

To: All Member School Athletic Directors
From: Jerry Snodgrass, Assistant Commissioner/Basketball Administrator
Date: December 11, 2013
Re: Basketball Administrative Update #1

Now that basketball season is underway in nearly every school, this is a short correspondence to serve as a few reminders and clarifications for issues that have arisen during the first few weeks of the season. Here are a few issues that have arisen:

Throwing Powder – Important

I thought it ended a few years ago but it's back with 'student sections'. Throwing powder into the air prior to introductions, etc. is not addressed in the NFHS Playing Rules – but it is incumbent on site managers/Athletic Administrators to prevent it from occurring. We can help curtail this at tournament levels by requiring automatic removal from a contest and fines but for obvious reasons do not control it at your events. Please develop a plan for dealing with it. There can be no excuse for halting the start of games because of powder being thrown in the air and on the court. And, for what it is worth – it is a medical concern. We dealt with it the first (and only) time at the state tournament a few years ago and were involved for several months with at least one respiratory issue that developed from it.

Ejections

Unfortunately, they were alarming in the first 2 weeks in both boys' and girls' basketball. Consistently, I hear from coaches that 'want the game cleaned up'. As soon as a game has 35+ fouls called, many of those same coaches are calling about 'poor officiating' and they should 'let them play'. The rules of the game have changed little in recent years and officials are instructed to officiate the game as the rules state – NOT make any personal indication on which calls should be made and which ones should not. Unfortunately, disagreement over calls made (or not made) all too often result in ejections of players and coaches. **Regardless of the circumstances, ejections are final and cannot be appealed.** Even though this is addressed in the coaches' pre-season meetings, I still receive calls from coaches (and some administrators) after ejections take place to inquire about the "Appeals Process". All officials' calls are final – if they are a traveling call or a technical foul – and cannot be changed or appealed.

Fighting

By NFHS Playing Rules, fighting is a "Flagrant Foul" and requires ejection as a consequence. In addition to any players on the floor participating, **any player that leaves the bench – whether to participate in the fight or not – is ejected from a contest.** An additional aspect of this rule identifies the same consequence for ***"any attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsporting act that causes a person to retaliate by fighting"***. This rule has been in effect for some time. Anyone in our business understands the importance of winning and losing but it is important for all administrators to take a minute and address teams and familiarize them with this policy.

Score Table Responsibilities

Though this was covered in the initial pre-season blast to Athletic Directors, in the past week, there have been several reports submitted by officials regarding professionalism at the Scorers' Table. I know that most scorers, timekeepers, and scoreboard operators have volunteered their time for years at various schools, however, as 'official game staff', they cannot and should not question officials' calls, act as a 'cheerleader' for a team or get involved in any discussion regarding calls made during a game. I know how much you rely on these individuals but just a quick reminder may save an embarrassing situation in the event an official removes them from a game.

Rating Officials

Please remind your coaches to rate their officials at the Varsity level. Athletic Administrators must provide them a login/password but please be assured they do not have access to change/affect any of your myOHSAA data. That should not be a reason to not provide them a login/password. Complete instructions can be found at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/myOHSAA/OfficialRatingInstructions.pdf>

"Rebounders' Reports"

I attempt to provide weekly updates for coaches via my "Rebounders' Report" posted online at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bk/girls/2014/RR2013-14.htm>. I address many of the same issues mentioned here, such as 'rating officials'. The link is from the boys' and girls' basketball web pages at our website. Please encourage your coaches at **all levels** to read these. They are designed to help them and help you.

Future Scheduling

Knowing that many of you issue contracts for the next year or two after playing a game this season, please note the calendar for the 2014-15 season moves a week 'later'. In other words, the start date for games THIS year was 11/22/13 for girls and 11/29/13 for boys. Next year, the start date for girls is 11/28/14 and 12/5/14 for boys. Just a reminder as you schedule for next year.

Non-Interscholastic Reminder

I mentioned this before but in the never-ending battle to help prevent forfeitures, please remind coaches to talk to their players about participation in non-interscholastic basketball during the school season. As the season progresses and players occasionally get frustrated with what they perceive as a lack of playing time – they often gravitate to sneaking in a game at the "Y" or a local facility. They cannot do this and remain eligible – they become an ineligible player immediately. Every chance you have to remind them will ultimately protect everyone later.