School Sports are Vital
More than ever before, it is time to show why interscholastic athletics are so important.

All in the Family
Central Ohio bowlers with mental and physical challenges contribute to their teams’ successes.

Expansion Plan
Football has a new division and the NFHS has several new education courses and a partnership with LRG.

Heart of a Champion
With help from her Pilot Dog, Chloe, Lexington’s Sami Stoner didn’t let the loss of most of her eyesight take away her love of running.

Minister claimed its first baseball state title in 2011.
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You play hard, so you need gear that can keep up. From day one to championship moments, players know that Eastbay has the most sizes, the most products and the most selection — with pro gear you can’t find anywhere else. So whatever your game, we’ve got you covered.

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**Mission**

The Ohio High School Athletic Association’s mission is to regulate and administer interscholastic athletic competition in a fair and equitable manner while promoting the values of participation in interscholastic athletics as an integral part of a student's educational experience. The OHSAA represents its member schools by recognizing and promoting academics, the safety of participants, good citizenship and lifelong values as the foundation of interscholastic athletics.

**Commitment**

The Ohio High School Athletic Association is committed to serving its member schools by being the nation’s premier non-profit athletic administration organization.

**We will:**

- Provide exemplary athletic oversight through swift, fair, consistent and impartial regulatory rulings;
- Operate with openness that generates trust and with strict fiscal accountability;
- Provide impartial, responsive and inclusive leadership;
- Conduct tournaments of nationally recognized excellence; and
- Honor our ultimate purpose, which is to foster lifelong values, good citizenship, ethics and a fair-play approach to life among student-athletes while promoting safe and sporting-like athletic environments.

The OHSAA is a member of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), which consists of the 50 individual state high school athletic and/or activities associations and the association of the District of Columbia and nine Canadian organizations. These associations have united to secure the benefits of cooperative action and increased efficiency through the coordinating of ideas of all who are engaged in high school athletic and activities programs.

**NFHS Mission Statement**

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) serves its members, related professional organizations and students by providing leadership for the administration of education-based interscholastic activities, which support academic achievement, good citizenship and equitable opportunities.

- 51 State Associations • 20,000 High Schools • 500,000 Coaches and Sponsors
- 11,000,000 Student Participants • 500,000 Officials and Judges •
- 9 Canadian Associations • 14 Other Affiliate Members

Assistant Commissioner Roxanne Price congratulates Centerville seniors Brad Boll and Ruben Geeraert, along with head coach Scott Long (background), on their third place finish in the 2011 Division I doubles state tournament. Boll and Geeraert defeated Springboro’s Ryan O’Gara and Zach Berry 6-0, 6-1 in the final match of their career. The 2012 boys tennis tournament will take place at the newly renovated OSU Outdoor Varsity Tennis Courts May 25-26.
It’s Time to Show the Value of School Sports

Value. I am reminded of that word more now than ever before in my career with interscholastic sports. It seems like everything today has to have a dollar value placed upon it even when it is impossible to do that for the most important things.

For those who want to place a dollar amount on the value of school sports, how do you show the value of teamwork? How do you show the value of all the life lessons learned or the overcoming of adversity? How do you show the value of the amount of pride a school and community takes in supporting its teams through the regular season and tournaments?

In so many of our schools, an actual dollar amount placed on that kind of enthusiasm and support could literally pass any levy. I see it every time I attend a contest and it is with pride that the OHSAA conducts postseason tournaments to create a stage for teams to display their talents at the highest level. The emotion I see on the faces of the kids is priceless and I know it will stay with them forever. Win or lose, they become better people because of the journey of a sports season, no matter where it ends.

Who would have ever guessed that school funding issues would force schools to consider dropping or significantly cutting their athletics programs? When I grew up and then got started in the education profession, it was such a great honor to wear your school colors and represent your team, your community and yourself through sports. To deny our kids that opportunity because of money is heartbreaking.

But those were also the days before AAU and Junior Olympics and club sports, among other things, began setting up shop and forever altering the landscape of amateur sports. Where is the academic accountability with those other programs? Where is the community support? Where is the emphasis on sportsmanship, teamwork and doing it the right way? Do they ‘Respect the Game’ like school sports are meant to do?

While I can understand and appreciate the desire to play at the highest level, non-school sports often leave so many lessons unlearned and the promises of college scholarships go unfulfilled. If the dollars spent chasing a Division I college athletic scholarship via AAU and travel teams were spent on education, just think how much more likely a college academic scholarship would become!

It is time that our schools, administrators, coaches and student-athletes make their voices heard that the value of school sports can’t even be measured and that the life lessons learned by playing on school teams fosters leadership and good citizenship. Our kids’ future depends on it.

Respectfully,

Daniel B. Ross, Ph.D., Commissioner Ohio High School Athletic Association

Prior to becoming the commissioner of the OHSAA in August 2004, Dr. Dan Ross served as a school superintendent for 21 years at three districts, including Patrick Henry (1983-86), Pickerington (1986-97) and Avon Lake (1997-2004). He has more than 30 years in education, having served as a superintendent, principal, teacher, counselor, coach and official. Dr. Ross is a native of Portsmouth, Ohio, and graduated from Columbus St. Charles High School in 1967. He received degrees from Ohio Dominican, Xavier and Bowling Green. Dr. Ross was a registered OHSAA official for 20 years and was selected to work state finals games five times in boys basketball and twice in girls basketball while also being certified in volleyball and baseball.
## OHSAA Ready Reference Sports Dates (Subject to Change)

### SPRING 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>1st Practice</th>
<th>Scrimmages</th>
<th>1st Contest</th>
<th>State Tournament/Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Baseball**           | Feb. 20      | 4 scrimmages after practice begins or 3 scrimmages/1 preview (See Preview Date) | Mar. 24 | May 31-State Semis/Cols. Huntington Park (Div. II & I)  
June 1-State Semis/Cols. Huntington Park (Div. III & IV)  
June 2-State Finals/Cols. Huntington Park (all 4 divs.) |
| **Softball**           | Feb. 20      | 4 scrimmages after practice begins or 3 scrimmages/1 preview (See Preview Date) | Mar. 24 | May 31-State Semis/Akron Firestone Std. (Div. IV & III)  
June 1-State Semis/Akron Firestone Std. (Div. II & I)  
June 2-State Finals/Akron Firestone Std. (all 4 divs.) |
| **Tennis (Boys)**      | Mar. 5       | One prior to first match | Mar. 26 | May 25/OSU Outdoor Varsity Tennis Courts (1st & 2nd rnds.)  
May 26/OSU Outdoor Varsity Tennis Courts (Semis & Finals) |
| **Track & Field**      | Mar. 5       | None Permitted | Mar. 24 | June 1-2/Ohio State Jesse Owens (Div. III, II, I) |

### FALL 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>1st Practice</th>
<th>Scrimmages</th>
<th>1st Contest</th>
<th>State Tournament/Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross Country</strong></td>
<td>Aug. 6</td>
<td>None Permitted</td>
<td>Aug. 20</td>
<td>Nov. 3/National Trail Raceway, Hebron (Boys III/II, Girls III/I)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Field Hockey**       | Aug. 6       | 4 scrimmages after practice begins plus 1 preview (See Preview Date) | Aug. 18 | Nov. 2 - State Semis/Upper Arlington H.S.  
Nov. 3 - State Finals/Upper Arlington H.S. |
| **Football**           | July 30      | 2 scrimmages or 1 scrimmage/1 preview plus 1 Jamboree game between August 7-August 18 | Aug. 20 | Nov. 2 - Reg. Quarterfinals (Div. II, IV, VI)  
Nov. 3 - Reg. Quarterfinals (Div. I, III, V)  
Nov. 9 - Reg. Semifinals (Div. II, IV, VI)  
Nov. 10 - Reg. Semifinals (Div. I, III, V)  
Nov. 16 - Reg. Finals (Div. II, IV, VI)  
Nov. 17 - Reg. Finals (Div. I, III, V)  
Nov. 23 - State Semis (Div. II, IV, VI)  
Nov. 24 - State Semis (Div. I, III, V)  
Nov. 30 - State Finals (Div. VI-Massillon; Div. IV-Canton; Div. II-Massillon)  
Dec. 1 - State Finals (Div. III-Canton; Div. V-Massillon; Div. I-Canton) |
| **Golf**               | Aug. 6       | 1 scrimmage any time during season | Aug. 10 | Oct. 12-13 (Bill, Gill, Bill/OUS& NorthStar, Sunbury)  
Oct. 19-20 (Bill & Gill/OH State) |
| **Soccer**             | Aug. 6       | 4 scrimmages after practice begins plus 1 preview (See Preview Date) | Aug. 18 | Nov. 6-7-State Semis (B-Btch; G-7th)/Sites TBA  
Nov. 9-State Finals/Columbus Crew Stadium, (Boys Div. III, II, I)  
Nov. 10-State Finals/Columbus Crew Stadium, (Girls Div. III, II, I) |
| **Tennis (Girls)**     | Aug. 6       | 1 scrimmage prior to first match | Aug. 13 | Oct. 19/OSU Outdoor Varsity Tennis Courts (1st & 2nd rnds.)  
Oct. 20/To Be Announced |
| **Volleyball**         | Aug. 6       | 5 scrimmages after practice begins plus 1 preview (See Preview Date) | Aug. 25 | Nov. 8-State Semis/Wright St. Nutter Ctr. (Div. II & I)  
Nov. 9-State Semis/Wright St. Nutter Ctr. (Div. IV & III)  
Nov. 10-State Finals/Wright St. Nutter Ctr. (all 4 divs.) |

