



# Commissioner's Notes

## July 2011

A monthly newsletter from Commissioner Julian Tackett, Kentucky High School Athletic Association, 2280 Executive Drive, Lexington, Kentucky 40505 859-299-5472 • www.khsaa.org

### **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCES INTERPRETATION REVISIONS TO WHAT IS ALLOWED OUT OF SEASON BY COACHES**

Over the last year, the Board of Control along with the Executive Staff of the Association have been in review of the Association's rules and rule interpretations. One of the key elements of discussion has been concerns over what our high school coaches and team members are allowed to do (or restricted from doing) during the school year, outside of the limitation of seasons period as defined for each sport.

Since its original passage in the late 1970s, Bylaw 25 has defined a limitation of seasons for each sport. These dates define the start and end date for practice and competition, the number of allowable contests and other sports specific limitations. This also provides for a window of time that the KHSAA Catastrophic Insurance is in place. Through the years, various interpretations have been added to the rule to try and detail what was allowed, and what was not. In reality, these interpretations actually created additional rules about what was legal and illegal during the off-season. The evolution of these interpretations over the years has led to more and more restrictions on the high school coach and the high school facilities and resources.

At the same time, outside groups (clubs, local gyms, AAU-type agencies, etc.) have increased in both availability, prominence and influence. That change has led to many student-athletes and their families being left with difficult choices and in many cases, they are choosing this outside competition over the high school based opportunities. This undermines the very purpose and value of school based competition, and could lead us down the road of the devaluation, and perhaps elimination, of high school sports.

Primarily for that reason, the Board of Control endorsed my proposed re-interpretation of Bylaw 25, specifically, eliminating Case Situations BL-25-18, BL-25-19 and BL-25-20, and replacing them with a consolidated revision. The revised interpretation is at the end of this email. Such a revision was made three years ago in the individual sports, but would now apply to the team sports. I am sure that this change will not be unanimously accepted. And I am certain that if this creates subsequent issues in future years, our membership will come together with a proposal to re-define restrictions in these areas. There are also those who worry, as do I, about the situations where the dominant coach in a school somehow influences students to play in a particular sport year round and not compete in other sports. In reality, that (specialization) is a nationwide trend that all high school associations are attempting to fight. However it has come to the point that this office does not have the resources and



personnel to monitor all potential illegal activity by its nearly 15,000 coaches and their involvement in out of season play. It is also apparent that a wide portion of the membership is unwilling or unable to provide the impetus and resources to enforce these restrictions at the local level, and that is certainly an understandable prioritization of resources and personnel.

Perhaps the bottom line was the realization that the rules we had were broken and hard to enforce, even becoming a bit antiquated compared with the needs of students and the desire of students and parents. Kids wanting to get extra help and individualized attention, instead of having to pay to go to a clinic or camp or outside group, can actually have the opportunity (provided its approved by the Principal) to get that help from their own high school coach. Instead of curtailing the high school coach and teacher and subsequently forcing kids to look to people that perhaps don't have the best interest of the individual student at heart, we should allow some opportunity for our coaches, the high school coaches, to have more time with the students who are looking to expand their skills. This was the primary topic of the discussion and the genesis of my desires for a revised interpretation.

This change puts the decision making for this important facet of the school athletic program, the high school coach's involvement with the students during the school year but outside the season, where it likely always belonged, at the local school, and in accordance with Bylaw 1, in the hands of the Principal. The interpretation is fairly self-explanatory, and will be printed in the 2011-2012 KHSAA Handbook. Coaches, please address specific questions to the sport contact in the KHSAA office: : Michael Barren (soccer) - mbarren@khsaa.org; Angela Passafiume (cross country) - apassafiume@khsaa.org; Butch Cope (volleyball) - bcope@khsaa.org; Darren Bilberry (golf) - dbilberry@khsaa.org and Julian Tackett (football) - jtackett@khsaa.org

