



February 16, 2016

To: Athletic Directors and Head Baseball Coaches
From: Peter Weber, Assistant Executive Director
Subject: 2016 Baseball Reminders

Included within this memo are reminders regarding OSAA policies and NFHS rules specific to baseball that each coaching staff should review as we begin the season. The links on the right side will take you directly to more detailed information regarding that specific reminder. Each school offering baseball should have received one copy of the NFHS Baseball Rules Book from the OSAA. If your school didn't receive your copy, please let me know. Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

GENERAL INFO

OSAA Baseball Plan

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

We've revamped our plan books to be more thorough and include all information necessary for schools. The plan contains the season dates, NFHS rule changes, OSAA baseball rules and policies, state championship information and qualifications, plus OSAA general policies. Many items listed in this memo in past years are now included in the OSAA Baseball Plan.

PITCHING LIMITATION CHANGES

Pitch Count Limitation

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

The OSAA Executive Board recently passed a change to the pitching limitation policy that is recommended for 2016 and will be required for the 2017 season. The change, which was created by the OSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) and Oregon Athletic Coaches Association, moves away from an innings limit to a pitch count limit that includes required rest days depending on the number of pitches thrown. For the 2016 season, the longstanding innings limit policy (not more than 12 innings pitched over three consecutive days) is still in effect. Schools will also be required, beginning in 2017, to enter the pitch counts of players through the OSAA website following each varsity game.

USA Baseball Pitch Smart Guidelines

<http://m.mlb.com/pitchsmart/>

The OSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) supports the Pitch Smart guidelines created by USA Baseball and MLB. The two entities have teamed up to help young players reduce arm injuries by providing a comprehensive resource for safe pitching practices. Research has shown that pitching too much, particularly at a young age, can increase a pitcher's risk of injury. Pitch Smart is a series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and Safety Information

<http://www.osaa.org/health-safety>

The OSAA website contains a variety of information regarding heat and hydration, lightning safety, and concussion management. This page contains links to informational items that all coaches should familiarize themselves with as practices begin.

Practice Model

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

Prior to last season, the Executive Board created a new policy governing in-season practices. The main component that impacts baseball teams is the requirement that a student may not practice or participate in a contest for more than six consecutive days without a rest day. A rest day must be complete rest – no organized team physical activity is allowed. Travel is allowed on a rest day, just no organized team physical activity. Please be aware of this change, especially for those teams traveling to Spring Break tournaments.

Practice Limitation Rule Change for Pitchers and Catchers

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

Prior to last season, the Executive Board passed a change to the Practice Limitation Rule (Rule of 2) allowing baseball coaches to begin pitching instruction and throwing workouts with pitchers and catchers only (maximum of eight total per day) two weeks prior to the Spring Sports First Practice Date (February 15, 2016).

Concussion Management

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

OSAA Staff worked with the Oregon Legislature to align Max's Law (public schools) and Jenna's Law (private schools) when it comes to the return to participation protocol. Therefore, all OSAA member schools are subject to the same policy when a student is removed after exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body. The law still states that, on an annual basis prior to participation, private schools shall require each student and at least one parent or legal guardian of the student to sign a consent form acknowledging the receipt of information regarding symptoms and warning signs of concussions. Private schools shall maintain a copy of each student's signed form on file for review at any time by OSAA staff.

Lightning Safety Guidelines

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

The OSAA has made a concerted effort to educate member schools and officials associations regarding the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. Once thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, all personnel, athletes and spectators should evacuate to available safe structures or shelters.

FIELD MARKINGS, OFFICIALS

Field Markings and Game Preparation

www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/baseballfielddiagram.pdf

A reminder to schools to have fields properly marked before a game begins. This includes all appropriate lines for batters boxes, coaches' boxes, the catcher's box, foul lines, runner's lane to 1st base, etc. It is recommended that all outfield fence signs are properly secured to the fence and off the ground.