### WINTER 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>1st Practice</th>
<th>Scrimmages</th>
<th>1st Contest</th>
<th>State Tournament/Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Basketball (Boys)**  | Nov. 2       | 5 scrimmages after practice begins plus 1 preview (OHSA Foundation Game may replace 1 scrimmage) (See Preview Date) | Nov. 30 | Mar. 21 – State Semis/OSU Value City Arena (Div. III and II)  
Mar. 22 – State Semis/OSU Value City Arena (Div. IV and I)  
Mar. 23 – State Finals/OSU Value City Arena |
| **Basketball (Girls)** | Oct. 26      | 5 scrimmages after practice begins plus 1 preview (OHSA Foundation Game may replace 1 scrimmage) (See Preview Date) | Nov. 23 | Mar. 14 – State Semis/OSU Value City Arena (Div. III and II)  
Mar. 15 – State Semis/OSU Value City Arena (Div. IV and I)  
Mar. 16 – State Finals/OSU Value City Arena |
| **Bowling**            | Nov. 2       | None Permitted | Nov. 16 | Mar. 1 – Girls/Wayne Webb’s Columbus Bowl  
Mar. 2 – Boys/Wayne Webb’s Columbus Bowl |
| **Gymnastics**         | Nov. 2       | None Permitted | Dec. 3  | Mar. 1 – Team/Hilliard Bradley H.S.  
Mar. 2 – Indiv. & AA/Hilliard Bradley H.S. |
| **Ice Hockey**         | Nov. 2       | 4 scrimmages after practice begins or 3 scrimmages/1 preview (See Preview Date) | Nov. 23 | Mar. 9 & 10 – Nationwide Arena, Columbus |
| **Swimming/Diving**    | Nov. 2       | None Permitted | Nov. 26 | Feb. 20-21, 23 – Diving/Canton Branin Nat.  
Feb. 21-23 – Swimming/Canton Branin Nat. |
| **Wrestling**          | Nov. 9       | 4 scrimmages after practice begins or 3 scrimmages/1 preview (See Preview Date) | Nov. 30 | Feb. 28-Mar. 2 – OSU Value City Arena |

**NOTE:** Dates and locations are subject to change
Some time ago, the OHSAA published a brochure entitled “School Sports Are Vital to Ohio’s Youth.” In fact, there are still copies available at the OHSAA office and it’s posted on the ‘Member Schools’ page at OHSAA.org.

I mention this because I happened to see a copy sitting on a table before one of our recent Board of Directors meetings at the OHSAA office and I picked it up, wondering if I could determine the year it was printed based on the photos. My mind quickly changed focus, however, when I started reading the content.

Even though it was printed about 10 years ago, I was struck by how applicable the content is today because of how school sports are being threatened in many school districts for financial reasons. Even as recent as 10 years ago when the brochure was printed, who would have guessed that coaches and student-athletes would have to fight to see the after-school activities that comprise such an important part of the educational process.

I know that budgets are tight in every school district in Ohio. The budget is very tight in my school district down in Portsmouth, too. But reducing or taking away sports opportunities can have devastating consequences. Kids who play school sports tend to have better grades, better attendance, fewer discipline problems and are more likely to pursue a college education.

As the brochure so accurately says, the mission of school sports is to support and provide motivation for the academic programs of the school, as well as provide experiences of a lifetime, establish a sense of community and develop healthy lifestyles for students that last for years to come.

Those values are often absent from AAU, club and Junior Olympic sports. School sports are about so much more than just playing games and winning or losing.

And what better place to learn teamwork, sportsmanship, time management, patience and hard work than by playing school sports alongside the students, coaches and teachers who are such a big part of the educational process.

As the 2011-12 school year comes to a close, I am proud to look back and say that this Board of Directors worked hard to promote and assist those ideals of interscholastic athletics. The work is not finished, however, and we must do all that we can to promote school sports and keep them as a vital part of a young person’s education.

After all, school sports exist to prepare our children not for the next level of sports, but for the next level of life.

Sincerely,

Tony Mantell, President, OHSAA Board of Directors
TOUGH TO BEAT DOWN THE STRETCH

With Perrysburg mounting a comeback charge, scoring two runs in the seventh inning and threatening to score again, Liberty Township Lakota East senior second baseman Craig Thomson (#4) made a diving stop and throw, in which senior first baseman Mitch Geers (#23) was able to stretch and stay on the base to record the last out of the Thunderhawks’ 6-2 victory over the Yellow Jackets in the 2011 Division I baseball state championship game. In seven tournament games, Lakota East allowed only seven runs, while scoring 43 offensively. The state championship was the Thunderhawks’ first in baseball. The 2012 OHSAA Baseball State Tournament returns to Huntington Park in Columbus, May 31-June 2.
LIVING UP TO THE NAME

Warren Champion senior Tawny Rogers races for third during one of the tournament-record three triples she hit in the 2011 OHSAA Division III softball state championship game. Behind solid pitching from All-Ohio junior Lindsay Swipas (inset photo), Rogers and the Champion Golden Flashes completed a 27-0 season and brought home their school’s fourth state championship trophy.
New Middletown Springfield then-junior Stephen Lyons prepares for one of his throws during the 2011 OHSAA boys Division III state shot put competition. Lyons’ long throw of 58’ 2” was good enough for a second place finish behind McDonald senior Matthias Tayala’s 64’ 8” throw. The 105th annual boys and 38th annual girls OHSAA state track and field meets will return to Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium at The Ohio State University June 1-2.
FOOTBALL ELIGIBILITY REMINDER

The OHSAA has received numerous questions with regard to student-athletes participating in football outside of the school season. Please remind your students participating in ANY type of football: tackle, arena style, 7 v 7, touch, flag, etc., outside of the school season will result in ineligibility for the upcoming season. Athletes that participated for their school team last fall are prohibited from participating in any type of football from the end of the football season until June 1, 2012. Beginning June 1, 2012, and ending July 31, 2012, athletes may participate in non-contact 7 v 7 football. Athletes that participate in football outside of these parameters will be subject to the loss of one school football season. Athletes that participated for football outside of the school season until June 1, 2012, may participate in non-contact 7 v 7 tournaments are now offered and beginning June 1, 2012, athletes may participate in non-contact 7 v 7 football. Athletes that participate in football outside of these parameters will be subject to the loss of one school football season. A number of 7 v 7 tournaments are now offered in the months of April and May. The plan will place the top 10 percent of schools based on enrollment in Division I, with the remaining 644 schools divided evenly among the next six divisions. This will leave 72 schools in Division I with the other six divisions averaging approximately 108 schools. Each of the seven divisions will continue to qualify 32 teams to the tournament. Currently, the six OHSAA football divisions are comprised of an average of 120 schools per division.

The plan for adopting an additional division was in response to a concern by some OHSAA member schools about the enrollment disparity that exists in Division I, where the current range is 494 males at the lower end of the division to 1,164 at the top. Based on current enrollment data, the lower end of Division I would increase to 600 males. Committee meetings were held to address the issue and the recommendation to add a seventh division came from the committee.

“Adding a seventh division not only helps address the enrollment disparity in Division I, but it also will create 32 more tournament opportunities for student-athletes, their schools and their communities, many of which have never or rarely experienced the playoffs,” Ross said. “The committee members believe that this is an issue unique to football, especially since not all schools qualify for the OHSAA football tournament.”

A separate committee, comprised of OHSAA Board and staff members, school administrators and the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association, will be formed to finalize the details of this plan. Among the details to be determined: adjustments to the Harbin Computer Ratings with the addition of another division; regional breakdowns and assignments for Division I, and dates in which specific divisions will play their tournament contests, including logistics of an additional state tournament contest.

Approval of an “athletic count” formula, which is included within a competitive balance proposal that OHSAA member school principals voted on during the annual referendum process that occurred between May 1 and 15, would also be factored in before placing schools into their respective tournament divisions.

