

PREPARING FOR SUMMER AND NEXT YEAR

By Craig Perry
Associate Director

Our spring sport athletes and coaches across the state are all enjoying incredible weather and access to outdoor facilities. At the same time, school administrators and coaches are preparing for the summer and for next year. The information below should help you with those preparations.

Coaching Summer Waiver Rule

Just a quick reminder that the new provisions of Bylaw 208 regarding the coaching summer waiver period are in place this summer. The key points of the new rule are below.

- The summer waiver for coaches runs from June 1- July 31.
- There is a no-contact period July 1-July 7. During this time no member of the high school coaching staff can have contact with students who are members of the high school program. Below are some examples:
 - The girls' basketball coach cannot supervise the weight room if students who are members of the girls' high school basketball program are in the weight room.
 - The football coach cannot drive members of the football team on July 7 to a 7-on-7 passing camp.
- The intent of the no-contact period is to ensure there is no contact at all with the students and the coaches during this seven-day period.
- Baseball and softball coaches are exempt from the seven-day no-contact period.

With the exception of baseball and softball the summer waiver period also includes a one-week no-contact period in July the week of July 4.

The no-contact period for summer 2010 remains unchanged as July 1-7.

New Practice, Scrimmage and Jamboree Travel Rule for 2010-2011

At the April 12 League Board of Directors meeting the travel rule for practices, scrimmages and jamborees was addressed. Implemented with the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, practices, scrimmages and jamborees could be held no further than 25 miles from the Minnesota border. Effective with the 2010-2011 school year and, provided that school boards approve the travel, there will no longer be a travel restriction for practices, scrimmages and jamborees.

The policy revision will also include recommendations or guidelines that school boards consider when making travel decisions, such as a full accounting of anticipated revenues and expenses, compliance with Title IX requirements, and knowledge of the itinerary. Here is what the new policy for next year will allow:

- The baseball team could travel to Florida for scrimmages. However, the team will still be limited to three calendar days for scrimmages or two days of scrimmages and one day for a jamboree.
- During the season the Nordic ski team could travel to the upper peninsula of Michigan to train.

Remember, the travel limit has been removed, but high school programs are still limited to three calendar dates for scrimmages and jamborees.

Practice, Scrimmage and Jamboree Policy Clarification

Each high school program has the opportunity to participate in scrimmages or jamborees on three separate calendar dates each season. Schools have a choice of using those three dates either for three days of scrimmages or for two days of scrimmages with the third day used for a jamboree. Here are some definitions that will help you as you build your schedules.

Contest: Any event involving two or more schools as identified in the sport-specific NFHS rules book and which follow the MSHSL rules, policies and bylaws.

Practice: Practice shall be defined as sport-specific training and instruction involving students from your school and the approved coaches and instructors from your school.

Inter-school Scrimmage: Any sport-specific training, instruction or interaction that involves members of your high school program with individuals or students who are not members of your high school program or who are not students at your school.

The intent of the scrimmage rule has always been to allow interscholastic scrimmages. By definition, an interscholastic scrimmage involves high school students only. Scrimmages or practices with college, community college, or other non-school programs are not allowed.

Schools participating in scrimmages:

- MAY use a time clock in order to approximate certain game situations during which coaches may want to give instruction to their athletes.
- MAY NOT participate in sessions that approximate or equal actual game conditions. For example, a hockey scrimmage cannot have three, seventeen minute periods.
- MAY use officials.
- MAY NOT use a scoreboard or other device to keep score or show points scored.
- MAY NOT keep an official or unofficial score.
- MAY NOT keep an official or unofficial scorebook.
- MAY use practice jerseys.
- MAY NOT use game uniforms or any other school identifying apparel.
- MAY NOT advertise or promote the scrimmages.
- MAY NOT charge admission of any kind, or accept free-will donations.

Jamboree: Jamborees really are mini-games or matches that are similar to a regulation game or match. The following provisions can be found in Bylaw 411—Scheduling of Contests:

- All jamborees may be conducted following five separate complete days of practice. Participation in a jamboree will not count as a game or match. For basketball, football, hockey, lacrosse, girls' volleyball, each participating team is limited to a maximum of one-half of the regulation contest. For wrestling, each individual contestant will be limited to one two-minute match or period. It is strongly recommended that all squad members have an opportunity to participate.

Shared Facilities: Two or more schools sharing a facility for sport-specific training and instruction will be defined as a practice as long as there is no interaction between the students from each of the schools. For example, if two schools share a swimming pool it will be a practice if school A trains in lanes 1-3 and school B trains in lanes 4-6.

Alumni Participation in Practice: Alumni from your school may participate in your school's sport-specific practices and not count against one of your three allowable scrimmage dates. All alumni practice participation must be approved in advance by the athletic director. *League catastrophic insurance will not cover any participation that involves current students from your school and alumni from your school.*

Alumni Coaches: All alumni or any other individuals who volunteer to assist with the coaching or instruction of student athletes at your school must be approved in advance by the athletic director and must be identified as volunteer assistant coaches for your school. Minnesota Statute 123B.03, subdivision 1, requires background checks for all individuals who provide athletic coach services for your programs. Here is what the law says — "*Background check required. (a) A school hiring authority shall request a criminal history background check from the superintendent of the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension all individuals who are offered employment in a school and provide athletic coaching services or other extracurricular academic coaching services in a school regardless of whether any compensation is paid.*"

Sports Medicine Advisory Committee Recommendations

With nationally and internationally recognized medical professionals, the League's Sports Medicine Advisory Committee meets twice yearly to review current medical policies and resources for the member schools as well as create new initiatives to support the member schools. At the most recent meeting held on April 7 the committee made several recommendations to provide continued support and education for students, coaches and parents.

- The League will develop and distribute a head injury/concussion management program for student athletes, coaches and parents. This program will be available for the 2010-2011 school year and will provide general information and educational tools that will help better manage situations when a student athlete has an injury to the head.
- The Pre-Participation Physical form and the Health History Questionnaire have been updated for the 2010-2011 school year and are now available on the League Web site.
- The committee also suggests that staff continue to pilot electronic health history questionnaires at member schools and develop a plan for statewide use by all member schools.

Ad Hoc Committee Reviewing 100 Series Bylaws

An ad hoc committee comprised of more than two dozen administrators from across the state has been formed to review the 100 Series Bylaws — General Eligibility. Over the next six to eight months these athletic directors, principals and superintendents will review the bylaws, focusing the review of each bylaw in three key areas: 1) What is the intent of the bylaw? 2) How is the bylaw currently interpreted? 3) How are the provisions of the bylaw applied?

This group will look at current policy, the history behind the provisions, and also compare the League's policy to similar policies from the other 49 state associations for each of the 11 bylaws in the 100 series. The committee discussion points and recommendations will be shared with school administrators at the 2010 spring and fall area meetings. At the area meetings additional information will be gathered from attendees to lead future reviews by the committee. In November the committee will meet for the final time and at that point make formal recommendations for change.