

This Week in Softball

Issue 6 | May 22, 2020

Updates were sent to member school administrators on May 15 and May 21 and can be accessed below:

May 15: <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20200515Update.pdf>

May 21: <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20200521AdministratorUpdate.pdf>

Important information from those memos pertaining to softball and other updates are below:

May 26- No-Contact Period will be Lifted

The no-contact period currently in place for school coaches will be lifted for softball coaches on May 26. You may begin working with your athletes at that time in skill work and in competition.

May 26-August 31

Below is the list of regulation changes that will affect how you can coach from May 26-August 31. These changes were previously planned to go into effect on June 1 but have now been adjusted to May 26.

1. The 10-day rule has been eliminated
2. The 50% limitation has been eliminated
3. The August no-contact period has been eliminated

What do these Changes Mean?

1. You were previously only permitted 10 days during June and July to work with more than 4 of your athletes. The elimination of the 10-day rule allows you to work with more than 4 of your own players on as many days as you want from May 26-August 31. The only stipulation being that you can't make participation mandatory.
2. You were previously permitted to only coach up to 4 of your athletes (50% limitation) in individual skill workouts and in non-interscholastic play at any time except during the no-contact period (August). This has been eliminated and you can work with as many of your athletes at any time between May 26-August 31. This would permit you to take your entire team to tournaments or play other school/non-school teams as often as you'd like during that time.
3. Previously, a no-contact period was in place during the month of August. This has been eliminated and allows you to work with your athletes as mentioned above through the month of August.

Please note, the changes above are in place for 2020 only.

School Athletic Facilities

For anyone who didn't see the Governor's press conference yesterday, Lt. Governor Husted announced that the opening of school athletic facilities is a decision to be made by individual school administrators. Please consult with your school administration to determine if your athletic facilities are open for use.

What Happens after August?

After August, the normal out of season regulations are in effect. Meaning, you can only work with 4 of your athletes in individual skill workouts and in non-interscholastic play. The indoor softball regulation remains in place from Nov. 1-Feb. 1 which permits an unlimited number of players from the same school team to compete together in indoor softball if being coached by a non-school coach. School coaches would still be limited to 4. Please note that any student who made the roster of your school team this spring would count towards your 4-player limitation after August.

May 20 Board of Directors Meeting-Approval of Softball Regulations

On Wednesday, the regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting took place with Presidents of each Coaches Association permitted to attend. Several items to note from this meeting:

- All sport-specific regulations were approved.
- There were minor changes to the softball regulations which included:
- Adjusting the non-interscholastic date to the first date that regular season competition is permitted (March 27). Previously, the date was in mid-May. This means athletes must cease non-interscholastic participation prior to this date.
- Another change allows schools in all team sports to utilize a waiver to participate against Special Olympic teams or teams of similar designation. The waiver will be posted on the softball page and if approved, would not count toward your scrimmages/previews/contests.
- All other changes were normal date change updates and other language to align with the changes to the general sport regulations as mentioned above.

Out of State Travel Bylaw Adjustment

The Out of State Travel Bylaw has been adjusted. You can continue to travel to contiguous states with no limitation. The adjustment was made when traveling to non-contiguous states. It is still a one-time permission per season but previously, you were not permitted to miss school time for travel or competition. This stipulation has been removed and it is now a school decision on whether you may miss school time.

Ejection Regulation Adjustment

Any student or coach ejected for fighting will now be ineligible for 4 games rather than the previous penalty of 2 games. Fighting is defined by the NFHS as any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to softball. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s) or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact.

Governor's Guidance

The Governor's Office released guidance last week for softball, baseball and batting cages. Although this is not our guidance and we have no authority to oversee or enforce these regulations, I wanted to share the document:

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Baseball-Softball.pdf>