

To: All Member School Athletic Directors
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Even though we are entering Regional Final play in football, most schools are beginning the basketball seasons this week. This just is an early winter season correspondence regarding several basketball administrative helpful reminders. Hopefully, some of this will help you as you enter those first home games.

As you may know, each Head Coach was required to complete the online Rules Interpretation meeting to be eligible for tournament (you can check this through your myOHSAA profile). Also, they are provided access to download the "Coaches Guide" that addresses many issues. You can download this to keep with you at games at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bk/bkmanual.pdf>. This "Coaches Guide" reviews not only the NFHS Rule Changes and Points of Emphasis, but also addresses many of the OHSAA's Sports Regulations and Bylaws affecting basketball. The many questions that are often presented to you are answered in this manual.

The NFHS continues to emphasize '*Sporting Behavior*'. A recent Point of Emphasis continues as a rule today that prohibits **teams from circling the floor OR running through the opponent's warm-up** when taking the floor for Pre-game. Additionally, any 'motivational huddles' should take place in front of their own team bench and **not at midcourt**. Lastly, if one team returns to the locker room during pre-game, which many often do, the other team is not permitted to use the entire court for warm-up. None of us want ejections but regardless of the circumstances, ejections are not appealable. When a coach receives his/her first "T", you might save a lot of paperwork and disagreement by trying to caution your coach from receiving the second one.

Athletic Directors are asked to pay special attention to authorized persons ONLY being on the floor. Spectators and those not having game responsibilities should NOT be on the floor or court area. As the number of Cheerleaders seems to increase year after year, they should be reminded also to keep the floor clear during the time a team is warming up. This happens more and more with the visiting team's warm-up area.

A few other important items:

Scoring Table Protocol & Floor Markings

We get growing concerns each year about comments or actions at the scorer's table. You may want to share this communication with your scorer's table personnel indicating they are similar to the officiating crew and part of game management. Cheering should not take place at the scorer's table. Please remember the **Striped Shirt for the Official Scorer** (home team scorer) is necessary.

This is a good time to remind Athletic Directors that the "X" as well as the "Coaching Box" should be taped down on the floor if it is not there permanently.

Court Set-Up, Buffer Zones.....

More and more schools place folding chairs on the floor in place of the front row of bleachers to serve as the team bench. A MINIMUM of 3 ft. of unobstructed space is required from the out-of-bounds line to any part of the team bench. As chairs replace the bleacher bench, the space is often slowly infringed upon.

Announcer Responsibilities/Introductions

This is an interesting point of emphasis from the NFHS with the continued goal of high school to NOT turn announcing into much of what professional basketball and other non-school sports have become. The goal of high school announcers is to NOT to be over-dramatic and incite the crowd – contrary to many people's belief.

"Listen to the Music"

May seem crazy for me to mention this but just about anyone that has been in an Athletic Director's role for any length of time has encountered something on the PA system used as warm-up music that is inappropriate. The player brings over a CD and says "can you play this?" You trust them...unfortunately, what student-athletes deem appropriate may not always be what adults deem appropriate. So I urge caution before you put that CD in and you have not listened to it. Download "Soundhound" or "Shazam" that will help you identify lyrics. You may be glad you did.

Non-Interscholastic "Warning"

Please...for the sake of all student-athletes in your school, take a moment and ask ALL your coaches to remind their athletes weekly NOT to participate in non-school sports of the same season. Basketball players cannot participate in "CYO", "Rec" basketball, etc. while a member of the school team. The more you remind them, the better everyone is protected from forfeitures of contests.

Rating Officials

I have reminded coaches on many occasions to rate their officials at the conclusion of games. Instructions are available through the link on the left side of our web page. FYI....Officials' Ratings are NOT VISIBLE to officials, so this dispels any belief that an Official can see how a coach rated them. They simply cannot.

Administrative Issues at Contests

A recent point of emphasis was (and remains) to keep the floor area clear of fans and others that do not belong on the play area. This is not meant to exclude any halftime shooting contests, etc., it is in reference to fans or other unauthorized individuals that simply do not belong on the floor. As the size of cheer squads increases, there appears to be growing concern with cheerleaders being on the floor during warm-ups, limiting warm-ups for opposing teams. Just an item to be conscious of prior to it becoming any sensitive issue.

Video Replay Boards

Also, there are more and more video-replay boards being put in gyms. Often times, students are running these boards. Though we do not have basketball specific regulations regarding these boards, please remember to provide instruction to not replay controversial calls on replay boards.