## REVISED INTERPRETATIONS

Deleted CS BL-25-18, CS BL25-19, CS BL-25-20 from 2010-2011 Handbook

Replace with -

### **Case BL-25-xx- Are there restrictions during the school year outside of the defined Limitation of Seasons (off-season) when the school's team members are participants or school coaches are involved?**

Yes, there are restrictions during the school year outside of the defined limitation of seasons. The "off-season" is the period for each sport or sport/activity that is outside the defined start and end dates for the sport or sport/activity as detailed in Bylaw 25. The restrictions begin on the first day of school and end on the earlier of the day following the last day of school or May 31;

The following general provisions apply to the off-season in all KHSAA sports and sport/activities:

There is no insurance coverage (catastrophic medical or other) expressed or implied by the KHSAA;

Any restriction includes all members of the athletic coaching staff, paid or unpaid, head or assistant, and at all levels;

No activity may be required for the student-athlete in that particular sport and there may be no penalties assessed, expressed or implied for non-participation;

There may be no organized activity (where sports specific skills are being taught, refined, developed or evaluated) that is restricted solely to the members or prospective members of any sports team; and

Nothing about these interpretations allow the use of any specific football gear during this period except during the allowable spring practice window and the use of a football helmet during any supervised activity.

A member of the coaching staff, member school, group of school representatives, or school or team-related booster group may not:

1. Pay the entry fee for a team or individuals into a practice, league, camp or tournament;
2. Pay other necessary fees for competition including umpire payment and game or facility management;
3. Provide or fund transportation for team members to go to games, or tournaments;
4. Allow school transportation to be used for team members to go to games, or tournaments;
5. Allow the use of the school name, nickname or other accepted likeness on school issued or non-school issued apparel;
6. Allow the use of school issued or school identifying apparel, including uniforms, hats, sleeves, jerseys, pants or school owned protective gear to be worn by team members, with the exception of football equipment during the allowable spring practice window, the use of a football helmet during any supervised activity and the use of appropriate and legal equipment during the April Cheer tryout period; or
7. Allow the use of the school facility for organized competition for which no rental/lease arrangement exists using comparable regional fair market values.

All other restrictions related to the scheduling, composition, pool and use of available personnel including coaches, and other

logistical arrangements are the jurisdiction of the building Principal for any activity held within that local school facility or off-site activities where the coach and team members are simultaneously present, in compliance with Bylaw 1 of the Association.

### **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCES REVISION TO BYLAW 25 RELATED TO SCHOOL TIME LOST FOR ATHLETICS**

Over the last year, the Board of Control along with the Executive Staff of the Association have been in review of the Association's rules and rule interpretations. KHSAA Bylaw 25, Section 1 (a) states "School Time shall not be lost for travel to or from, or participation in, any regular season interscholastic contest". In addition, the Commissioner's office had previously issued an interpretation (CS BL-25-1) regarding the use of school time and relevant penalties. This interpretation, while initially addressing the issue, fails to recognize the ever-changing methods that are being revised or added to allow for instruction of students in alternate environments and formats. Such things as distance learning, satellite classes and other web-based and electronic mechanisms mean that the rules of the KHSAA must be modernized to allow for change, and not be an inhibitor to potential academic progress.

Following the review and discussion, the Board of Control endorsed my proposed revisions to Case BL-25-1 as printed below. The Bylaw still explicitly states "School Time" may not be lost for regular season competition, but this interpretation appropriately places the burden of defining "School Time" back at the local district in compliance with Kentucky Department of Education guidelines. In reality, this is a KHSAA rule that supports a KDE series of attendance regulations, but those regulations need to be monitored at the local district level, and enforced if necessary, by the Department of Education.

### **Case BL-25-1- What is the expectation of KHSAA member schools as it relates to missed school time for regular season contests?**

The KHSAA annually solicits verification through the membership application from school administrators that these provisions have not been violated in order to comply with Kentucky Board of Education reporting requirements. The KHSAA expects all of its member schools, including those not normally subject to all rules and regulations of the Kentucky Department of Education to adhere to the attendance regulations of the Department of Education.

