

December 30, 2023

## Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association Update

Happy Holidays OPSWA members! Thank you for your coverage of high school sports. Please see below for several updates, including being a part of the annual writing and photography contest. All OPSWA members are encouraged to enter the annual contest, as the contest is the only regular source of funding for the OPSWA. Please see below for details and submit entries by February 7, 2024.

**Please support the OPSWA and enter the contest and serve as a judge!**

### Annual Writing and Photography Contest Details

The entry process for the annual OPSWA writing and photography contest is now open. The submission deadline is February 7 (postmark). The contest includes articles and photos about Ohio high school sports published in print or online between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2023. The cost is \$15 per person to enter the contest, which is the OPSWA's only regular source of funding, so please enter the contest to support the OPSWA.

**Members serve as judges in the contest. Please reply to indicate if you are willing to serve as a judge.** Tim Stried coordinates the entries, judges packets, results, etc.

### Minimum Two Entries (Maximum of Three) Per Category:

Sportswriters and photographers must submit at least two pieces per category that they enter, with a maximum of three pieces per category. Entries by the same author or photographer within a category will be given one collective score, instead of separate scores for each entry. Entrants shall use one entry form for all the articles or photos within each category (not a form for each entry). Writing contest entries must be printed on regular 8.5x11 paper so that copies can be made to send to the judges. Photos can be submitted on any size paper (they are not copied and mailed to judges).

### Contest Entry Form (deadline to enter is February 7 postmark):

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/News/OPSWA/OPSWAContestApplication.pdf>

### Categories:

Sportswriters and photographers must enter the correct category! Brief descriptions are below, and please see the full explanation and the contest entry form at: <https://www.ohsaa.org/news/OPSWA/contests>

- **News Story** – typically some kind of breaking news element (not game stories or features).
- **Feature Story** (story telling) – good features often have a lyrical voice to some degree and a unique quality (not newsy or formulaic).
- **Column** – must have a strong amount of opinion or perspective, not simply a unique game recap or feature.
- **Game Recap Story** – cover all the basic elements of a contest, but with some sort of flair that grabs the readers' attention.
- **Action Photograph** – from an athletic contest
- **Posed Photograph** – the photographer poses the subject(s) for the shot

*Note that there is no longer an Investigative/Enterprise category. Members should utilize the Feature Story category for those types of entries.*

### Divisions: (daily newspapers have four or more issues per week)

Division I: Daily Circulation over 25,000 (11 newspapers, see list on contest application form) and Websites

Division II: Daily Circulation between 10,000 and 25,000

Division III: All other daily newspapers (at least four printed editions per week)

Division IV: Non-daily newspapers and specialty publications

### Call for Judges

The annual OPSWA writing and photography contest is judged by OPSWA members. Any OPSWA member interested in being a judge should notify Tim Stried. Every category has at least two judges, with the final results being the average score of the two judges.

### **Thank You OPSWA Members for Football Honors Participation**

The OPSWA weekly notebook was again a big success this fall. Thank you to all members who submitted content, and thanks to Jake Furr, OPSWA Vice President, for compiling them for Tuesday release.

Thank you to the district chairs for coordinating the all-district teams and for submitting your nominees for the All-Ohio teams. That group also determined the list of finalists for the Ohio Mr. Football Award. Thank you to all OPSWA members who participated in the all-district teams selection and those who voted for the Mr. Football Award.

### **OPSWA Member Meeting Tuesday in Late April**

There will be an in-person OPSWA member meeting in late April at the OHSAA office in Columbus. Lunch will be provided. In the first hour, the OPSWA officers will discuss several changes and points of emphasis during the upcoming school year. After lunch, OHSAA Executive Director Doug Ute will hold a Q&A session with the membership.

### **OPSWA Officers**

Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association members conducted officer voting last April. Congratulations to the following four individuals who were elected to a two-year term from May 1, 2022 through April 30, 2024:

President: Eric Frantz, MaxPreps.com

Vice President: John Kampf, Willoughby News Herald

Vice President: Tom Wilson, Lancaster Eagle-Gazette

Vice President: Jake Furr, Mansfield News Journal

Please don't hesitate to reach out to the officers with any OPSWA suggestions or issues. OPSWA officers select the Hall of Fame (members nominate potential honorees), vote for All-Ohio teams (with the district chairmen, listed below), determine any changes to OPSWA procedures, etc. Thank you to all members who were on the officer ballot. They have all committed to remaining involved with OPSWA work.

### **Hall of Fame**

The 2024 induction class for the OPSWA Hall of Fame will be announced in early January and inducted at the 2024 boys basketball state tournament in Dayton. Last year, the OPSWA Hall of Fame class included Craig Dunn (Logan), Mark Huber (Wilmington), and the late Pat Galbincea (Cleveland Plain Dealer). The complete OPSWA Hall of Fame list is posted at: <https://www.ohsaa.org/news/OPSWA/HOF>

### **OPSWA Members Encouraged to Join All-District Voting Process**

Since 2017, the OPSWA has coordinated the All-District and All-Ohio teams in football and basketball. All OPSWA members are encouraged to be a part of the selection process for the all-district teams in football and basketball. The All-Ohio teams are based on the work and nominations of the district committees. Please contact your district chairperson to be a part of the process.

Northeast Lakes: Matt Goul, Cleveland.com

Northeast Inland: Chris Beaven, Canton Repository

Northwest: Mark Hazelwood, Norwalk Reflector

Southeast: Paul Boggs, Portsmouth Daily Times

East: Sam Blackburn and Brandon Hannahs, Zanesville Times-Recorder

Central: Steve Blackledge, PressProsMagazine.com, retired from Columbus Dispatch

Southwest: Greg Shoemaker, TriStateFootball.com; Scott Halasz, Xenia Daily Gazette; Jeff Gilbert, Dayton Daily News

### **OPSWA Membership List**

Please check the district membership lists, and if you are aware of any edits, please email Tim Stried at [tstried@ohsaa.org](mailto:tstried@ohsaa.org). The membership lists are posted at: <https://www.ohsaa.org/news/OPSWA/membership>. The goal is that OPSWA members utilize the list to communicate with other members for such things as exchanging information on out-of-area opponents, facility details, etc.

### **OPSWA ID Badges Available**

The OHSAA produces ID badges for OPSWA members that include the member's photo and their media outlet logo(s). Any OPSWA member that wants a new ID badge should email their headshot and media outlet logo, if desired to Tim Stried. There is no cost for the ID badge and a green OHSAA lanyard is included.

#### **Tim Stried**

Director of Media Relations

#### **Ohio High School Athletic Association**

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