



Oregon School Activities Association

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March 16, 2021

TO: OSAA Executive Board

FROM: Kris Welch, Assistant Executive Director

SUBJECT: OSAA Baseball Contingency Group Meeting Summary

The OSAA Baseball Contingency Group met on March 16, 2021 via a Zoom meeting for the fifth time. Most members were present.

We began as a whole group of Season 3 sports with Baseball, Golf, Softball, and Track & Field Contingency Groups together as the OSAA staff updated the groups on items since the last meeting. The OSAA staff summarized the current guidance as well as continued decisions to be made ahead. After the completion of information and questions and answer session, the contingency groups broke off into their own break-out sessions.

We quickly reviewed our goal to develop a set of recommendations that we can present to the OSAA Executive Board to help our 204 membership schools who sponsor baseball during these unprecedented times of uncertainty.

We began discussion with the concern of the shortened season and compressed preparation for pitchers and catchers and their ability to be prepared for the season. The group thought it might be good to expand the preseason to allow the athletes time to get acclimated to baseball as most Season 2 sports are in full swing and kids are not getting the opportunity to condition their arms. Some coaches stated that their usual pitchers would not pitch during Season 3 because of the concern for safety and injury of arms. The season starts on April 5 and goes through May 21 with 15 games for the first 5 weeks and then a culminating week at the end. While the Practice Limitation is a good concept, schools are limited to the amount of time (3 hours per day) they get with their shared athletes with the priority being the in-season teams. Most baseball players are participating in Season 2 and coaches are not pressuring them to come to the Season 3 workouts.

The group talked about the COVID modifications and were okay with most. The OSAA plans on having webinars again, as they did for Season 2 sports to help guide the protocols with schools.

1. Masks shall be worn at all times by all individuals in attendance.
2. Physical distancing measures shall be in place at all times other than when engaged in competition.

3. Sportsmanship is a key component, while physical contact of handshakes, fist-bumps, etc., are not allowed teams are encouraged to acknowledge their opponents in pregame and postgame rituals with a physical distance observance of the team's choosing.
4. **PITCHER.** If the pitcher puts his/her hands to their mouth off the mound and touches the ball, "Time" is called, a new ball is inserted and the pitcher must sanitize their hands before throwing the next pitch.
5. Physical distancing requirements must be observed by all in the dugout.
6. If the dugout area is not large enough to provide for physical distance requirements, players and game personnel may move outside the immediate dugout area to practice physical distance requirements.
7. If athletes cannot provide their own equipment, then it is recommended that equipment be sanitized between each use.
8. Each team provides sanitized balls (bucket) while on defense.
9. Have a bucket for "dirty" balls available so they can be sanitized after the game.
10. No seeds, gum or spitting.
11. Coaches will only be allowed to enter the fair ball territory to talk with their pitcher on the mound. If a coach wants to discuss a play with the umpire, they are to request time, go to the foul line nearest the umpire in question, and wait for the umpire to come within six feet to maintain physical distancing.

After some discussion, the Group started on the focused questions.

What are your current schedules?

Most schools are playing local and playing 3-game series. Very few schools are playing outside of their area and are being flexible with their games due to the low number of umpires. Ideally some leagues are playing on either Tuesday or Wednesday with a single game and a double header on Saturday. Other schools are being flexible, knowing that they may have to move off of a certain day because of lack of umpires. Most have scheduled 15 games and are not playing a district tournament at the end of the fifth week, but some may be moving to that as those games would not count against their participation limitation as long as those games are counted towards some type of seeding for the culminating week.

Culminating week?

The baseball group wants there to be some type of meaningful ending to the season. This group is committed to help create opportunities for some type of championship if at all possible. With Comprehensive Distance Learning working they feel the loss of class time is not a big deal and that they would be flexible in coordinating some type of 8-team brackets that limit travel by allowing the first round to be more regionalized match-ups. They brought up the 4A proposal for Season 2 and thought that they could do something like that for each of the classifications. With missing out completely last year, they are more determined than ever to create opportunities for kids to participate in a championship, even if that meant games throughout the entire bracket are played at home school sites.

The future meeting dates:

- TBD (6:30pm – 7:45pm)

We may need to add some more meetings depending on what we hear or need.

Thank you for everyone's willingness to be on this group and for your insight!