The next two-year cycle for reassigning schools to tournament divisions begins in the fall of 2013. Based on current enrollment figures, a sample of the football tournament divisional enrollment ranges when adding a seventh division would be (again, keeping in mind that this will change before the 2013 season): Division I – 600 to 1,164; Division II – 410 to 599; Division III – 288 to 409; Division IV – 216 to 287; Division V – 159 to 215; Division VI – 114 to 158, and Division VII – 30 to 111. The current football tournament divisional enrollment ranges, which run through 2012, are: Division I – 494 to 1,164; Division II – 327 to 493; Division III – 243 to 326; Division IV – 172 to 242; Division V – 120 to 171, and Division VI – 30 to 119.

This is the first time the OHSAA has expanded the number of football tournament divisions since 1994, when a sixth division was added. Five years later, the number of tournament qualifiers in each division expanded from 16 to 32. When the tournament first began in 1972, there were three football tournament divisions, and expansion to five divisions occurred in 1980.

LEFT: Upper Sandusky’s Marissa Linhart competes in the 2011 OHSAA girls Division II 100-meter hurdle preliminaries. The 10th annual boys and 39th annual girls OHSAA state track and field meets will return to Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium at The Ohio State University June 1-2.

RIGHT: Trotwood-Madison’s Israel Green broke four individual state championship records in the Rams’ 42-28 Division II championship game victory over Akron in 2011. The junior running back set records for most touchdowns in a game in all divisions (6), most rushing touchdowns in a game in all divisions (6), most points in all divisions (36) and most rushing yards in a game for Division II (326). The state championship was Trotwood-Madison’s first in football after claiming Division II state runner-up honors in 2010.

OHSAA TO ADD SEVENTH FOOTBALL DIVISION

Division I Will Be Reduced to 72 Schools; Plan to Begin in 2013

The Ohio High School Athletic Association will be adding a seventh tournament division in football beginning in 2013, Commissioner Daniel B. Ross has announced. The addition of a seventh division was approved by the OHSAA’s Board of Directors by a 6 to 3 vote during its regularly scheduled meeting in April.

The plan will place the top 10 percent of schools based on enrollment in Division I, with the remaining 644 schools divided evenly among the next six divisions. This will leave 72 schools in Division I with the other six divisions averaging approximately 108 schools. Each of the seven divisions will continue to qualify 32 teams to the tournament. Currently, the six OHSAA football divisions are comprised of an average of 120 schools per division.

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“Adding a seventh division not only helps address the enrollment disparity in Division I, but it also will create 32 more tournament opportunities for student-athletes, their schools and their communities, many of which have never or rarely experienced the playoffs,” Ross said. “The committee members believe that this is an issue unique to football, especially since not all schools qualify for the OHSAA football tournament.”

A separate committee, comprised of OHSAA Board and staff members, school administrators and officers of the Ohio High School
Emergency Announcement Plan

According to a recent survey by the National Association of Sports Public Address Announcers (www.NASPAA.net), 36 percent of public address announcers have had to make an emergency announcement at least once in their career that required fans to be evacuated. School administrators are reminded that an emergency evacuation announcement and similar announcements should be available at every contest and that schools should work with public address announcers to know the protocol to ensure safety in the event of an emergency.

NFHS Opposes U.S. Soccer’s New 10-Month Season

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), to which the OHSAA and all state associations belong, recently announced its opposition to the new 10-month boys soccer season adopted by U.S. Soccer, the sport’s governing body in the United States. As a result of the 10-month season, the approximately 4,000 boys who compete in the 78-team Development Academy will no longer be able to play soccer on their high school teams.

NFHS Licensing Program

In its second full year, the licensing program continues to grow and generate revenue for participating schools. Licensing Resource Group (LRG) has partnered with Home Team Marketing (HTM) in an outreach program to educate individual schools about protecting their marks and signing the individual school licensing agreement. LRG and HTM will continue contacting individual schools with program information through this school year and again in the fall. To date, more than 3,000 individual schools have signed up with the LRG program. We encourage participating states to promote this program to member schools so they can continue to receive revenue. Royalty revenue will be distributed by the end of this fiscal year (July 2012). Any questions on the program can be directed to Judy Shoemaker in the NFHS office or Dick Welsh at LRG, dwelsh@lrgusa.com or 516-492-9278.

OHSAA Cross Country Invitational Coming in August

The OHSAA will sponsor a cross country invitational at National Trail Raceway (site of the state championships) in August prior to the start of the regular season. Participation in the event would not count toward a team’s allotted total of 16 regular-season contests. Details will be posted on the cross country page at OHSAA.org as they are finalized.

OHSAA Partnership with OSU’s Schottenstein Center to Continue

In January, the Board of Directors approved a memorandum of understanding with The Ohio State University to extend the contract for the Jerome Schottenstein Center to host the OHSAA’s wrestling, girls basketball and boys basketball state tournaments through 2015.

NFHS Coach Education/Certification

The NFHS entered into an agreement with World Book to develop three courses for coaches. The program is called Pro Learner and continues on page 15
LEXINGTON – Sami Stoner has yet to cross the finish line in first place, but she has won over fans while trying.

In the process, she’s become a champion for teens with challenges.

Stoner, who is legally blind and a runner on the Lexington girls cross country team, is believed to be the first high school athlete in Ohio to compete with a guide dog.

“How could anyone in cross country complain when you look at what she is doing? It’s powerful stuff,” Lexington head coach Denise Benson said.

Yet, that powerful example almost wasn’t allowed to happen.

HISTORIC PRECEDENT

As with anything pioneering, Stoner’s quest was initially met with resistance.

“We had a hard time getting her approved through the OHSAA,” Lexington assistant coach Anne Petrie said. “(Athletic Director) John Harris went above and beyond to get Sami a dispensation.”

In order for Stoner to compete in events sanctioned by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, a waiver was needed. Harris made the phone calls to the organization’s Columbus office and was denied.

“Initially they thought they couldn’t do anything like that because in other sports it would be hard to compete with a Pilot Dog, as you could imagine in a sport like soccer, for example,” Harris said of the OHSAA’s concern about precedent.

But he wasn’t going to be denied. Harris continued to appeal to Dale Gabor, the director of cross country and track and field for the OHSAA, each time hashing out ways to safely allow Stoner to run.

“To be very honest and be what the OHSAA stands for, we want to accommodate any kids with disabilities,” Gabor said.

When OHSAA commissioners told Gabor it was his call, it didn’t take him long to search his soul.

“As I told John, she already has a handicap. She doesn’t need another one, so let her run,” Gabor said of the decision made in September. “We have to do what’s best for kids, and we either stand with them or we don’t.”

Gabor’s waiver came with conditions. Stoner has to wait 20 seconds after the start of the race before she can run. That’s to assure the dog doesn’t get spiked or inadvertently knock another runner over. Stoner can pass other runners, but she can’t impede them with the dog. She is to be a non-scoring competitor, and if finish chutes are deemed too small, she can’t cross the finish line with the dog for the same reasons she can’t start with the field.

“We agreed full-heartedly,” Harris said. “What’s happened to her isn’t fair, but she’s such a positive example for everyone, and it motivated me to get this done.”

Gabor, who has been around the sport for decades, believes Stoner is a trailblazer, possibly the first blind cross country runner to compete with a guide dog. He thinks she exemplifies the purpose of interscholastic sports, which is to broaden horizons.
The example she sets for those kids is phenomenal," Gabor said. "The funny thing is Stoner didn’t set out to be a role model, just a runner.

“I don’t run for time or place or anything. I run because I love it,” she said.

RUNNING WITH BLINDNESS

Like dozens of kids at Lexington, Stoner ran cross country in junior high, and she enjoyed the sport. However, in eighth grade, her vision began to worsen.

“When she started having eye problems, I thought that part of her life was over,” her father Keith Stoner said. “It took eight or nine months to get the diagnosis, and as you can imagine, the Internet is a wonderful thing and a scary thing.”

Stoner and his wife, Lisa, were trying to figure out what the problem was and what kind of future lay ahead for their daughter. When they finally got the diagnosis, it was a worst-case scenario. Sami had inherited Stargardt disease, a juvenile form of macular degeneration that robs children and teens of their central vision. She would soon be legally blind, although she retains some of her peripheral vision.

“I was devastated. You have hopes for your kids, and a lot of it has to do with the things you see. It was a tough time for all of us,” her father said.

Stoner’s only question for doctors was whether she’d ever get to drive a car.

“She was pretty down,” Keith said of the answer she received. “She was 14 at the time. She’s now 16 and a lot of her friends are getting licenses and it’s hard. She has a lot of wonderful friends and they are so good about picking her up and including her.”

One thing Stoner could do is run.

“When she ran in ninth grade, we wondered how she would do it,” Benson said.

Stoner ran with a companion runner. Hannah Ticoras became her guide, telling Stoner to watch for this root or that rut as they ran side-by-side.

