

Section 6 of OHSAA Media Regulations - Photography Regulations

a.) These regulations apply to both regular-season and OHSAA tournament contests for all photographers approved for credentials. These regulations shall be administered by contest managers for regular-season and OHSAA tournament contests prior to the state tournament or the OHSAA office for state tournaments.

b.) Flash Photography: Authorized media representatives, who have been approved for credentials by contest managers or the OHSAA, shall be permitted to use electronic lighting equipment (includes both strobe lights and flashes mounted to cameras) throughout the course of a given activity in all sports EXCEPT bowling, gymnastics, and diving (including warm-ups). In addition, electronic lighting is NOT permitted to be used in the following situations: in basketball in the free throw lane area (behind the background); in golf from the time the golfer addresses the ball until contact is made; and in swimming immediately before the start of a race so as to not interfere with the starter's signal.

In the sport of volleyball, electronic lighting is not permitted at any time during OHSAA tournament contests, and electronic lighting is only allowed during regular-season contests in gymnasiums that do not meet the minimum lighting standards of 1600 ASA (film speed) at 500th of a second at an aperture of f2.8. If those lighting conditions apply, flash photography may be used, but not when a student-athlete is serving. During regular-season volleyball contests, photographers must work with school administrators anytime prior to the start of a match to test equipment and have the light meter reading verified. The reading can then be used for future matches in the same facility in the same season without retesting.

1. Requests to use strobe lights (when permitted per Section 6-c) mounted to fixed positions shall be made in advance of the contest.
2. Requests to use strobe lights mounted to fixed positions shall be honored if the facility permits it. If so, a priority system will be used based on an official photographer designated by the OHSAA, newspapers that cover their hometown teams, newspapers that cover the site of the host facility, media which is national, regional or statewide (wire services) in scope, and finally, any other approved media.

c.) Photographers approved to use strobe lights mounted to fixed positions shall ensure contest managers or the OHSAA that such lights are mounted and secured safely.

1. To ensure safety, photographers shall meet with contest managers or the OHSAA no less than 90 minutes before game time.
2. Contest managers or the OHSAA may inform participating coaches and contest officials that photographers have been approved to use strobe lights in fixed positions.
3. Photographers are expected to use good judgment when placing strobe lights in fixed position so that such lights do not interfere with a participant's execution of a play. In the sport of basketball, for example, strobe lights shall not be mounted directly behind the backboard.

d.) Positioning: In basketball, photographers and videographers are prohibited to position themselves behind the backboard (within the free-throw lane area) unless approved by the OHSAA.

1. The first violation of this policy shall result in a warning from contest managers or the OHSAA, and the second violation of this policy shall result in the removal of the photographer from the contest facility.
2. Photographers may position themselves along the baseline outside the lane area of the court (and are permitted to use electronic lighting as specified in Section 6-c).
3. The use of remote-operated cameras behind a basket is permitted (without flash) so long as the guidelines listed above are followed.

4. In soccer, photographers are permitted between the team benches only if approved by the head official (who may consult with both head coaches, if needed).

e.) Photographers for other sports shall be placed in positions in accordance with National Federation of State High School Associations National Rules. In the sport of football, field hockey and soccer, photographers shall be positioned behind the restraining line, which is two or more yards from the sidelines and end zones. In volleyball, photographers shall not be positioned in an area that could be “in play.” When a soccer match goes to penalty kicks (after overtime), photographers may position themselves on the field in the midfield area if approved by the site manager or media coordinator. In football, photographers shall not be positioned in the team boxes between the 25-yard lines. In baseball, photographers are prohibited from being in live ball areas unless a photographer’s area (typically with a paint or chalk line) has been established by the game manager and approved by the officials before the game. The OHSAA requests that at least one area be designated for photographers that provides an unobstructed view of the field. In softball, no such deadball area for photographers is permitted by NFHS rules. In golf, photographers may not position themselves behind the hole in line with the golfer.

Officials have the authority to remove any member of the media for not staying in or keeping their equipment in designated dead ball areas. In the sport of golf, photographers are not permitted to take photos while a player is addressing his/her ball and during his/her swing unless the photographer is at such a distance away from the player that no audible noise can be heard by the player. In the sports of volleyball, bowling, track and field, swimming and tennis, contest officials have additional authority to decide where photographers may position themselves based on the layout of the facility or competition area.

f.) Photo Sales and Availability

1. Individual credentialed media personnel and spectators may not sell photos from state tournaments. Furthermore, credentialed media may not give photos to current student-athletes (or their parents or legal guardians) or post galleries of their photos from state tournaments on their personal websites. (A gallery is defined as more than five photos displayed on one webpage.) If a credentialed media photographer posts a photo on his/her personal webpage, it may not be made available for high-resolution download.

