

218. The regulation which permits a coach to coach a maximum of three or four students from the same school out of season during the school year does not allow two coaches to coach six or eight students from the same school. No matter how many coaches are present, no more than three or four players from the same school district may be involved out of season during the school year. **Structured and scheduled rotations throughout a facility of three- or four-player groups moving from conditioning programs or weight training or open gyms to skill development sessions (e.g., hitting, throwing, running, lifting) are prohibited. It is also intended that the three-player rule apply to internet-based or other digital presentations.** See Interpretation 228.

219. **During, or in preparation for, the three- or four-player limitation period, coaches shall not coordinate, officiate at, or in other ways assist** with out-of-season school or non-school athletic events which involve more than three students from the same school district in grades 7-12 in a sport they coach that is sponsored by that school district in grades 7 through 12. This applies to coaches on all levels (varsity, junior varsity, etc.), for either gender, whether paid or volunteer. Violations of the three- or four-player rule are likely, and allegations of violations are inevitable if coaches fail to heed this precaution. Administrators should work with coaches to keep them above suspicion, avoiding even the appearance of violations at out-of-season athletic events.

Some activities **generally prohibited** under Interpretations 218 and 219 are listed below. This is a partial list; there may be other unlisted activities not in compliance with out-of-season coaching controls:

- a. A coach **may not book, schedule, or make other arrangements** for more than three players to participate in an out-of-season activity (e.g., batting cages, tennis lessons, indoor soccer or lacrosse leagues, indoor track, fall ice time, etc.).
- b. A coach **may not post nor distribute a time or event schedule designed specifically** for more than 3 players to attend out-of-season activities.
- c. A coach **may not arrange for a parent or other non-staff person to act as coach** in an out-of-season coaching activity. A coach may not arrange for a parent or non-staff person to do that which the coach is prohibited from doing under the regulation.
- d. A coach may not arrange transportation nor provide transportation on a regular basis to more than three players so they may be part of an out-of-season activity.
- e. **The three-player limitation period applies to all out-of-season environments** during the school year including club and AAU teams, camps, clinics, combines, leagues, profit or non-profit facilities or enterprises.

Some activities **generally permitted** under Interpretations 218 and 219 are listed below. This is a partial list; there may be other unlisted activities that would be in compliance with out-of-season coaching controls:

- a. The coach **may be a spectator** at an out-of-season activity but should have no contact with the athletes in competition.
 - b. The coach **may be present as an employee of a facility** where sport coaching is taking place and where the coach is not providing coaching directly to more than three players from his or her district but is providing coaching to other players from other school districts. The presence of more than three students from the coach's district within the same facility but not receiving coaching from a school coach is permitted if it is incidental to the coach's presence or employment and not scheduled or pre-arranged. This allowance is not intended to permit an employee of the facility who is also a school coach to provide coaching or to coordinate or assist in non-school activities which involve more than three players from the district during or in preparation for the three-player period.
 - c. The coach may be present as a school **employee or volunteer at school-sponsored** competition as an administrator or contest worker (scorer, timer, announcer, etc).
 - d. The coach may **discuss or distribute materials produced by others outside the school district that advertise out-of-season opportunities such as camps, clinics, competitions, or leagues** that occur out of season and are not designed or arranged specifically for more than three players from the coach's school district. These communications must involve students enrolling and participating completely voluntarily of their own accord, disconnected from the school or coach, and in no way may be mandatory or part of team selection.
 - e. A coach who is also a registered official may officiate an athletic event in which more than three players from the district in grades 7-12 are participating out of season provided that the coach/official working the athletic event was assigned by an independent agent or organization and the contest is a random assignment for the official or the result of a random tournament progression. In general, coaches shall not officiate when it is known in advance that they will encounter more than three players from the school district for which they coach.
221. The Summer Dead Period is intended to provide at least seven consecutive days when school coaches will have no contact with students in grades 7-12 of the school district in any manner related to any sport sponsored by that school. Unplanned, casual, normal community contact is permitted. It is intended that no sport-related involvement, including attendance at school sport related fundraisers and functions, take place during the Summer Dead Period. It is intended that no sport activities occur on school premises during the Summer Dead Period that involve school coaches or are sponsored by the school or supported by the school. Because school personnel are prohibited from holding such activities, it is intended that no school facilities be planned for use by non school groups or individuals for athletic purposes (including student-led practices/conditioning) during the Summer Dead Period.

OUT-OF-SEASON COACHING GUIDE 2009-10



*A Supplement to the MHSAA Handbook
Regulations and Interpretations*

2009-10 OUT-OF-SEASON & SUMMER COACHING ALERT

Updated June 2009—Changes effective Aug. 1, 2009

Possibly impacting summer activities, camps, clinics and sport curriculum classes

For the past several years the MHSAA has emphasized out-of-season and summer coaching controls which took effect in June 2007. **In May 2009 the Representative Council enacted changes which take effect August 1, 2009. The Summer Dead Period and Preseason Down Time begins its third season and may impact school and non-school programs that involve students in grades 7-12 if member school coaches and athletic facilities are involved. Coaches and schools should plan and communicate so activities, students, coaches and school facilities are all in full compliance.**

The Representative Council clarified that the purpose of the new limitations would not be served if non-school groups or individuals were permitted to occupy the time and space left open because school people and places were operating within the limitations. Coaches and others should consult the local school athletic director and review the MHSAA Handbook, Regulation II, Section 11. An updated summary of these limitations follows as well as relevant portions of the *Handbook*.

