



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Thursday, November 12, 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.

Two Weeks of Fall Tournaments Remaining; Participation Numbers Have Been Positive

The OHSAA is headed down the home stretch of the fall seasons and, as was unfortunately predicted in the summer, the COVID-19 numbers have spiked tremendously not only nationally but also in Ohio and show no signs of slowing down. With state championships still to be determined in four OHSAA sports – 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 follow all the Health Director's Sports Orders in order for our fall seasons to be completed. Please do your part, encourage everyone to be diligent and disciplined and 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!

The OHSAA has collected data from four of the fall sports tournaments, and, luckily, the coronavirus has not had a major impact. Here is a look at tournament data in some of OHSAA's fall sports through Nov. 9:

| | Regional & State Trnt. Contests Scheduled | Regional & State Trnt. Contests Played | Percent of Regional & State Trnt. Contests Played |
|---------------------|--|---|--|
| Football | 612 | 585 | 96% |
| | Sectional, District & Regional Trnt. Contests Scheduled | Sectional, District & Regional Trnt. Contests Played | Percent of Sectional, District Regional Trnt. Contests Played |
| Boys Soccer | 520 | 510 | 98% |
| Girls Soccer | 510 | 504 | 99% |
| Volleyball | 722 | 707 | 98% |

Views from Week 11 of the Observer's Program

The OHSAA sent Observers to a combined 53 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.

Ohio Schools Encouraged to Participate in University of Wisconsin COVID-19 Study

The OHSAA is encouraging its member schools to participate in a University of Wisconsin research study titled **"COVID-19 in High School Sports."** The objective of the study, conducted by UW's Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation within the School of Medicine and Public Health, is to identify the incidence of COVID-19 among U.S. high school athletes and the risk reduction procedures that schools utilized during the fall 2020 high school sports season. Participation entails having a high school staff member (athletic administrator, coach or athletic trainer) complete a short (less than 10 minutes) anonymous, online survey.

Specifically, the survey asks about each school's COVID-19 policies; sport start dates; sports played; the number of athletes; practices and games for each sport, and some details of COVID-19 cases in your athletes from August 1 through October 31. The survey is NOT asking schools to provide any specific information on your individual student-athletes, their private or protected health information or the names of individual students, school staff or coaches. The study was reviewed by the University of Wisconsin Health Sciences Minimal Risk-IRB. The online link to complete the survey is available here:

https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_263SsVIsGevx7xP

The deadline to complete the survey is Thursday, November 19, at 5:00 p.m.

Once the results of the survey are available, the report will be shared with the National Federation of State High School Associations. It is anticipated that information collected from the study will better define the risks associated with COVID-19 among U.S. high school athletes and potentially aid local decision-making regarding the continuation of high school sports. Participation by Ohio's schools will provide vital information as we all continue to navigate the decisions to promote the health of our young student-athletes in the months and years to come.

OHSAA Provides School Form for Students Returning to Play from COVID-19

As a reminder, the Ohio Health Director's Sports Order says that a student-athlete who tests positive for COVID-19, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, shall not return to sports activities until a documented medical exam is performed clearing the individual prior to the individual returning to participate in practice or games. The documented medical exam must specifically include an assessment of the cardiac/heart of high intensity exercise due to the potential of myocarditis occurring in COVID-19 patients. To assist the membership in this process, the OHSAA has developed a form that schools are welcome to utilize for students who have had the medical exam to verify that the student can or cannot return to practices or games. The OHSAA form is not a requirement and is simply being provided as a tool for the membership. The form is also for use by the student and schools only and is not to be returned to the OHSAA. Administrators can access the form here:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/2020/RTPCoronavirus.pdf>

OHSAA Football Finals 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. Spectrum's weekly game selections are posted at: <https://www.ohsaa.org/Sports-Tournaments/Football/Football-2020/2020-OHSAA-Football-on-Spectrum>. Live video streaming of the state championship games and other selected football playoff games will be available at OHSAA.tv, which is free for Spectrum subscribers and \$9.99 per game for non-Spectrum subscribers.