Monitoring and definitions regarding the restrictions related to "school time" must be done at the local level in compliance with Kentucky Department of Education regulations. Member schools detected violating these restrictions will be referred to the Kentucky Department of Education for attendance review. This stance is necessary due to ever changing rules and regulations about what constitutes school time, and the fact that the member schools are in better position to monitor this regulation as they implement new and revised methods of delivering instruction. If further clarification is needed relative to local policies which may be in place as to what constitutes

School Time, please have the appropriate district personnel contact the Kentucky Department of Education.

### **BOARD OF CONTROL APPROVES REVISION OF EJECTION PENALTIES**

For nearly two years, the Board of Control has been reviewing data related to player and coach ejections in KHSAA sports. This seven year data review, published in the Athlete magazine and as part of the Board of Control agenda (<http://portal.ksba.org/public/Meeting/Attachments/DisplayAttachment.aspx?AttachmentID=107273>) for a couple of different meetings, revealed that a variety of changes in penalty and implementation had failed to result in a deterrent of unsportsmanlike acts and a reduction in ejections. The review also showed that there was no statistical correlation to certain areas, certain officials associations, or certain specific officials.

What was apparent however, was the need to continue to reiterate the need for this level of athletics to be played by, and coached by, individuals who model the highest standards of sporting conduct, regardless of what is on TV or at other levels. What was particularly disappointing was the realization that for a state our size, we have a disproportionately high number of player and coach ejections.

Following the review of that data, the penalties for ejections have been revised effective immediately. Please note that for ejections during 2010-2011, for which enforcement carries to the 2011-2012 school year, last year's penalty requirements will be in force. Also note that the requirement for the online Star Sportsmanship has also been removed, primarily due to cost.

The Board of Control continues to work on this issue, and has requested staff research in certain sports with a particularly high incidence of ejection, for possible future revisions. The Board will also be monitoring the suspension reports to ensure that some sports aren't disproportionately penalized under these provisions as they work toward the balance between being consistent with all sports, and ensuring that this level of play remain the area where the highest values and ideals are displayed.

As we are headed into the scrimmage season and getting ready for play, it would be timely to remind all of your fall sports coaches about these revised policies, particularly the provisions related to the ejection of individuals during scrimmages.

### **Case BL-11-7- If a coach is ejected from a scrimmage or contest, how long is the suspension?**

The suspension is in effect for any further interscholastic competition on that day. (i.e., the freshman coach ejected during the first game may not be in the gym for the subsequent varsity game, baseball/softball coach ejected in first game of multiple game tournament may not be at field during any subsequent games that day) and at minimum, for the next three additional contests at that level. The suspension is considered immediate and indefinite at the level of play at which the ejection occurred. The suspended coach may not participate in another contest at that level (JV, Freshman, Varsity, etc.) until being reinstated by a member of the Commission. Following review, the Commission may extend the suspension. For all coach ejections, the penalty

shall be a minimum of three game/meet/contests.

For all adults sitting out in an individual sport such as swimming, track or wrestling due to suspension, the penalty shall be for the entire meet schedule, not for a single event.

If the ejection was during one of the two preseason scrimmages, the penalty shall be served during the first regular season contests.

### **Case BL-11-8- If a player (participant) is ejected from a scrimmage or contest, how long is the suspension?**

The suspension is in effect for any further interscholastic competition on that day. (i.e., a freshman ejected during the first game may not be in the gym for the subsequent varsity game, baseball/softball coach participant ejected in first game of multiple game tournament may not be at field during any subsequent games that day) and at minimum, for the next additional contest at that level. The suspension is considered immediate and indefinite at the level of play at which the ejection occurred. The participant may not participate in another contest at that level (JV, Freshman, Varsity, etc.) until being reinstated by a member of the Commission. Following review, the Commission may extend the suspension.