SUMMER DEAD PERIOD

Each school selects their dead period each school year. Typically, MHSAA member schools selected a dead period of at least seven days that included the July 4 holiday. It must occur between the last day of school or participation by any team in MHSAA tournaments and Aug. 1. During the dead period, which must be the same for all sports, all school athletic facilities and school coaches have zero contact with students in the school district from grades 7-12. A high school's Summer Dead Period is also extended to Junior High/Middle Schools of the same district. The dead period is a **no school sports time**: **no** open gyms, practices, competitions, conditioning programs, weight training; **no** sport related functions or fundraisers, camps or clinics at school facilities or sponsored elsewhere by the school; **no** coaches or students in grades 7-12 may have planned contact other than casual, normal community, non-sports contact. While there may be sports activities during this time, they must not involve the school coach, the school or school facilities for seven full consecutive calendar days.

The only exception to this period is that school coaches would be allowed to continue coaching without interruption previously scheduled non-school, summer organized baseball and softball practices or competition, such as American Legion Baseball or Junior Olympic Softball when students from the district are present.

PRESEASON DOWN TIME

In all seasons there is a preseason period when no open gyms, sport-specific camps, clinics or competitions with groups that resemble school teams (inter-squad or intra-squad) shall occur at the school or be sponsored elsewhere by the school with any school district personnel present. The preseason down time distinguishes the preseason activity from the actual start of tryouts or practices. For all fall sports, the down time runs from Aug. 1 until the first day of practice. For winter sports, the down time runs for 14 calendar days prior to the start of practice. For spring sports, the down time runs from March 1 to the start of practice on the second Monday after March 1. Junior High Middle Schools apply the preseason down time 14 calendar days before the 1st practice in the fall and all subsequent seasons.

Only non-sport specific conditioning/weight training or individual skill development work with no more than three players is permitted during this time. (See the relevant interpretation that prohibits rotations from conditioning to three player work). This is a period of time **before the season begins** and none of this activity, even though permitted, is to be mandatory either directly or indirectly, nor may it be any part of team selection.

The similarity between in-season practices and preseason conditioning in track & field, cross country and swimming & diving necessitated a new interpretation so as to see a legitimate starting date for practices in these sports. "Regardless of what they are called or where they are held, coach-conducted running or swimming sessions which involve the structure of distances **AND** timing and/or teach sport specific technique shall not be provided even on a voluntary basis during the down time prior to cross country, track & field or swimming & diving seasons if they are conducted by the school coaches of those sports."

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Because students and coaches may assemble voluntarily during the summer from the same school, five sports are limited to 15 days of competition and football to 7 dates when a coach and a set number of students in grades 7-12 ("players") are present in competition against individuals not enrolled in that school. When three basketball, volleyball or ice hockey players and a school coach are present, or seven soccer or lacrosse players are present with a school coach – it counts as one of the 15 allowed summer dates of competition (7 players and 7 dates allowed in football). These dates must occur before Aug 1, not during the Dead Period and must comply with the MHSAA travel rule if held outside Michigan. At all times, including the summer, activity may not be mandatory, part of team selection, or involve school general funds, school owned or rented transportation, uniforms or warm-ups (**Effective Aug. 1, 2009 non-competition practice jerseys may be worn during the summer whether or not school owned or issued**).

OUT-OF-SEASON & SUMMER COACHING REGULATIONS & INTERPRETATIONS

Selections Reprinted from the 2009-10 MHSAA Handbook Regulation II, Section 11 Changes effective Aug. 1, 2009

SECTION 11 (H) - There is no such thing as a school team outside the interscholastic season of practice and competition. Schools shall not require or sponsor activities in the name of the school team outside the school season for the sport involved.

2. These limitations **out of season apply to COACHES**:

a. Outside the school season during the school year (from Monday the week of Aug. 15 through the Sunday after Memorial Day observed), school coaches are prohibited from providing coaching at any one time under one roof, facility or campus to more than three (or four) students in grades 7-12 of the district or cooperative program for which they coach (four students if the coaching does not involve practice or competition with students or others not enrolled in that school district). **This is commonly known as the limited player rule** and effective Aug. 1, 2009 when there is practice only among students enrolled in the same school, up to four students are allowed.

3. These limitations apply to member **SCHOOLS year-round**:
(Including at summer camps or clinics):

- a. **At no time** out of season may **school transportation** be used. There may be no use of school-owned and issued **competition warm-ups and/or uniforms (non-competition practice jerseys may be worn whether or not school-owned or issued)**. Neither the school nor its coaches shall allow the out-of-season activity to be mandatory or to be any part of the basis for selection of the school team.
- b. School **operating funds** may not be used in any way to support out-of-season activities; only funds from school-approved activities of booster clubs, school teams, student groups and community, civic or service groups may be used to pay entry fees for individuals on some basis other than athletic ability or potential (qualification for federal school lunch program is a suggested criterion). The limit is \$200 per sport per student per year (Aug. 1-July 31).
- c. Because students and coaches may assemble from the same school, there is a tendency at summer camps and in summer leagues to call teams by their school names, **but it must be understood they are not school-sponsored teams**. They can't be. To assure there are not misunderstandings about the school's authority and responsibility (including liability for injuries), the following should occur:
(1) School administration must not allow camp and league organizers to use the school designations. "Lansing" is permissible; it's a city; but not "Lansing Everett" or "Lansing Catholic Central," which are the names of schools.