

Commissioner's Notes

November 2004

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FROM THE COMMISSIONER'S DESK



November serves as a reminder to all of us that it is the time of the year to reflect and give thanks for all we have in this country. The entire KHSAA office staff is certainly thankful for the opportunity we have today in the field of education to provide our student athletes with opportunities to grow and learn through sports and activities. It's hard to believe we are over half way through the fall sports championship season. As the KHSAA prepares for the Cross Country and Football State Championships we continue to focus on making each of our state championships special for the participants.

The Association Board of Control continues to study the Basketball Alignment. The Board will review the responses that were submitted by October 15 from member school personnel at the Board of Control Meeting on November 17-18. There will be a comment period the afternoon of November 17th for school personnel desiring to speak on alignment changes or suggestions. Contact your Board of Control representative if you would like this opportunity for input.

Thank you again for all you do for the students in Kentucky high schools and have a Happy Thanksgiving!

ANNUAL MEETING DELEGATE DESIGNATION

Enclosed with the Principal's copy of this issue of the Commissioner's Notes, is a copy of KHSAA Form GE31, where the school is to designate its delegate to the Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held on Thursday, January 13th at the Hyatt Regency in Lexington. A small block of rooms has been reserved and can be obtained by calling the reservation office at 859-253-1234 and referring to the KHSAA Annual Meeting. It should be noted that there are no Constitutional requirements for the qualification of the delegate, other than the designation by the school Principal.

The School Principal should complete and return the delegate designation form by Friday, November 19, 2004. Doing so by this time will ensure that the official copy of the issues to be voted on by the Delegates is distributed prior to the holidays.

BASKETBALL ALIGNMENT TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

Thanks to the administration of all member schools for your thoughtful and well considered responses to the basketball alignment draft. The Board has expressed its intentions to finalize this project at its November meeting. More than 150 schools submitted written responses, and each one of those will be reviewed by the staff and members of the Board of Control.

It is the hope of the Board that following the November 17 Board of Control committee meeting along with consideration of the items brought up in discussion and review, the alignment can be finalized during the business meeting on the following day.

The Board has also directed staff that immediately upon adoption of any form of final alignment, staff is to bring to the next regular meeting, a list of those areas that would be affected if the same or similar alignment boundaries were adopted in baseball and softball. Several schools have inquired about the alignment status of those two sports throughout this process.

SOCCER SITE PROPOSALS

Proposals from communities to host future KHSAA State Soccer Tournament are now being accepted. Proposals to host the 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 tournaments will be accepted until November 10. Host sites/communities may bid on a single or multiple years. The Board of Control will review proposals at its November meeting. Should you have specific questions or inquiries about minimum requirements/bid specs, contact Roland Williams, Asst. Commissioner.

KHSAA EVENT TICKET ORDERS

Football ticket order forms have been mailed electronically to the schools and will be available through the Association office until November 19.

Ticket order forms for member schools and the general public to purchase tickets to the 2005 Houchins Industries/KHSAA Girls' and National City/KHSAA Boys' Sweet 16® State Basketball Tournaments will be mailed the week of November 8, 2004.

TITLE IX – PRIME TIME PLAY

Over the past weeks, the KHSAA Title IX audit team has been assisting member schools in identifying issues related to Title IX and the scheduling of prime time basketball contests. Recently, 24 schools were mailed letters indicating that for both the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years, the school fell short (according to data available from the school) of the KHSAA initiative regarding prime time play.

There is an appeals process for those schools that fall short of the requirement. Any appeals will be heard by the Title IX Committee of the Board of Control at its November meeting.

Following these announcements, many schools have asked for assistance in helping determine whether or not they meet the prime time initiative.

To help determine if your school meets the requirement, you will need to make two calculations. First, divide the number of girls' home prime time games played, by the total number of home games for your girls. If that percentage of girls' home prime time games played is equal to or greater than 40.00% then the school complies with this initiative. For example, if your girls' team is playing five games on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday during the season and you have 10 total girls' home games during the season, then your girls' prime time percentage would be 50.00% (5 prime time games divided by 10 total home games). Using this example your school would be in compliance.

If your percentage of girls' home prime time games is **NOT** equal to or greater than 40.00%, then make the same above calculation for your boys' schedule. If your girls' percentage is less than 40.00%, then the boys' percentage, based on the calculation above, must be within 10 percentage points of the girls' percentage, otherwise your school is not in compliance.

If you need assistance in trying to prevent problems with your schools' prime time compliance, please feel free to contact the KHSAA office.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

Through a special grant and initiative, the University of Kentucky Department of Kinesiology & Health Promotion is making available a special course, KHP781, Sections 201-206, Current Issues in Sports Leadership. A flier is enclosed for this excellent program, which is being taught at many regional universities, and through a distance learning pilot project. Please contact Dr. Weiner at the numbers listed on the flier should you have questions.

ATHLETIC DIRECTORS CORNER

The National Conference of Athletic Directors will be held in New Orleans, LA December 11-14. To receive more information or register for the conference visit www.nfhs.org and click on New Orleans at the bottom of the homepage.