Following the day of ejection, there shall be a minimum two additional games/meets/contests suspension for any participant ejected from a contest.

For participants sitting out in an individual sport such as swimming, track or wrestling due to suspension, this penalty shall include the entire meet schedule not for a single event.

If the ejection was during one of the two preseason scrimmages, the penalty shall be served during the first regular season contests.

### **TWICE THE HYPE**

Mark your calendars now to plan and attend the 2011 HYPE Student Leadership Conference. For the first time, the one-day conference has been expanded to fill the needs of students in more of the commonwealth. The first conference will be Monday, August 22, at The Lexington Center while a second date has been added for Tuesday, August 23, at the Bowling Green Convention Center. Additional conference information will be posted on the Association website and emailed to all schools in late July.

### **MEMBER SCHOOLS REMINDED ABOUT HEAT INDEX REQUIREMENT**

Each school participating in a fall sport is required to submit a Heat Index form. The form, GE20, is to be maintained by each fall sports team on every day that a practice of any type is held. The form is available on the KHSAA web site, <http://www.khsaa.org/forms/ge20.pdf> or <http://www.khsaa.org/forms/ge20.doc>.

Complete information about the heat index plan and the manner in which data is to be collected can be found on the KHSAA web site, <http://www.khsaa.org> and then pull down the KMA/KHSAA Heat Information near the bottom of the page. The most important single document is the temperature chart, which allows for you to enter the temperature at the site of practice/play and the humidity, and it gives you the heat index. It is from that index that the determination must be made as to the removal of any equipment or the cessation of practice or play.

## **SPORT UPDATES**

### *Baseball*

Congratulations to Central Hardin on capturing the 2011 Kentucky National Insurance State Baseball Tournament. A State Championship record crowd of 5,097 filled Whitaker Park to witness Central Hardin's win over Mercer County.

### *Basketball*

The proposal to change the limit of games in basketball from 23 including two tournaments, to a fixed limit of 30 games has been approved per the notice to the schools on June 14. There are no longer tournament counting exceptions.

### *Cheer*

The Annual Cheer Coaches Clinic will be held Saturday, Aug. 27 at the KHSAA Office. Information on the event, which is held in cooperation with KAPOS is posted under the Cheer/Spirit. Colorado High School Activities Association Associate Commissioner Rhonda Blanford-Green will be one of the featured clinicians. She is the current Chair of the NFHS Spirit Rules Committee.

### *Cross Country*

With the heat at extremes this past week we remind coaches to monitor the heat index carefully. Early morning or late evening practices would be the best alternatives to combat the heat.

### *Football*

Coaches and administrators reminded to review the regulations on preseason scrimmages, particularly the limitations when the team is in shoulder pads and other gear. Any school playing during week 0 only has one scrimmage session of 3 total hours. Also remember to log your practices once shoulder pads begin to be worn on the required forms.

### *Soccer*

This is a reminder that the mandatory rules clinics are now available online, free of charge, beginning July 22. Officials please mark your calendars, the two week window to take the Part II test opens on Aug. 15 (this is one of the requirements to be certified to work the postseason).

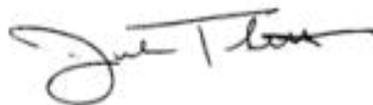
### *Volleyball*

The draw for the State Volleyball Tournament will be conducted Friday, Sept. 16 at 2 p.m. (ET). The event will be webcast live through the KHSAA website at [www.khsaa.tv](http://www.khsaa.tv). Coaches are reminded that participation in the Bluegrass State Games does not count toward the two scrimmage limitation and that beginning this year Volleyball teams are permitted to play a total of 35 varsity contests.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| August 22 | HYPE Student Leadership Conference,<br>Lexington Center, Lexington                       |
| August 23 | HYPE Student Leadership Conference,<br>Bowling Green Convention Center,<br>Bowling Green |

Thanks for all of your continued support!



Julian Tackett