



# Ohio High School Athletic Association

Thursday, October 29, 2020

## *Administrator Update*

**TO:** Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators  
**FR:** OHSAA Executive Director's Office

Below are general updates and reminders to share related to our fall and winter sports seasons. Please disseminate this information to the appropriate personnel on your staff.

### **We're Almost There – Don't Let Your Guard Down!**

Back in July, the Executive Director's Office heard from countless administrators, coaches, participants and parents who echoed Lt. Governor Jon Husted's hashtag campaign of #IWantASeason. With the loss of many 2020 winter sports tournaments and the entire spring sports season, many believed that – despite the COVID-19 pandemic – our student-athletes needed the OHSAA more than ever and that there were major health, social and educational risks in keeping children away from their school and interscholastic athletics. The Governor's Office, with support from the Ohio Department of Health and the OHSAA Board of Directors and staff, permitted our programs to move forward because they believed that our education-based sports programs were suited to be the best advocates for safety, while promoting and following the mandates such as wearing facial coverings and staying socially distanced.

Since practices began on August 1, we now head down the home stretch of the fall seasons and, as was unfortunately predicted in the summer, the coronavirus numbers have spiked and shown no signs of slowing down. With state championships still to be determined in seven OHSAA sports – boys and girls cross country, field hockey, boys and girls soccer, volleyball and football – now is not the time to let our guards down. It's going to take all of us to be as vigilant as possible and follow all the Health Director's Sports Orders in order for our fall seasons to be completed. Please do your part and let's work together to ensure our student-athletes and their communities have the opportunity to experience the thrills and excitement of tournament competition until state champions are crowned!

### **Views from Week 9 of the Observer's Program; Tips for Helping Ensure the Mandates are Followed**

As the fall sports seasons continue, the OHSAA sent Observers to a combined 95 football, boys soccer, girls soccer and volleyball contests last week. There continue to be some areas that need improvement. Schools are reminded of the following:

- Players not in the contest **ARE REQUIRED** to wear facial coverings on the sidelines. In football, wearing helmets while on the sidelines is **not** a substitute for wearing a facial covering.
- Players not in the contest and on the sidelines **ARE REQUIRED** to be socially distanced (as close to six feet apart as possible).
- Outside of game play, players are **NOT PERMITTED** to have physical contact with their teammates (such as high-fives and handshakes). Coaches and other team personnel are also not permitted to have physical contact with players.
- Spectators **ARE REQUIRED** to wear facial coverings.

We again send a huge **THANK YOU** to all school administrators for your tremendous efforts in trying to help ensure that all mandates which are part of the Ohio Health Director's Sports Order are being followed when hosting a contest. For some suggestions that you might consider utilizing while hosting a contest in order to help ensure the mandates are being followed, please read last week's Administrator Update: <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20201022update.pdf>.

### **OHSAA Football Playoffs on Spectrum News 1; Football and Other Tournaments on NFHS Network**

Spectrum News 1 will provide exclusive television and streaming play-by-play coverage of the OHSAA football state championship games and other selected football playoff games each week. Football games not televised or streamed by Spectrum are available for live video streaming or tape-delayed television with payment of a rights fee. The fee structure is posted at: <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/News/Media/TournamentBroadcastRates.pdf>. Spectrum's weekly game selections are posted at: <https://www.ohsaa.org/Sports-Tournaments/Football/Football-2020/2020-OHSAA-Football-on-Spectrum>. Live audio broadcasts in all sports are permitted with payment of a rights fee (see link above) if a host site can accommodate the request.

In addition to Spectrum's football coverage, the NFHS Network will provide live video streaming of selected OHSAA postseason tournament contests, including the cross country and soccer state championships, the volleyball and field hockey state tournaments and other selected tournament contests during the sectional, district and regional tournaments. Contests not selected by the NFHS Network are available for live video streaming, live television or tape-delayed television with payment of a rights fee. The fee structure is posted at the link shown above.

**Please inform your fans that there are several fraudulent websites advertising live pay-per-view streaming of OHSAA football playoff games. If a game isn't being streamed by Spectrum News 1 at OHSAA.tv or the NFHS Network, please advise your fans to check with you for verification of their 'official' video streaming source.**

## **Football Playoffs Continue**

The 2020 OHSAA Football Playoffs continue Friday and Saturday, Oct. 30 and 31. Divisions I, II, III and VII will play on Friday nights and Divisions IV, V and VI will play on Saturday nights. Each division will have seven playoff rounds with the exception of Division I, which will have six. Division I will hold its championship game on Friday, Nov. 13, while Divisions II through VII will be played the following week.