Use of Video Equipment

A radical departure from previous years now permits coaches (by NFHS Rule) to use video equipment on the bench area and at halftime in the locker room – a VERY radical departure from previous rules. I anticipate many coaches will want to utilize this as “video replay” to attempt to overturn calls or prove a call was wrong at the end of a contest that has a bearing on the result. However, though it can be used for coaching purposes, **it can never be used for any video replay or evidence of officials’ calls.**

Photography Regulations & Videotaping Regulations

This is often misunderstood since it differs from Volleyball in the fall. Flash photography IS PERMITTED at basketball games. However, it CANNOT occur in the lane line extended under the basket.

Also, many younger and newer coaches today are not aware of the videotaping regulations that prohibit the video taping of an opponent for scouting purposes. This is especially true with newer cameras on phones, iPads and the like. A reminder to your younger coaches may be a good idea.

“Rebounders’ Report” & Coach Communication Memos

Periodically throughout the season, I will post a “Rebounder’s Report” to communicate with coaches (and others) regarding current issues in basketball around Ohio. I hope this helps YOU as the Athletic Director and am always open to possible topics that need addressed. I have posted the first one at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bk/ReboundersReport/ReboundersReport.htm>

I encourage you (and coaches) to check the basketball webpage periodically throughout the season to read new postings. Also, periodically we have sent a “Coach Memo” to each of the Head boys’ and girls’ basketball coaches in the OHSAA data base. This is to directly help them with reminders and issues that surface. These are also posted on the “Rebounders Report” link listed above.

Contracted Games & Re-Scheduling of Games

A growing concern has been schools that do not honor contracts made in good faith. Contracts between 2 schools and the contests they represent are to be met unless mutual agreement has been made to alter them. When a game is postponed due to weather conditions...the game is to be made up, unless both parties agree NOT to make it up. Common sense allows schools to work out the best arrangement. However, when one party will not agree to a date (and the date is available), OHSAA Bylaws require the dispute to be settled by the Commissioner. They will be settled and most often not to the liking of the parties involved. More unresolved disputes have come to us in the past year than in the past 20 combined. When disputes have to be settled, we WILL require a game to be played. Should a team STILL not meet that obligation, financial penalties outlined within the contract will be enforced. If no financial penalty is written into the contract (you may want to double check those!), Bylaw 11 permits the Commissioner’s Office to implement them. In 99 out of 100 cases, schools solve their rescheduling issues. We’d love that to be 100 out of 100.

Ejections

Unfortunately, they occur. Should a player or coach be ejected from a contest, please keep in mind that you will receive an electronic report from the OHSAA that reflects the Official’s Report. Please keep in mind that if that report is not received by you, schools/coaches are required to follow all the protocols for an ejected player or coach regardless. Officials have their own penalty if they do not submit timely, but the ejection must be enforced. Also, relative to ejections – effective this year, and ejected player MAY sit on the bench, MAY travel to the game, and MAY be in the locker room. However, under no circumstances may they be in any uniform OR warm-up and they may not participate in any pre-game, halftime or post-game warm-up. Doing so will lengthen their suspension.

Shortened Contests – “2 Quarter Games”

More and more schools are dealing with a lack of numbers that surfaces most at the JV level. Though it is not permissible to schedule ‘2 quarter games’, a rule DOES exist in the NFHS Rules that permits a game to end by mutual agreement of coaches and officials. SO, though games cannot be scheduled as such...they can end by mutual agreement after the half if that is the intent of both coaches. Upon that mutual agreement by coaches and the officials it then is recorded as a complete game.

Halftime Events

A note about ‘Halftimes’: Halftimes are required to be 10:00 in length but may now be extended to 15:00 in length for “Special Events” **if the opponent coach/administration/officials are notified PRIOR TO THE GAME NIGHT.** This is explained in NFHS Rule 5-5-1.

“Special Event Games”

There are more and more ‘Special Events’ that utilize high school teams for attention to various causes. “Coaches vs Cancer”, The Kay Yow Foundation, etc., have a strong foothold in high school basketball. Though there can be uniform exceptions provided for this, basic *number*

requirements' on jerseys are not waived. A Pink Basketball is never permitted (none have the approved NFHS stamp on them). Should you wish to request a waiver (pink jerseys at home, pink headbands/wristbands, etc.) simply complete the waiver request on our website (directly at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bk/Special%20Event%20Request.pdf>)

In addition to all the responsibilities you have with other sports throughout the winter, I hope this helps in the early season transition to basketball season. I wish ALL Athletic Directors in Ohio a 'snow-free and ice-free' winter – despite how it has started! I know it will make your job a bit easier!