The two became so close, members of the team began referring to them as Hami, a good-natured combination of Hannah and Sami.

But Ticoras graduated in 2010 and Stoner’s eyesight continued to fade, leaving many to wonder if she had a future in running competitively.

ENTER CHLOE

In the uncertainty arose an opportunity.

“Sami mentioned it to me as early as last spring,” Keith Stoner said. “She had a man come up from Columbus to work with her and he recommended her for a guide dog, and they’re pretty restrictive about that.”

Founded in Columbus, Pilot Dogs has been training guide dogs for the blind since 1950. It’s a private, nonprofit charity that requires a recipient to undergo an extensive screening process.

One of Stoner’s first questions was whether she could learn to run with the dog.

“There are individuals that do it and have run marathons. It’s her dog, but we caution against it,” Pilot Dogs director Jay Gray said. “The concern is not every individual is capable of it. It is very rare.”

Stoner had to spend four weeks this summer living full-time at Pilot Dogs, learning how to use her guide dog, a golden retriever named Chloe. Fortunately, Stoner’s and Chloe’s trainer was an avid runner.

“Her and Sami hit it off and they worked closely together,” Keith Stoner said. “They didn’t run enough because they had a lot to learn, but they did run.”

Stoner needed to work her way up to run distance races, and so did her year-and-a-half old compatriot. Chloe ran up to a mile for a week, then up to two miles for a week-and-a-half, then the three miles for cross country.

“It took a while for Sami and the dog to get conditioned to run that far,” Harris said. “I had complete faith that Chloe could function in this. My concern was with Sami and her safety and well-being. If you see them compete, they are basically one runner, and it’s hard not to get emotional.”

Benson was ecstatic for Stoner.

“I coached her for three years, and I could see how hard it was getting for her (to see), so I was excited about the opportunity Chloe would give her as an athlete,” the head coach said. “I was counting down the days until they could get back home together.”

When they did return, practices could be trying for Stoner. The dog is trained to come to a stop at all curbs, which makes running in town a difficult process.

There were other rules that had to be followed. Benson printed out a list of do’s and don’ts with the dog and gave them to the team and parents. Chief among the rules is no one is allowed to pet or address Chloe while the harness is on.

“At first it was a little awkward, but now it’s just a part of Sami and it is how it is,” Benson said.

RUNNING WITH CHLOE

Running cross country for a sighted runner can be harrowing. The ground is uneven and any number of sticks, ruts, roots, stones and bumps can knock a runner out of a race with an injury.

“It’s scary,” Stoner admitted. “You have to have a lot of trust, and good ankles help, too.”

It’s one thing coaching a runner with two legs, but what about one with four?

“We had to teach Chloe a certain gait,” Petrie said. “If you watch Sami and Chloe run together, you’ll see Chloe almost trot. What’s interesting is Sami is guiding the dog, really. The dog is following Sami’s commands. The dog is not pacing Sami; Sami is pacing the dog.”
At times, Stoner looks as though she’s running with her eyes closed, but she’s really using what’s left of her peripheral vision to see her next step. Meanwhile, Chloe looks straight ahead to make sure all is clear in front of the duo.

“I’m just trying to stay focused to keep her focused,” Stoner said. “I thought she would go toward the people cheering, but she barely looks to her sides. She just keeps amazing me.”

Cross country races can be chaotic, with fans crossing the running path, people yelling and other dogs brought by spectators running about, but Chloe just runs, and so does Stoner.

“I think she’s geared toward racing now, which is very cool,” Petrie said.

Cross country courses aren’t always marked well, so it’s important that they get a trial walkthrough before a race.

“She kind of gets a feel for how the course goes,” Stoner said. “While we’re running, she leads me around roots and stuff, and when she turns, I can feel it in the harness so I can just kind of follow her so she can find a clear spot.

“It looks a lot harder than it really is.”

It looks uncomfortable for Stoner as she hangs onto the harness across the dog’s back with her left hand and holds a leash with her right hand, so she’s essentially running with little arm movement.

“Anyone who thinks it’s helping her needs to try to run with one arm while holding onto a dog. It’s hard to run with a dog,” Benson said.

But Stoner has adapted.

“In the last race her paw got scuffed up, so I didn’t do the cool down with her. I was running by myself, and I thought I was going to fall over. I felt so off balance. It’s just something you get used to,” Stoner said.

Last year while running with her companion runner, Stoner ran a 31:19 at Ontario. A year later with Chloe, that time dropped to 30:24 while giving away 20 seconds at the start. Stoner may have started last, but she didn’t finish last, passing seven runners on the course at Marshall Park in late September.

“It’s a very good feeling,” Stoner admitted through an aw-shucks smile.

A CHAMPION

Chloe has become not only an accepted member of the team, but of the school.

“She just sleeps through all her classes,” Stoner joked. “I’m a little bit jealous, but it’s all right.”

Harris said the dog goes unnoticed, lying by Sami’s side until it’s time to switch classes. In the hallway when it’s busy, Chloe acts as a wedge between the crowd and Stoner to make sure no one inadvertently bumps into her.

Stoner is enjoying the high school experience. Petrie and Benson, who taught her science and math respectively in that trying year as an eighth-grader, marvel at her spirit.

“She’s just an incredibly brave young lady,” Petrie said. “She gets great grades. I also coach her in Destination Imagination, a creative problem solving group. It’s more of an academic team, and I’ve coached her for four years in that. She is so creative. She writes songs. She acts. She’s very modest and won’t tell you that.”

In the early stages of the disease, teachers would make special copies for Stoner with enlarged high-contrasting print. Now she works exclusively off an iPad.

“She does the same things as any student. She’s just doing what she can to equalize the playing field,” Benson said. “She’s such a wonderful young lady, and she’s not letting her disabilities dictate who she is.”

And that’s been the case in cross country.

“Each and every day, that’s what my job is — to coach,” Benson said. “She doesn’t want to be treated any less. She has goals for the race.

“She is able to do this sport, and that’s what is so great. Sami has ability. And I think she can get to 24 minutes.”

Stoner admits this is a learning year with Chloe.

“We’re just hoping to keep on racing and hopefully keep breaking our times. We’re just trying to do our best. Hopefully, next season we can just keep getting better,” she said.

Keith Stoner, who is a member of the Lexington school board, is grateful to Benson and Petrie for all their work with his daughter and her dog. He appreciates Harris for his tenacity in getting her waiver and the OHSAA and Gabor for granting it. Most of all, he’s thankful for everyone’s acceptance of Sami and the school’s understanding of her plight.

“It’s a great message,” he said. “She’s never going to be up front getting a medal, but as far as my wife and I are concerned, she wins every race.

“I’m thankful that puppy was brought into our lives.”

That puppy turned a teen-aged girl into a champion.
In the 75th anniversary of the OHSAA state wrestling tournament, Apple Creek Waynedale senior Zebulun Beam won the Division III 160-pound weight class in 2012. Beam’s win helped lead the Golden Bears to a Division III team title when they defeated runner-up Troy Christian by 22.5 points. The wrestling state championship was Waynedale’s first.

continued from page 11

In addition, “Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment,” a one-hour online course, is now available. This course presents content on abusive situations (sexual harassment, emotional abuse, physical abuse and verbal abuse), hazing and bullying (including cyber-bullying), and how the Internet and technology play a role in all of these situations. The coach is provided data on the extent of these problems as well as guidance on the role he/she must play to protect the health and safety of students.

**OHSAA Honors 30 Schools with Awards**

In October, the OHSAA Board of Directors accepted a list of 30 schools that have been honored by the OHSAA’s Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity Committee for sportsmanship. Eleven schools were named as having met the ‘Respect the Game Challenge,’ while 19 schools also were honored with the Harold A. Meyer Award. A separate press release is posted on the ‘News & Media’ page at OHSAA.org containing the list of schools and information about the awards program.

**2010-11 Audit Report Posted at OHSAA.org**

In April, the 2010-11 OHSAA Audit Report from the audit firm of Balestra, Harr & Scherer, CPAs Inc. was posted at OHSAA.org (click on the ‘About the OHSAA’ tab). Once again, the audit report received the best classification possible from independent auditors.

will provide online training for students in the areas of homework, test preparations, research and strategies for reading and learning. All courses come with the homework helper component. If the user purchases all three courses, the cost will be $75 and the course will be available to the student for one full year.

The projected launch date will be June 2012, at which time more information will be available for member schools. In response to needs from the membership, the NFHS is developing “A Guide to Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention.” This course will be provided at no cost to the user and will be available before July 4. The user simply registers on www.nfhs-learn.com – if he/she has not already done so – and orders the course. The course will take 20 minutes to complete and provides the following:

- Specific guidelines to acclimatize students to the heat
- Information about the importance of hydration in sport
- Information on the types of heat illness and the steps to take when the signs and symptoms of heat illness are present
- Many valuable printable resources in the course.