For the Regional Finals, the higher seeded team will have the choice to host the contest and may choose to host the game at a site other than their home site. For the State Semifinals, contests will be played at neutral sites and will be based on the best site available (equal travel distance is not a consideration). Visit the OHSAA website at <https://www.ohsaa.org/Sports-Tournaments/Football/Football-2020/2020-OHSAA-Football-Playoffs-Coverage> for this year's brackets.

As a reminder, schools eliminated from the OHSAA playoffs or that choose not to enter the OHSAA playoffs have the option to schedule additional regular season contests through Saturday, Nov. 14 (maximum of 10 regular season contests permitted).

## **Other Fall Sports State Tournament Schedules**

Here is the schedule for the OHSAA's other fall sports state tournaments:

### **Thursday, Nov. 5, and Saturday Nov. 7**

State Field Hockey Semifinals (Thursday at 5:00 and 7:30) and Final (Saturday, 12:00), Thomas Worthington High School

### **Saturday, Nov. 7**

State Cross Country Tournaments, Fortress Obetz

- Boys DIII: 9:00 a.m.; Girls DIII: 10:00 a.m.; Boys DII: 12:00; Girls DII: 1:00; Boys DI: 3:00; Girls DI: 4:00

### **Friday-Sunday, Nov. 13-15**

State Volleyball Semifinals and Finals, Vandalia Butler High School

- Friday, Nov. 13: DII semifinals at 10:00 and 1:00; DI semifinals at 4:00 and 7:00
- Saturday, Nov. 14: DIV semifinals at 10:00 and 1:00; DIII semifinals at 4:00 and 7:00
- Sunday, Nov. 15: DII final at 9:00; DI final at 12:30; DIV final at 4:00; DIII final at 7:30

### **Friday-Saturday, Nov. 13-14**

State Soccer Finals, Mapfre Stadium Columbus

- Friday, Nov. 13: Girls finals in DI, DII and DIII (division order and game times TBA)
- Saturday, Nov. 14: Boys finals in DI, DII and DIII (division order and game times TBA)

## **Playoffs/Tournament Ticketing**

All ticketing for the football playoffs and all other OHSAA tournaments is being handled digitally by the OHSAA's digital ticketing partner, HomeTown Ticketing, and information has been shared with the participating schools by OHSAA Assistant Director of Operations Jacki Windon. All spectators will need a passcode to be able to purchase a ticket. For more details, go to: <https://www.ohsaa.org/tickets>. Some key ticketing notes:

- Only competing schools have passcodes to their event.
- Schools may only distribute these codes through their traditional methods of ticket distribution (families of players, coaches, band and cheerleaders).
- If one of the competing schools has not met its allotment, work with your opponent and mutually decide if you would like to give your codes to your opponent so they can sell more to their families. This is the ONLY instance in which you would share codes. Note that if you decide to do this, codes will only be valid until the allotment of tickets has been reached.

## **Winter Sports Requirements, Recommendations and Modifications**

As occurred for fall sports, the OHSAA staff has developed sport-specific requirements, recommendations and modifications for schools when conducting interscholastic competition in winter sports. Links to the sport-specific requirements, recommendations and modifications for winter sports are available here:

**Basketball:** <http://bit.ly/BKRecs>

**Bowling:** <http://bit.ly/BORecs>

**Gymnastics:** <http://bit.ly/GYMRecs>

**Ice Hockey:** <http://bit.ly/IHRecs>

**Swimming & Diving:** <http://bit.ly/SDRecs>

**Wrestling:** <http://bit.ly/WRRecs>

## **COVID-19 General Guidance (Including Mandates and Recommended Best Practices)**

Like the current fall sports that are on-going, all mandates in the Ohio Department of Health Director's Sports Order must continue to be followed for winter sports. Here is a link to the Health Director's Sports Order: <https://bit.ly/2RWa1jh>. In addition, here is a link to the Health Department's Responsible RestartOhio guidance document for sports:

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Youth-Collegiate-Amateur-Club-Pro-Sports.pdf>, and here is a link to the ODH's Responsible RestartOhio guidance document for sports venues:

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Sports-Venues.pdf>.

