this in detail throughout this week's posting. Best of luck as good weather DOES settle in and I hope you find the information helpful.

New Concussion Regulations

"What it Means to YOU"

As you probably know by now, Gov. Kasich signed House Bill 153 into law several weeks ago with provisions about Concussion management and recognition. This law affects both SCHOOL coaches and NON-SCHOOL coaches while also affecting umpires. Let me repeat...it affects YOU as a coach and it affects the thousands of 'summer', 'Travel', 'ACME', 'Babe Ruth' etc. coaches that coach non-school baseball. AND...it affects each and every umpire that works those games – even kids that umpire games in organized Rec. leagues (for example). So....

What this means to School Coaches

- The law indicates that all coaches in Ohio must possess a valid Pupil Activity Permit and upon renewal after April 26, 2013, they must complete one of 2 approved Concussion Education Courses.

-All student-athletes and parents must read and sign a document acknowledging their understanding of current concussion regulations.

-Any athlete removed for a suspected concussion is not permitted to return on the day of the removal.

-Return to play (not on the same day) by any athlete that has been removed for a suspected concussion may only do so upon being assessed by a physician (M.D./D.O.) or other licensed health care provider the board of education authorizes (in consultation with the physician). Written authorization must be provided to the school's administration.

Additionally, the law prohibits schools from hiring umpires that have not met the requirements of the law. Next year, all Umpires will need to show proof of one of the above requirements prior to obtaining their officiating license, but the period of time from April 26 until the end of the year poses some challenges. The OHSAA has asked all umpires to print the certificate of completion of their course (or a copy of their "PAP") and show to the administrator or coach prior to the start of the contest..

All Forms and detailed explanations are found on the OHSAA's Sports Medicine page at:

<http://www.ohsaa.org/medicine/Concussions/ConcussionRegulations.pdf>

Making Up/Completing Suspended Games

With this spring's weather, many games are suspended and to be picked up from the moment of suspension at a later date. In many cases, league schools complete the remaining inning(s) in the second scheduled game of the league – often at the other school's site. Just a reminder that completion of a suspended game prior to playing a regular scheduled game does NOT count as a doubleheader; meaning you ARE permitted to do this.

Check that Music Coach

We have volumes of music at our disposal on our phones today. Just about anything is downloadable. So...music between innings and in pre-game? All sounds good.....until. Just a note of advice for the unsuspecting coach – check that music first. Every year, every season I get calls about someone offended by inappropriate music that got on a school's PA system. Just check it first. And....download "Shazam" and "Soundhound", two great apps that not only allow you to identify a song immediately by listening but also will call up the lyrics. It is worth it!

Lightning & Inclement Weather Reminder

Though the weather has not been ideal for baseball, I have received more concerns regarding contests that have ignored mandatory NATIONAL rules relative to lightning and inclement weather.

Summer Team (Non-Interscholastic Team) Warning #1

Ok, the first of many cautions that I will mention. The most occurring violation by players during the season is a violation of the non-interscholastic regulations. Unfortunately, they often go unnoticed by coaches, yet it often ends up causing multiple forfeitures. In a nutshell, players are not permitted to tryout, practice OR play for their 'summer' team anytime during the season of play. Very few other sports have the non-school season in conflict with the school season like baseball does. And, since so many 'travel' teams are formed in the fall of the previous season, there is such a temptation for players to be involved while a member of the school team. So...warning number 1 – take 10 minutes at the start of practice and remind your players **not to tryout, practice OR play with their non-school team** while a member of YOUR team. An every-week reminder would not hurt.

Speaking of Non-School Teams.....

Now of course, the reality is there has been an explosion of non-school teams. Obviously in MOST cases, it is good for baseball and hopefully it is good for your program. Though my responsibility lies with school baseball coaches and programs there is a huge volume of calls and emails daily from the hundreds of non-school coaches (in all sports) that *usually* are asking for all the right reasons. With this in mind, I have a document posted for all the non-school coaches out there. Please feel free to take this and put it in the hands of any of those programs that you work with. It even includes information relative to newly enacted Concussion Legislation (that THEY must follow also!). You can access that directly at:

<http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bb/boys/2013/2013TWIBSummerBaseball.pdf>

Special Event Game?

From "Strike Out Cancer" to "Whiffing for the Cure", many teams are participating in Special Event games held for a specific cause. Though the uniform regulations for baseball are fairly permissive anyhow, a waiver can be provided to permit the sponsoring event's logo to be included on the uniform for the event. Simply go to this link (also on the "This Week in Baseball" webpage, download the request and email to me at jsnodgrass@ohsaa.org. The direct link can be reached at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bb/boys/2013/BBSpecialUniformRequest.doc>

NFHS Rules Survey

As you know, an important part of the "rules process" by the NFHS is to solicit input from coaches and umpires from all states. An email was sent out recently to all head coaches in Ohio with a link to this important survey. This serves as the basis for future rule changes and "Points of Emphasis". Please take the time to go in and provide responses to the NFHS' survey. The survey closes May 13. Speaking of these future rule changes, an upcoming "TWIB" will focus on the 'rule making process' through the NFHS. I think coaches will find this interesting.

And, Speaking of Rules – Please Take this Short Survey!

I have initiated discussion recently regarding the current OHSAA Baseball Sports Regulation that limits players to participation in 27 games for the season. Declining numbers in many schools has prompted several requests to look at an "Inning Limitation" instead of a "Game Limitation" for individual players. Please take a moment and answer 4 short questions regarding your views on this. You can use the following link to complete the short survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/XJF93ZH>

Player Contest Limitations

Despite my references above, current OHSAA baseball regulations limit each player to participation in 27 total games. Should a player have exceeded that, he is participating at that point as an ineligible player. And, use of an ineligible player results in forfeiture. Just a reminder.

*Jerry Snodgrass
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