In addition to Spectrum's football coverage, the NFHS Network will provide live video streaming of selected OHSAA postseason tournament contests, including the soccer state championships and the volleyball state tournaments. **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 Nearing the Finish Line

The 2020 OHSAA Football Playoffs continue this week with the Division I State Final Friday, Nov. 13, at 7:00 at Fortress Obetz and state semifinals in the other six divisions on either Friday or Saturday, Nov. 13 or 14. Visit the OHSAA website at <https://www.ohsaa.org/Sports-Tournaments/Football/Football-2020/2020-OHSAA-Football-Playoffs-Coverage> for this year's brackets. The state finals schedule – with all games at Fortress Obetz – is as follows:

Friday, Nov. 13 – Division I state championship (Pickerington Central vs. Cincinnati St. Xavier), 7:00 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 20 – Division VII state championship, 2:00 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 20 – Division II state championship, 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 21 – Division V state championship, 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 21 – Division III state championship, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 22 – Division IV state championship, Noon

Sunday, Nov. 22 – Division VI state championship, 5:00 p.m.

Semifinals this weekend are as follows (all games at 7:00):

Friday, Nov. 13

Division II

Avon vs. Akron Archbishop Hoban at Parma Byers Field

Massillon Washington vs. Cincinnati La Salle at Marysville High School Impact Stadium

Division III

Columbus St. Francis DeSales vs. Kettering Archbishop Alter at London High School Bowlus Field

Tiffin Columbian vs. Chardon at Brunswick High School Auto Mart Stadium

Division VII

Warren John F. Kennedy vs. Newark Catholic at Massillon Washington Paul Brown Tiger Stadium

Lima Central Catholic vs. New Bremen Wapakoneta Harmon Field

Saturday, Nov. 14

Division IV

Mentor Lake Catholic vs. Carroll Bloom-Carroll at New Philadelphia High School Woody Hayes Quaker Stadium

Van Wert vs. Cincinnati Wyoming at Piqua High School Alexander Stadium

Division V

St. Bernard Roger Bacon vs. Ironton at London High School Bowlus Field

Kirtland vs. Tontogany Otsego at Parma Byers Field

Division VI

Beverly Fort Frye vs. New Middletown Springfield at Zanesville High School Sulsberger Memorial Stadium
Coldwater vs. Columbus Grove at Sidney High School Memorial Stadium

Other Fall Sports State Tournament Schedules

Friday-Sunday, Nov. 13-15, State Volleyball Semifinals and Finals, Vandalia Butler High School

- Friday, Nov. 13: DII semifinals at 10:00 (Plain City Jonathan Alder vs. Chardon Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin) and 1:00 (Tipp City Tippecanoe vs. Gates Mills Gilmour Academy); DI semifinals at 4:00 (Columbus Bishop Watterson vs. Parma Padua Franciscan) and 7:00 (Cincinnati Mt. Notre Dame vs. Cleveland St. Joseph Academy)
- Saturday, Nov. 14: DIV semifinals at 10:00 (Newark Catholic vs. New Bremen) and 1:00 (Tiffin Calvert vs. Dalton); DIII semifinals at 4:00 (Zoarville Tuscarawas Valley vs. Independence) and 7:00 (Huron vs. Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy)
- 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 – DIII at 1:00 (Kirtland vs. Cincinnati Country Day); DII at 4:00 (Mansfield Madison vs. Granville); DI at 7:00 (Strongsville vs. Lewis Center Olentangy)
- Saturday, Nov. 14: Boys finals – DIII at 1:00 (Youngstown Cardinal Mooney vs. Cincinnati Mariemont); DII at 4:00 (Warren Howland vs. Tipp City Tippecanoe); DI at 7:00 (Cleveland St. Ignatius vs. New Albany)

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 the OHSAA Office. 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 fall sports seasons, 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>.

As was shared in the fall and with COVID-19 cases on the rise, here are some additional recommendations from the OHSAA for schools to attempt to mitigate exposure:

- Maintain physical distancing while not on the court of play;
- Require facial coverings while not on the court of play;
- Reduce or greatly eliminate unnecessary travel, and
- Reduce or eliminate contact frequency with student-athletes from schools outside of each school's league/conference or normal competition sphere.

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/or contests for the OHSAA's winter sports:

Friday, Nov. 13 – first contest for bowling; first day of practice for wrestling

Friday, Nov. 20 – first contests for girls basketball and ice hockey

Wednesday, Nov. 25 – first contest for boys basketball

Monday, Nov. 30 – first contest for swimming & diving

Thursday, Dec. 3 – first contest for wrestling

Monday, Dec. 7 – first contest for gymnastics

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 (those dates are listed on page 62 of the 2020-21 *OHSAA Handbook*). 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.

Reminder that the \$50 late fee for the winter state rules meetings will begin the day after the above referenced date listed for each sport. Please have your coaches complete the required state rules meeting prior to the dates listed above to avoid the \$50 late fee.

Please contact 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!