In June, the NFHS will replace “First Aid for Coaches” with a new course entitled “First Aid, Health and Safety for Coaches.”

AD SPOTLIGHT

**Scott Aronhalt**

Zanesville H.S.

When the OHSAA comes calling, searching for sites to host tournament games, Zanesville athletic director Scott Aronhalt answers.

Aronhalt and the Zanesville community routinely host tournament games for football, boys and girls soccer, volleyball and boys and girls basketball. This offering makes up six of the 24 sports that the OHSAA offers member schools.

Why does he do it?

“It’s great exposure,” says Aronhalt. “We have a community that enjoys hosting and a great core group of people that love to be here and feel that excitement and atmosphere.”

Aronhalt knows that finding host sites can be difficult, but he finds hosting an opportunity to show off the facilities at Zanesville, also citing it as a chance to bring in more revenue for the athletic department and school community.

When he is not hosting tournament games as athletic director, Aronhalt can be found inside the gym as the head coach of the Blue Devils’ boys varsity basketball team. He is in his 22nd year as basketball coach and his fifth year in the dual role. When asked about the challenges of coaching and being athletic director, his response is “enormous.”

“There aren’t enough hours in the day for just being athletic director, let alone to coach. Being in the gym is my stress relief.”

Aronhalt enjoys coaching, which is why he continues to fill both roles, and it allows him to not lose touch with the coaching point of view.

“It gives me a good perspective on what all of our coaches go through and the demands placed on them.”

During his time in high school athletics as a coach and athletic director, Aronhalt sees those demands on everyone rising, whether it’s practices and games, coach’s certification, student forms or financial demands.

“I’m not sure people realize how much goes into the job of coach or athletic director.”

Looking down the road, Aronhalt hopes that educational-based athletics remains a core of high school communities. He sees financial burdens being a constant hurdle for schools, but maintains that students who participate in extracurricular activities are better in the classroom.

“I would hate to see club sports take over and there be a separation between schools and athletics. It’s critical that we hang onto high school athletics.”

15 OHSAA www.ohsaa.org
The Reynoldsburg High School bowling team readies the lane for Lauren Sampson as if it was working on a well-trained assembly line.

One teammate brings a ramp to the foul line and Sampson, a freshman, pushes herself to it and gets in position. With the ball placed atop the ramp, Sampson, with a flick of her right hand, rolls it down the apparatus and down the lane.

One hundred pins or so later, Sampson concludes another day of contributing to the Raiders’ burgeoning success — in spite of spina bifida that confines her to a wheelchair.

“What Lauren appreciates is she’s treated like everyone else,” said her mother, Stacey Sampson. “Her teammates even gave her the nickname ‘Wheels.’ I was a little skittish about that at first, but she loves it. She has the opportunity to letter in a sport and that’s important to her. She wants to letter all four years.”

Lauren Sampson, who also enjoys riding horses, skiing and scuba diving, is one of a handful of central Ohio high school bowlers with a physical or mental challenge. Hilliard Darby junior Heather Miller entered the week with five 200 series this season despite being legally blind, Westerville North senior Erin

Students Earn Equal Opportunities on Lanes

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Moore has Down syndrome and Haugland Learning Center — a school in Dublin serving more than 200 youths with autism and related behavioral issues — is fielding a six-person team for the second consecutive year.

“We’ve always been open to everybody,” said Jo Dimond, coordinator of the Central Ohio High School Bowling Conference and Central Ohio United States Bowling Congress Association manager. “The only setback would be any delay of the game. We start games at 4 p.m. to give teams time to get to the lanes after school and must be off the lanes at 5:15 in a lot of places, usually (to give way to) leagues.

“But we’ve always been a sport where we want everybody that can participate to participate.”

Before a Jan. 18 match against Columbus East, Sampson had rolled two triple-digit games this season — 108 in the opener against Walnut Ridge on Dec. 5 and 103 against Newark on Jan. 5.

“People don’t realize how difficult a sport bowling is,” Westerville North coach Dean Dabe said. “A coach in basketball is thrilled if a kid shoots 70 percent from 20 feet away, and there’s nothing between him and the basket but air. In bowling, you’re 60 feet away and there’s no telling what a lane pattern might be like. The oil might be applied to the lane in various ways. We’re asking someone to bowl that and be perfect every time.

“But really, bowling is all-inclusive. It doesn’t matter if you’re 4-foot-11 and 220 pounds or 6-foot-5 and 130 pounds. With good training and the right technique, it can be taught to anybody.”

Moore, who was averaging 103.2 through 19 games, achieved two season-bests with a 128 game and 227 series Dec. 16 against Olentangy Liberty. Her challenges in bowling are mostly manageable, Dabe said.

“We run into situations every once in a while where her attention span is short and wanders. She has a tendency to get sidetracked with other things, but that doesn’t last long,” he said. “Sometimes she might stop a foot behind the foul line instead of four or five inches. There might be difficulty with her arm swing when she releases the ball, which comes with hand-eye coordination. But once she catches on, she is pretty good. She is as competitive as any girl on our team. There are some subtle things that require a little additional coaching for her to understand, but she is smart. She learns fast.”

Miller was diagnosed as a toddler with optic nerve hypoplasia, which means her optic nerve is small, pale and missing several fibers. That left her legally blind in both eyes and largely without peripheral vision, but it has not prevented her from taking part in bowling as well as track and field.

Miller rolled a 248 series Dec. 13 against Worthington Kilbourne and had a 151 game Dec. 7 against Hilliard Davidson.

“She has had games in the 140s and 150s and she will have games in the 60s,” Darby coach Bob Clute said. “From what she has told me when she is standing on the lanes, she can see white blobs and she sort of situates herself. She keeps herself in the middle of the lanes. The scoring system puts what pins you have remaining and she will put her face right up to the screen to see what pins she has left.”

Six of Haugland Learning Center’s 10 high-school age students participate on the team, which was conceived when coach Gary Hardin — a one-time junior bowling coach — visited the school to seek admission for his son, Garrett, now a junior.

“I challenge any other school to have a 60-percent participation rate in a sport,” Gary Hardin said. “The biggest benefit is it gets the kids out and socializing. They’re competing as equals with others from around the area. Sometimes, interaction can be awkward for them. But I have yet to run across someone who hasn’t been accepting.”

Hardin said several of his bowlers have Asperger’s syndrome, a higher-functioning form of autism.

“A few kids weren’t sure which fingers to put in the holes (of the ball) at first. Once they did it a few times, you could see the light come on,” Hardin said. “The kids just get out and they have fun. They enjoy it. It’s worked well that way. You just need to be willing to try.”

Participating in a team atmosphere also can be an adjustment or an entirely new experience.

“It’s a whole different gamut being on a team as opposed to skiing or going horseback riding,” Stacey Sampson said. “It’s been a good thing (for Lauren). As a parent, you only want what’s best for your kid and want them to experience all they can. It gives some normalcy to high school, being able to have the opportunities every other student has.”

It’s a lesson coaches and parents hope transcends competition.

“They are so willing to help each other out. They’re so accepting,” Reynoldsburg coach Jean Martin said of her bowlers.

“That, to me, is what it’s all about, watching young people growing into decent adults.

“The win is nice, but to watch a person grow as a person and be a part of a team, that, to me, is what it’s about. And with me, everybody bowls. They want to learn, and they’re not going to learn unless they do it.”
**ONLINE ELIGIBILITY RESOURCES**

Due to the many questions surrounding the OHSAA Bylaws as they relate to student-athlete eligibility, the OHSAA website has a section dedicated solely to this area. In addition to the complete text of OHSAA Bylaws, the online eligibility resource center contains an Eligibility Guide for Student-Athletes, an Eligibility Checklist, an Eligibility Guide for Guidance Counselors, a list of Bylaw situations requiring the Commissioner’s Approval and a Transfer Bylaw Resource Center. Additionally, the eligibility resource center also contains various eligibility forms like the Pre-Participation Physical Exam Form, the Residential Transfer - Exception 6 Form, and the Affidavit for Bona Fide Residence Form, along with many others. All this information can be found at [http://www.ohsaa.org/eligibility/default.asp](http://www.ohsaa.org/eligibility/default.asp).

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**OATA REMINDS SCHOOLS TO BE PREPARED**

An Outline for the Development of an Emergency Action Plan

Unfortunately, injuries are a part of sports and prompt emergency care can help improve the chances for a positive outcome. In February 2012, the National Athletic Trainers’ Association released a position statement dealing with preventing sudden death in sports.

The first preventative step is to design an emergency action plan, or EAP. A plan should be developed for all sporting events/venues and should include all practice, travel and game situations and facilities. The plan should be written and everyone involved should be educated about the importance and components of the plan. The plan should be practiced on a regular basis.