Officials – Host School Responsibilities

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

Remember that a game manager shall be designated by the host school for all contests. It's a good idea for the game manager to introduce themselves to the officials upon arrival. A member of the coaching staff of the home team is not eligible to serve as game manager during a varsity contest at which he or she is coaching. A coach of a sub-varsity team may act as the game manager at a sub-varsity contest at which he or she is coaching. The game manager shall wear easily recognizable identification, shall be physically present and / or readily accessible by phone, and shall be responsible for:

- a. Designating reserved parking for officials as close as possible to the contest site; where available if requested by the commissioner of the Local Association providing the officials
- b. Designating dressing facilities for officials where available if requested by the commissioner of the Local Association providing the officials;
- c. Monitoring and responding to inappropriate crowd conduct during and after the contest; and
- d. Providing an escort to the designated dressing facilities or vehicle for officials following each contest unless that offer is declined. ***(This is especially important at fields where officials must walk through the spectator area when leaving the field.)***

JEWELRY, EJECTIONS, GAME ENDING/SPEED-UP, INTERRUPTED CONTEST PROCEDURES

Jewelry

Remember that rubber bracelets are considered jewelry and shall not be worn during games. NFHS rules are very clear in this area. *"Jewelry shall not be worn (see 3-3-1d) except for religious or medical medals. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert must be taped and may be visible."* **(Rule 1-5-12)**

Game Ending / "Speed-Up" Procedures

1. Varsity: 10-Run Rule is allowed, per league adoption.
2. Sub-Varsity: 10-Run Rule and Time Limits are allowed, per league adoption.

Ejections During a Doubleheader and Out-of-State Ejections

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

Multiple ejection reports came through the OSAA office last season where a player or coach had been ejected in the first game of a doubleheader. A reminder that when this happens, the player or coach is done for the rest of the day (**Ejection Period**) and is also suspended through the next contest at that level of competition (**Suspension Period**). Some schools have mistakenly thought that the 2nd game of the doubleheader counts as the suspension period.

- a. Example #1 – A varsity coach is ejected in the first game of a doubleheader. The coach is done for the rest of the day (**Ejection Period**). The coach is also suspended through the next varsity contest (**Suspension Period**).
- b. Example #2 – A JV player is ejected in a game on Friday (single game that day) and the JV team has a doubleheader the next day on Saturday. The player is done for the rest of the day on Friday (**Ejection Period**). The player sits out the 1st game of the Saturday doubleheader (**Suspension Period**) but is eligible to play in the 2nd game of the doubleheader on Saturday.

Remember that when a player or coach is ejected from an out-of-state contest, OSAA ejection policies still apply. It is the responsibility of the school to notify the OSAA of the out-of-state ejection.

Interrupted Contests / Tie Games

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

Listed below are the procedures on interrupted contests as there are no ties in Oregon high school baseball. Games don't have to be continued, but if they are it shall start from the point of interruption. If teams choose not to continue, the game should be deleted from each team's schedule and won't count against either team's participation limitation. Innings/pitches thrown by pitchers in the tie game are still counted toward the individual pitching limitation.

OSAA WEBSITE / RANKINGS INFO

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/bbl/bblplan.pdf>

Postponing/Canceling Contests

On the day of a contest, schools are able to change the status to either Postponed or Cancelled by selecting the appropriate box in your editing window. When Postponed is selected, schools have the option to list the new date/time, if known. If a postponed contest will be replayed but you aren't sure when, you can leave the new date/time field blank to complete at a later time. If you aren't sure if the contest is going to be replayed, it should be Cancelled. That way you can always reinstate the contest if you end up being able to get it scheduled. Deleting contests from your schedule and adding them back later in the season may result in contests not counting in the rankings based on the following policies. When in doubt, leave it on your schedule as Cancelled.

Adding Contests to Schedules vs. Teams More Than One Classification Away After April 4

Remember that results from contests added to a team's schedule after a certain date each season (Winter – April 4) **vs. a team more than one classification away** shall not be included in the rankings.

Adding Any Contest to Schedules After April 11

A new policy recently approved by the OSAA Executive Board states that results from contests added to a team's schedule after a certain date each season (Winter – April 11) shall not be included in the rankings. NOTE: Contests not affected by this policy include bracketed contests at tournaments, league tiebreakers, and district/league tournaments. Schools may apply for an exception to OSAA Staff in extenuating circumstances.

Tracking Out of State Opponents

www.osaa.org/docs/osaainfo/ManagingOutOfStateRecordsInstructions.pdf

Varsity teams are required to update their schedule and results through the OSAA website throughout the season. Schools are also required to track records of out of state opponents. Each Oregon school is ultimately responsible for making sure their own schedule and results are accurate, including the records of their out of state opponents.

Home/Away Designation

- a. Baseball and softball contests, even those played as part of a tournament, shall not be listed as neutral due to the fundamental difference associated with being the home team in those sports (advantage of batting last).
- b. **Doubleheaders:** If a team is playing a doubleheader at another school, both contests should be shown as away contests on the schedule to accurately portray where the contests are physically taking place. When scoring the contest, schools are able to check a box if the "home" team batted first so the home/away designation is correct for the rankings.