2. In team sports (field hockey, soccer, volleyball, football, team wrestling, ice hockey, basketball, softball, baseball and lacrosse), one school-designated photographer (student or adult) may be credentialed for OHSAA tournament contests if approved by the school’s athletic administrator. The school-designated photographer may only give his/her photos to the school (athletic director, principal or head coach) for the school’s use. Photos from the designated school photographer may not be sold or posted online in galleries (see previous note) and may not be posted so they are available for high-resolution download.

3. Media outlets that are approved for credentials at an OHSAA state tournament may sell photos from that event.

a. School officials have the authority to permit or deny freelance photographers (including parents) from having special access at their regular-season athletic contests.

b. School officials have the authority to permit or deny the sale of photos from their regular-season contests.

c. Freelance photographers who are granted a media credential for sectional, district and regional tournament games (and state semifinal games in the sports of football, soccer and lacrosse) may sell photos from the contest as long as the photographer is affiliated with a specific school and can produce a written or on-site verbal show of support from that school’s athletic director. However, said photographers may not set up booths or tables, distribute promotional material or request that public address announcements be read that advertise their services.

d. Freelance photographers who are not affiliated with a bona fide media outlet will not be credentialed for state tournament contests. Photos taken from spectator viewing areas at state tournament contests are for personal use only and may not be sold.

g.) Guidelines for Credentialing School Photographers at OHSAA Tournaments

The following regulations shall apply to school-approved photographers of participating schools at OHSAA tournament events:

1. Photographs taken shall be exclusively for the school's publication, promotional, educational or public relations use.
2. Photographs may not be sold. See Section g-2 for terms of use.
3. The school's principal or athletic administrator must submit a written request (email will suffice) for the authorized school photographer to the tournament contest manager or the appointed media coordinator (sectional, district and regional contests) or the OHSAA office (for state tournament contests) in order to be issued a media credential. The following conditions apply:
 - a.) For team events (field hockey, football, soccer, volleyball, team wrestling, basketball, ice hockey, baseball, softball and lacrosse) a school may have one photographer (student or adult).
 - b.) The OHSAA reserves the right to request photos from school photographers for promotional purposes (photo credit will be given).
 - b.) The credentialed school photographer must agree to adhere to all OHSAA regulations, including Conditions of OHSAA Tournament Credentials; may be subject to further regulations as determined by the OHSAA, and will lose credentials, be removed from the tournament contest and jeopardize the school's ability to be granted a photography credential in the future should these regulations be violated.
 - c.) Because of the large number of teams involved and limited space available, no media credentials for school representatives shall be authorized at state tournaments in the individual sports of golf, tennis, cross country, bowling, gymnastics, swimming and diving and track and field.
 - d.) At the individual state wrestling tournament, a school may have one student media representative. The principal or athletic director must submit the official student media credential application form and the student must have a ticket to exchange for a temporary media credential.
 - e.) The OHSAA will not honor requests for media credentials on behalf of coaches (including college coaches), parents of state tournament competitors or businesses or individuals contracted by the school.

h.) Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones)

The use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), most commonly referred to as drones, is not permitted anywhere within the entire athletic facility during any OHSAA tournament contest, beginning one hour before the contest is scheduled to begin. This includes both indoor and outdoor contests. The facility includes both the area above the playing surface itself, and the areas above the surrounding surfaces that are a part of the facility, including, but not limited to, bleachers and other seating areas, parking lots, sidewalks, running/walking track, adjacent athletic fields, etc.

Note: The use of drones at regular-season contests is permitted pending approval from the host institution, which confirms that the drone operator complies with local, state and federal regulations.

OHSAA Tournament Policy/Public Address Announcement on Spectators Taking Photos and Videos

"Spectators taking photographs or videos may not interfere with the view of this contest by other spectators, nor may they take additional space in seats that have been purchased. In addition, all photographs and videos taken by spectators at this event are for personal use only. The use of photographs or videos for commercial, scouting or coaching purposes is strictly prohibited. The OHSAA reserves the right to remove offenders from this contest and invoke additional penalties."