Since licensed athletic trainers are highly educated and skilled athletic healthcare providers, it is highly recommended that a licensed athletic trainer be available to develop and monitor this plan along with the team physician. To assist in the development of EAPs, the Ohio Athletic Trainers’ Association’s Secondary School Committee has developed an outline which can be found at [www.oata.org](http://www.oata.org) or in the sports medicine section at [www.ohsaa.org](http://www.ohsaa.org). Once the EAP has been developed, the outline shown below can be used to introduce the plan to the various athletic teams.

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**EMERGENCY PLAN WORKSHEET**

Use this worksheet at the beginning of each season to develop an emergency plan. Discuss this plan with your team and assign each member of your team a responsibility. Practice this plan on a regular basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Performed by:</th>
<th>Title:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Aid/CPR</td>
<td></td>
<td>Head Coach/Athletic Trainer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call 911</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coach/Athletic Trainer (include direct line #)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hello my name is __________________________ I am calling from __________________ and I need emergency medical personnel to report to _____________________________.

We have an injured athlete with __________________________ injury.

Notify Parents: Telephone numbers will be kept at ___________________________.

Medical kits/plints: The medical kit will be kept at ___________________________.

Unlock gates/doors: The coach will keep the keys at ___________________________.

Crowd Control: Guide EMS: One reports to outside door/gate, one reports to building/field entrance, one meets EMS at parking lot/driveway.

Belongings: Rides to Hospital: Gather Team: Get Athletic Trainer: Documentation: ________________ ________________ ________________ ________________

Student Athlete or Parent/Sibling Assistant Coach Team Captain Student Athlete Head Coach/Athletic Trainer

All responsibilities should be assigned to at least two people in case someone is not present or they are the one involved.

The plan should address all facilities which the team will use such as the practice fields, weight room, and locker room and game field. The plan should also address emergencies such as fires and inclement weather. This plan should be practiced on a regular basis.

Emergency numbers: Athletic Trainer Team Physician Emergency Medical/Fire Police Hospital Athletic Director

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**Columbus Bishop Hartley junior Brooke Betts goes up for a kill against Kettering Archbishop Alter senior Kristen Kaiser during the 2011 OHSAA Division II volleyball state championship game. Betts finished the match with 16 kills and helped the Hawks bring home their first state volleyball crown. The 2012 OHSAA volleyball state tournaments return to the Ervin J. Nutter Center on the campus of Wright State University Nov. 8-10.**
Developing an Exciting & Winning Athletic Department Culture

By Christopher Stankovich, Ph.D., OHSAA Magazine Contributor

Every interscholastic athletic director wants to develop a safe, meaningful and successful athletic program, one that not only contributes toward a better overall school culture, but adds excitement to the community as well. When schools develop these kinds of athletic departments, student-athlete participation increases, student attendance at games increases and community support improves through greater participation in fundraisers, bond approvals and other supporting ways. It is for these reasons, along with many others, that it behooves school administrators to invest in their efforts toward creating an exciting and winning athletic culture within their schools.

When it comes to developing a positive athletic department culture, there is both good and bad news to report. The good news is that every school can improve its athletic culture, and these efforts will result in a better overall athletic experience for the student-athletes and coaches involved. More good news is that when athletic departments thrive, this almost always impacts the overall culture of the school and community at-large. The bad news, however, is that improving athletic culture is not a passive process and does not happen by merely hoping things will get better. In other words, it takes work!

To help you get started with improving the culture within your athletic department, a short summary of tips and strategies are provided below:

• Start with a quick audit of your school – do you feel any sport spirit? Some schools do a great job with displaying the school logo, championship banners and trophies, and other unique ways to give you that winning feeling as soon as you enter their building. When kids come to school and feel like they are a part of something special, they usually take pride in their school identity and work hard to uphold the lofty standards set by the student athletes who came before them.

• When it comes to hiring coaches, how do you feel about the current hiring process? Does it include background checks and ongoing continuing education opportunities for coaches? Remember, the more oversight and training you provide, the better and more equipped your coaches will be when it comes to providing healthy and positive leadership to the kids they coach.

• Is your school athletic department mission statement and philosophy defined and visible for student athletes, coaches, and parents? With social media and the Internet, you might want to have this information clearly stated on your school's webpage and any other social media tools that your district approves.

• If you have an athletic department webpage, be sure to take the time to add all important forms, rules, parent information, and links to important contacts. You can also have fun with your webpage by adding pictures of current and former teams and student athletes, and even add video clips of recent games or standout performers.

• Indoctrinate freshmen student-athletes from the first day about the importance you place on school traditions, sportsmanship, integrity and the overall positive impact athletics has on the school and community. Help freshmen understand the responsibilities they will have over the next four years in being successful leaders and role models, and for helping the kids that come after them in the years ahead.

As we near the end of this school year, take time this summer to think about the many ways in which you can positively impact your athletic department in the future and in turn create a safe, fun and meaningful athletic experience for everyone involved, www.drstankovich.com

Geneva freshman Danielle Nicholson watches her tee-shot during the 2011 OHSAA girls Division I golf tournament. Nicholson fired a 73-70-143 to win medalist honors by three strokes over Marysville senior Tess Fraser. The Division I girls golf tournament returns to The Ohio State University’s Gray Course Oct. 19-20.

Dr. Chris Stankovich

Dr. Chris Stankovich is a professional athletic counselor, media spokesperson and author in the field of sport performance science. His doctorate degree is from The Ohio State University, with an emphasis of study in sport and health psychology. Known as “The Sports Doc” for his weekly television segment on Ohio News Network, he is also a featured national columnist for The Examiner. To learn more about Dr. Stankovich, including products and services, please visit www.drstankovich.com.
Zaborniak Retires from Big Ten Football Officiating

After 15 years as a Big Ten football official, OHSAA Assistant Commissioner Henry Zaborniak announced his retirement from college football officiating following the 2011 season, which was rewarded with an assignment to work the Cotton Bowl Jan. 6.

Zaborniak officiated in every Big Ten stadium during his career and worked every Big Ten rivalry game at least once except for the Ohio State-Michigan game. He also worked the annual Notre Dame-Southern California game three times.

Now in his 23rd year at the OHSAA, Zaborniak oversees the entire officiating program in Ohio, which has grown from about 11,000 officials when he took over the officiating department in 1989 to about 16,000 officials in 2011, which was rewarded with an assignment to work the Cotton Bowl Jan. 6.

“With about 16,000 registered officials in Ohio, the task of recruiting, training, leading and retaining officials is a never-ending process. OHSAA Assistant Commissioner Henry Zaborniak heads up that effort, which also includes oversight of the Directors of Officiating Development, the annual Handbook for Officials and regional and state tournament assignments.

An official himself since 1975, Zaborniak was a Division I college football official since 1990 and retired in January 2012 from his Big Ten Conference officiating crew (see sidebar). During his tenure at the OHSAA, he has seen the number of officials grow from about 11,000 when he took over the officiating department in 1989.

“There are three main reasons why the number of officials has gone up,” Zaborniak said. “First, we have done a better job recruiting officials and providing opportunities. The local officials organizations have been a big part of that. Second, we have better training now, so officials are more successful and more apt to stick around. And third, we have so many more sports and teams now that need officials to work their games. Girls sports, for example, were added in the 1970s, which has caused a prolific increase in the number of opportunities, and not just at the varsity level. There are so many youth teams and leagues out there, most of which require their officials to have some kind of OHSAA certification.”

Interscholastic sports officials are an important contributor to the development of young men and women. Because of this role, every official is expected to be a person of good character, integrity and free of racial, religious and personal bias. The sports official represents the very integrity of the game.

But officiating is even more than that. It can be a fulfilling and challenging avocation. It provides individuals with opportunities for physical fitness, earning extra income, meeting people, goal setting, continuing education and public service. Most importantly, officiating interscholastic sports provides officials with the privilege to play a vital role in the education of student-athletes.

As always, though, there are issues facing current and prospective officials. Zaborniak recently surveyed officials to find out what those issues are.

“It was interesting to see that behavior from coaches and student-athletes was not a problem, but it was the fans who were the problem,” Zaborniak said of the survey results. “We address all those issues ahead of time now, so hopefully there is less of a problem with those areas as what there used to be since they know what they are getting into before they begin. They understand that they have to dedicate themselves to studying the rules and attending meetings. If they are able to do those two things, they have a chance to be successful.”

OHSAA DIRECTORS OF OFFICIATING DEVELOPMENT

BASEBALL - KYLE MCNEELY
BASKETBALL - DENNIS MORRIS
FIELD HOCKEY - BILL GARDINER
FOOTBALL - BRUCE MAURER
GYMNASTICS - LORI POWERS-BAISINGER
ICE HOCKEY - GARY WILKINS
SOCCER - DON MUENZ
SOFTBALL - JERRY FICK
SWIMMING & DIVING - KEN GIPES
TRACK & FIELD - DALE GABOR
VOLLEYBALL - DIANE PLAS
WRESTLING - JIM VREELAND

OFFICIATING PROGRAM MISSION

Creating a competent community of sports officials who play a key role in developing Ohio student-athletes into good citizens of tomorrow.