### **Additional Winter Sports Guidance – Athletes/Participants Counting in Capacity; Cheerleaders & Pep Bands**

The OHSAA has received additional guidance from the Ohio Department of Health on various winter (indoor) sports concerns. First, contest participants (athletes waiting to play and athletes completing play, plus cheerleaders, pep band members, etc.) do not count toward a sports venue's allowable number of spectators under Ohio's Sports Order or any variance that has been approved for your facility. However, school administrators are cautioned to use good judgement in this area. If, for example, auxiliary areas are available for athletes waiting to play or having completed play, including cheerleaders, pep band members, etc., consider placing these students in that area. No matter where these students are placed, six-foot social distancing mandates must be followed, and facial coverings are required. Consideration should also be given to sending freshman, junior varsity and/or varsity teams on separate transportation to away contests and having those groups depart after their specific contests are completed.

Secondly, cheerleaders and pep band members are considered to be participants in the sports event and consequently subject to the Sports Order and guidance (links to both are provided in the previous section). Administrators should take caution on where they place cheerleaders (consider having them cheer as far away from players and contest officials on the court as possible and potentially in bleacher areas if room is available). Cheerleaders and pep band members must wear facial coverings when not performing and must maintain six-foot social distancing. For additional "recommended best practices" for pep bands, go to:

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/schools/K-12-Collegiate-Band-Choir-Dance.pdf>.

### **The Latest on Winter Sports**

The OHSAA Sport Management staff continues to provide the latest updates on their respective sports through communications to coaches and/or athletic administrators. For the latest updates, visit:

**Basketball:** <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/Basketball-Girls/2021/20201014BballCoachMemo.pdf>

**Ice Hockey:** <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/Ice-Hockey/2020-21/IHMemoOct2.pdf>

**Wrestling:** <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/Wrestling/2020-21/2020OctoberUpdate.pdf>

### **Winter Sports Schedules**

With fall tournament season in full swing, winter sports have either started practices or will be starting. Here is the schedule for the beginning of practices and contests for the OHSAA's winter sports:

#### **Girls Basketball**

First Day of Practice – Friday, Oct. 23

Scrimmages with Other Schools – Can begin when practice begins

First Contest – Friday, Nov. 20

#### **Boys Basketball**

First Day of Practice – Friday, Oct. 30

Scrimmages with Other Schools – Can begin when practice begins

First Contest – Wednesday, Nov. 25

#### **Bowling**

First Day of Practice – Friday, Oct. 30

Scrimmages with Other Schools – None permitted

First Contest – Friday, Nov. 13

#### **Ice Hockey**

First Day of Practice – Friday, Oct. 30

Scrimmages with Other Schools – Tuesday, Nov. 3

First Contest – Friday, Nov. 20

#### **Swimming & Diving**

First Day of Practice – Friday, Oct. 30

Scrimmages with Other Schools – None permitted

First Contest – Monday, Nov. 30

#### **Gymnastics**

First Day of Practice – Friday, Nov. 6

Scrimmages with Other Schools – None permitted

First Contest – Monday, Dec. 7

#### **Wrestling**

First Day of Practice – Friday, Nov. 13

Scrimmages with Other Schools – Can begin when practice begins

First Contest – Thursday, Dec. 3

### **Winter Sports State Online Rules Meetings Now Live**

This is a reminder that 2020-21 OHSAA state rules meetings for each winter sport (basketball, bowling, gymnastics, ice hockey, swimming & diving and wrestling) are now live and that completion of these online meetings is required for tournament participation. Schools are encouraged to have either the head coach, an assistant coach or the athletic administrator complete the meeting prior to the final meeting date for each sport. The final meeting date coincides with the tournament entry/withdraw without penalty date. All state rules meetings are available through *myOHSAA* and can be accessed through the Rules Meeting icon. Athletic administrators have been emailed additional information regarding tracking state rules meeting attendance from the OHSAA Membership Services team. Please contact [membershipservices@ohsaa.org](mailto:membershipservices@ohsaa.org) if you have any questions or need assistance.

Thank you for your attention to this information and for the service you are providing our student-athletes!