OFFICIATING PROGRAM GOALS

• Recruit men and women of diversity into sports officiating
• Train prospective officials in order that they will have the entry level skills needed to enjoy officiating and competently manage lower level contests. In addition, train and educate the current officiating community in order to manage contests of all levels
• Support officials and their activities
• Reward officials through advancement opportunities, tournament assignments and enhanced fees
• Recognize officials and their achievements
• Develop leadership of local association officers, assigns, instructors and others
As the new Executive Director of the Ohio Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (OIAAA), I am personally and professionally excited about the game plan our organization will be pursuing over the next several years. Our mission to become the best organization for assisting our member athletic directors in providing quality, education-based interscholastic experiences for the young people and stakeholders of Ohio has never been more imperative in these challenging times.

With that being said, the OIAAA fully understands the broad scope of needs and continual evolvement of school sports. We know that, like most of your own efforts, we will need the support and collaboration of several groups to achieve our objectives. The OHSAA has long supported our organization and is a strong ally in promoting the true purpose of school-based sports in Ohio. One of the key ingredients to achieving many of our OIAAA goals will be the synergy created between our two organizations.

The focus of a body like the OIAAA really boils down to some simple, yet highly significant, themes:

- Provide training for our member athletic administrators to become “best practice” leaders within their school or district. We like to use the phrase, “The athletic director is a coach of coaches!”
- Promote the continuous training of all interscholastic coaches as they truly are TEACHER-COACHES regardless of their educational background. Why would we even have sports in our schools if we didn’t ask our coaches and our athletic teams to mirror our respective school’s educational mission?
- Encourage research, development and training of methods to utilize within our schools that enhance the educational process for our students, parents and communities. Re-visioning what we are truly charged to accomplish (provide education-based athletic programs) needs to always be our highest priority.
- Develop relationships, opportunities and forums to assist all Ohio stakeholders in attaining positive results from their interscholastic sports experience. We have tremendous resources available to us in our state that are prepared to partner with our member schools and associations in support of quality interscholastic athletic programming.

Challenges have always been a part of school-based athletics. However, I would venture to say every one of us, as Ohio school supervisors, officials, parents, contributors and student-athletes, absolutely understand the life-enhancing value and benefit of quality sport programming. We in the OIAAA are committed to providing the best opportunities to our students through our interscholastic sport programs. We look forward to helping facilitate those ideals in the coming years.
Jeff Jordan

After an 11-year stint at the Ohio Department of Education, Jeff Jordan joined the OHSAA’s administrative staff as Chief Financial Officer in August of 2011. He was director of finance program services for the ODE since 2006 and had oversight of districts in fiscal caution, watch and emergency. Between 2001 and 2010, he was responsible for the ODE’s Office of Federal and State Grants Management.

Jordan was appointed to an ex-officio position on the OHSAA Board of Directors by the ODE from 2001 through April 2011. He has been an OHSAA licensed basketball official since 1991.

As the OHSAA’s CFO, Jordan will oversee internal financial operations, the annual budget, tournament financial operations and the independent company that performs the annual audit. He will also serve as the financial advisor for the OHSAA Foundation.

Below: Columbus Africentric sophomore Sierra Harley drives to the basket during the 2012 OHSAA Division III state championship game against Anna. Harley scored 10 points in 28 minutes of action to help the Nubians win their school’s third state title. The girls basketball state tournament returns to the Jerome Schottenstein Center March 14-16.
**Circle of Champions**

Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year in conjunction with the Ohio High School Athletic Association centennial, the OHSAA has selected individuals who had prominent roles in the history of Ohio interscholastic athletics to become members of the OHSAA's Circle of Champions. The honorees not only had outstanding achievements at the high school level, but also have had outstanding achievements after their prep careers ended, have displayed outstanding character and serve as role models. The members are honored each year at the boys state basketball tournament in March.

### 2012
- Dick Snyder
- Barry Clemens
- Bob Haying
- LaVonna Martin-Floreal
- Harry "Butch" Reynolds
- Gene Tenace

### 2011
- Wayne Embry
- Jim Houston
- Harrison Dillard
- Madeline Manning Mims
- Phil Niekro
- John Havlicek

### 2010
- Tony Trabert
- Al Oliver
- Jesse Owens
- Howard "Hopalong" Cassady
- Jerry Lucas

### 2009
- Robin Freeman
- Larry Siegfried
- Mary Wineberg
- Dick Schafrath
- LeBron James

### 2008
- Bill Willis
- Galen Cisco
- Susan Nash Sugar
- Jim Lachey

### 2007
- Todd Blackledge
- Jay Burson
- Dean Chance
- Archie Griffin
- Bill Hosket
- Dante Lavelli
- Cindy Noble Hauserman
- Katie Smith
- Clark Kellogg

### Tournament Draw Dates & Tournament Regulations

#### Spring Sports - 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Draw/Seeding Meeting Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys Tennis</td>
<td>4/29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>4/29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>4/29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track &amp; Field</td>
<td>5/6</td>
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#### Fall Sports - 2012

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Draw/Seeding Meeting Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>9/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Tennis</td>
<td>9/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Hockey</td>
<td>10/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Country</td>
<td>10/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>10/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>10/7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Winter Sports - 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Draw/Seeding Meeting Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swimming &amp; Diving</td>
<td>1/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>1/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrestling (Individual)</td>
<td>1/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrestling (Team Dual)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Basketball</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Hockey</td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys Basketball</td>
<td>2/10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tournament regulations are available online at OHSAA.org by going to the individual sport homepage, under Tournament Info, on the left-hand sidebar of the webpage. These tournament regulations are posted and updated once a tournament draw has occurred.
The OHSAA Foundation once again hosted three Student Leadership Conferences this March for over 500 Ohio high school student-athletes of sophomore and junior ranking.

The conference attendees gathered to discuss a variety of roles in sports, through both peer discussion and personal reflection. In between presentations and guest speakers, attendees split into group sessions and discussed building character through athletics, finding equality in sports and identifying careers in the sports industry.

"[Our student-athletes] made it a point to come to my office and tell me that it was awesome," said Tony Pusateri, Athletic Director of Dublin Coffman High School. "They loved the speakers, the fellowship and the food!"

Founded in 1997, the OHSAA Foundation was created to provide scholarship, leadership and service opportunities through active engagement among Ohio’s exemplary student-athletes, beginning with a single annual leadership conference in Columbus. The organization has since increased the amount of annual conferences and continues to offer scholarships to Ohio’s student-athletes.

"We couldn't be happier about how everything turned out," said Kim Combs, Executive Director of the OHSAA Foundation. "We were fortunate enough to bring in an assortment of incredible speakers to help us out and engage the audience."

Harvey Alston, motivational speaker and author of “Be the Best,” headlined each of the conferences. Each conference also featured a unique keynote speaker for attendees. Former NFL quarterback Todd Blackledge shared his expertise at Kent State University-Stark, a panel of former Ohio student-athletes provided insight at Wright State, and Jack Hanna, with a few of his animal friends accompanying him, spoke at the Columbus Zoo.

"Thanks for a good day at the Leadership Conference," said Mark Carden, Athletic Director of Struthers City Schools. "Our kids enjoyed it and what dynamic speakers Mr. Alston and Mr. Blackledge were. We took home some valuable information and lessons."

A range of experts in education and sports management gave presentations to support Alston and the guest speakers, offering observations and tips about leadership skills, respect, sportsmanship and service opportunities.

The leadership conferences were held in Columbus on March 12, Dayton on March 27 and Canton on March 28. Conference photos, further information and notifications about future events sponsored by the OHSAA Foundation can be found on the organization’s Facebook page.
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As a Farmers Agent, there is no limit to your income potential; you set your own hours, which can complement your full-time officiating or coaching career.

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One of the many rewards of business ownership is that after years of building your agency, you have a valuable asset, your agency. The work that goes into the development of your agency can be passed onto a qualified family member once you retire.

Farmers is a national insurance company, and has been a leader in the insurance industry for over 80 years. A Farmers agent provides customers with valuable and reliable services, backed by a company that will be here tomorrow and when you are in need.

As a Farmers agent, you will work with your customers, letting them know what coverages are available to them through every stage of their lives. Farmers agents offer their communities auto, home, business and life insurance products. Farmers is now more than an insurance provider. Today, Farmers provides its customers with financial services that help them achieve their dreams and insurance products that help solve their worries.

If you would like more information on becoming a Farmers agent, please visit www.farmers.com or call 1-800-FARMERS.
The OHSAA Girls and Boys Basketball Championships heat up the Schottenstein Center every March and this year was no different. With more than 190,000 in paid attendance over the two weekends, girls and boys teams from across the state battled to the buzzer for the opportunity to be called state champions.

In addition to all the fans in attendance, OHSAA partners were there to show support for student-athletes across the state and to promote their various products and initiatives. The OHSAA would like to thank all of its corporate partners for their generous support of the association, the Board of Directors, coaches, officials and student-athletes in Ohio.

**FARMERS INSURANCE**

Farmers Insurance is the presenting sponsor and “Official Insurance Provider” of the OHSAA for all eight games broadcast on SportsTime Ohio. State office representatives, district managers, agents and staff attended games throughout each weekend to support their local towns in their fight for the championship. Specifically, agents showcased Farmers’ products and services to fans in the concourse, were announced as “Agent of the Game” and sponsored the starting lineups for their hometowns on STO broadcasts. To top off the weekend, State Executive Director Dan Lewis was interviewed during the Division 1 game on Saturday night.

**SPORTSTIME OHIO / TIME WARNER CABLE**

SportsTime Ohio is the “official broadcast partner” of the OHSAA Basketball Championships. All eight girls and boys championship games were broadcast live in HD on SportsTime Ohio and then carried throughout the state through Time Warner Cable’s network. Additionally, parents and fans can order DVD copies of each game from the OHSAA or watch the action at any point on Time Warner Cable OnDemand Channel 411.

**EASTBAY**

For the third year in a row, Eastbay sponsored the OHSAA Basketball State Championships. At all events, Eastbay had signage, PA announcements and program ads. Eastbay merchandise was also sold through Korporate Kasuals at on-site booths and kiosks. In case you didn’t pick up the latest gear during the basketball championships, Eastbay products are going to be sold at all OHSAA championship spring events or can be found online at eastbay.com/ohsaa.

**MARATHON PETROLEUM COMPANY**

Marathon was proud to be the “Official Fuel Service” provider of the OHSAA at this year’s Boys and Girls Basketball Championships. Marathon had PA announcements and program ads, as well as high profile brand placement of LED and scoreboard graphics and a floor decal on the court. During each broadcast on SportsTime Ohio, Marathon sponsored the “Marathon Keys to the Game” for each team. The popular “Marathon Spirit Shot” was a huge success this year! During each semifinal and final game, one student from a participating high school had a chance to win a Marathon gas card, branded sling bag and commemorative basketball. A total of $4,200 in gas cards was given away between the two championship weekends! Marathon... fueling the American Spirit!

**AMERICAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION MIDEAST**

It would have been impossible to miss the American Dairy Association (ADA) during the OHSAA basketball championships. Signage, PA announcements and program ads, which educated fans about the nutritional and health benefits of chocolate milk, were displayed at all championships events. The ADA provided chocolate milk to all student-athletes and foam fingers to the fans during the basketball championships. To cap off each championship game, the ADA supported the winning team with a “milk toast” in the Championship Zone. Additionally, during the Division I championship game, the CEO of the American Dairy Association Mideast, Scott Higgens, was interviewed on the OHSAA Radio Network - fueled by Chocolate Milk. Get the facts about flavored milk at drink-milk.com or facebook.com/FuelUpWithChocolateMilk.

**OHIO OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

The Ohio Ophthalmological Society (OOS) partnered with the OHSAA to promote the importance of eye health and safety. Each year over 45,000 sports and recreation-related injuries occur and more than half are incurred by children. At the girls and boys basketball championships, the OOS educated coaches, students and parents on using proper eye projection for all sports. The OOS had branded signage, PA announcements and program ads. We all need to make sure our eyes are protected when doing certain activities. Visit playhardgear.com for more eye safety information.
2012 SPRING CHAMPIONSHIPS PREVIEW

By Paul Seiter, OHSAA Sports Information Assistant

BOYS TENNIS

The 2012 boys state tennis tournament is the first OHSAA tournament to be held at the new Ohio State University Outdoor Varsity Tennis courts in Columbus. The new facility replaces the Stickney Tennis Center on campus and features 10 courts with renovated seating, concessions and restrooms ideal for large spectator crowds.

Showcasing nearly 100 tennis players from around the state, state championship trophies will be awarded to individuals and doubles competitors in Divisions I and II. The 93rd edition of the boys state tennis tournament will be played May 25-26. Play begins at 9:00 a.m. daily and tickets are $8.00 per day.

In Division I singles, 2011 winner Evan Bechtel from Toledo St. John’s Jesuit has graduated and state runner-up Zach Mueck from Liberty Twp. Lakota East will look to improve upon his finish from a year ago as a junior. Upper Arlington’s Division I doubles champion, Stu Little, won as a sophomore and has an opportunity to return to the tournament, but his partner Billy Weldon graduated last spring.

A new Division II singles champion will be awarded as Columbus Bishop Watterson senior Chris Diaz took home that honor in 2011. Last year as a freshman, Patrick Wildman from Cincinnati Country Day and sophomore James Trevino from Tipp City Tippecanoe made an impact in the tournament, playing in the third-place match. In Division II doubles, senior John Kidd and junior Alex Swick from Lima Central Catholic look to improve upon their state runner-up finish.

SOFTBALL

The top teams in the state head to Akron again in 2012 to compete for an OHSAA state championships in softball. Played over three days at Firestone Stadium, four division winners will take home a championship trophy. The 35th annual softball state tournament comes on the heels of a 2011 tournament that saw three perennial powers win titles and one first-time winner.

In Division I, North Canton Hoover rallied from being down early to defeat Gahanna Lincoln 4-2 and win its fifth title in five trips to the state tournament. The Division II championship game saw Poland Seminary win its first softball state championship. The Bulldogs did so by defeating No. 1 ranked LaGrange Keystone 4-0, becoming the fourth school in Mahoning County to win a softball title.

Warren Champion won its fourth title, topping Baltimore Liberty-Union 11-2 in the Division III final. The Golden Flasher’s championship victory capped off a 27-0 record, becoming the 12th school to finish the season with a perfect record since the tournament began in 1978. Division IV champion Strasburg-Franklin won for the sixth time, holding off Convoy Crestview 3-1 in the championship game. The Tigers are one of only five schools in OHSAA softball history who own six or more state titles.

Teams and fans will fill Firestone Stadium, May 31-June 2. Single-session tickets are $8.00, with each session consisting of two games. All tournament session passes are available for purchase on May 31 and are $35.00.

BASEBALL

The 85th annual state baseball tournament returns to Huntington Park in Columbus, home of the Cleveland Indians’ AAA affiliate Columbus Clippers. The 2012 tournament marks the fourth year that Huntington Park has hosted the finals. Four teams earned the right to be called champions in 2011, two of those teams for the first time, the other two for the second time. The 2012 state baseball tournament begins May 31 and runs through June 2. Tickets are $8.00 per day.

In 2011, Liberty Twp. Lakota East won its first Division I baseball state championship by defeating Perrysburg 6-2 in the championship game. Also winning for the first time, Minster locked up the Division IV state championship by blanking New Middletown Springfield 6-0. Both teams won behind strong pitching performances with Lakota East’s Evan Hills striking out seven and only allowing two runs. Minster’s Adam Niemeyer and Austin Knapke allowed a combined three hits, with only one Springfield base runner advancing past second base.

Winning for the second time but first since 1979, Columbus St. Francis DeSales captured the 2011 Division II title, 9-8, over Akron Archbishop Hoban. The Stallions did so with no seniors on the team and taking advantage of six walks and 12 hits allowed by Hoban. The Division III championship trophy belonged to Canton Central Catholic after it defeated Cincinnati Madeira 7-6. Senior Joe Tann picked up both state semifinal and final victories pitching 10 total innings, striking out 12, while surrendering only three runs. The title was the Crusaders’ second after previously winning the championship in 2008.

TRACK & FIELD

The 2012 state track & field championships look to continue to build upon a strong tradition of excellent performances by student-athletes from all over the state. In the 105th edition for boys and 38th for girls, Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium on the campus of The Ohio State University continues as the proud host of the OHSAA state track & field championships. In 2011, 16 state meet records were either tied or broken during the two-day event.

The Reynoldsburg girls brought home their third straight Division I state championship last year. Cincinnati LaSalle won its second boys title by edging out Centerville 30-34 in points. In Division II the girl’s team from Columbus Bishop Hartley won its second state title in three years, while the Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary’s boy’s team won its first state track & field championship.

Steubenville Central Catholic outlasted Versailles in Division III girls competition to take home its first track & field state title. McDonald won its second boys title by 10 points over Anna. Annually drawing around 25,000 fans to the two-day event, the track & field state championships are held June 1-2. Individual tickets are $10.00 per day.
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