The State KHSADA Conference site has been changed. Our new "home away from home" will be the Clarion off Hurstbourne Lane in Louisville April 20-22, 2005. Mark your calendars now.

If you are an Athletic Director and have not been receiving any KHSADA information via e-mail (i.e. *Athletic Directions*, LTP course dates, etc), e-mail ftoronto@bourbon.k12.ky.us to be added to the distribution list.

SANCTIONS FOR CONTESTS WITH OUT-OF-STATE TEAMS

When Kentucky member schools are participating in out-of-state contests, the host school from that state is responsible for completing the sanction form through the applicable state association. However, each Kentucky school participating must verify with either the KHSAA or the inviting school that a sanction has been approved. A Kentucky school may not participate in an event out of state for which sanctioning is required and has not been completed. A complete review of the sanctioning requirement is contained in Case Situations BL23-1 and BL23-2 on page 32 of the 2004-2005 Handbook.

KHSAA member schools hosting an event are to complete the NFHS sanction form and include a processing fee in the amount of \$75.00. The fee should be made payable to the National Federation and sent to the KHSAA with the appropriate form. The KHSAA is responsible for forwarding the form and fee to the National Federation Office.

A sanction form is not required if all participating schools are from bordering states of Kentucky. **Please note**, however, that Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia require a sanction form for every out-of-state tournament. If you have any questions, please contact Marilyn Mitchell at the KHSAA office (859)299-5472 or email mmitchell@khsaa.org.

2004-05 CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

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| Nov. 3-4, 6 | Boys' & Girls' Soccer | Rawlings Stadium, Georgetown |
| Nov. 13 | Boys' & Girls' Cross Country | Ky. Horse Park, Lexington |
| Dec. 3-4 | Football | Papa John's Cardinal Stadium, Louisville |
| Feb. 18-19 | Swimming | UK Lancaster Aquatic Center, Lexington |
| Feb. 24-26 | Wrestling | Frankfort Convention Center, Frankfort |
| March 16-19 | National City/KHSAA Boys' Basketball | Rupp Arena, Lexington |
| March 23-26 | Houchens Industries/KHSAA Girls' Basketball | WKU Diddle Arena, Bowling Green |
| May 13-14 | Slow Pitch Softball | RiverShore Complex, Hebron, KY |
| May 26-28 | Fifth Third/KHSAA Boys' & Girls' Tennis | UK Boone/Downing Complex, Lexington |
| June 3-4 | Boys' & Girls' Track | UK Shively Track, Lexington |
| June 10-11 | Fast Pitch Softball | Jack Fisher Park, Owensboro |
| June 15-18 | Fifth Third/KHSAA Baseball | Applebee's Park, Lexington |

2004-05 KHSAA WINTER RULES CLINICS

It is an Association requirement that each licensed official and head coach attend a rules interpretation clinic conducted by the KHSAA (ByLaw 26, Sec. 2). Coaches who have not met the requirement will not be permitted to coach any postseason contest. (A complete listing is posted on the Association website.)

ALL TIMES ARE LOCAL.

BASKETBALL

(All times are 7 p.m., unless noted otherwise)

11/8 Owensboro, Apollo HS

12/15 Make-Up (\$75 Fine) Lexington, KHSAA Office, 1:30 p.m.

WRESTLING

(All times are 7 p.m., unless noted otherwise)

11/8 Make-Up (\$75 Fine) Lexington, KHSAA Office, 1:30 p.m.

REPORTING OF SCORES AND SCHEDULE ENTRY

We ask that member school personnel review your baseball, basketball (boys and girls), and softball schedules to make sure any game updates have been added. Schedules are to be entered on the KHSAA website through the "Member School Only" link.

Please remember to call in the scores of contests to the KHSAA/Riherd's Scoreboard immediately following each contest. The number is **1-800-715-8388** and is toll free.

While it is a Board policy that the membership cooperate with the data collection on the scoreboard, it has been proven by the membership time and again that they desire to voluntarily cooperate with this project.

YOUTH FOOTBALL PARENTS OUT OF CONTROL

GRIFF NOTES By Todd Griffin Times Leader, Saturday, October 02, 2004, Reprinted with permission

"Athletics is out of hand. We've got too many people, they don't read the front page of the newspaper. They go to the sports page. They don't know what's going on in the world. They don't have an interest in what's going on in the world. All they're interested in is the box scores and how many points we're favored by in a football game. To me that's really disgusting."

Former UK All-American Rodger Bird was speaking of sports fans in general when he made that comment to The Courier-Journal recently, but he could just as well be talking about the parents of some local youth athletes.

"I think sports is out of hand. ... I think it's going to get worse," said Bird, who played for the Oakland Raiders of the NFL and now lives in Henderson.

Let me add a simple, "Amen, brother."

A few weeks ago I showed up in Tiger football coach Anthony Hatchell's office to talk about that week's game, only to find him shaking his head. Seems the school had gotten some complaints because there had been no public address announcer at the junior varsity game the week before. "I've never had a PA announcer for a JV game," exclaimed Hatchell, who has had head coaching stops at Anderson County and Graves County in addition to Caldwell.

No PA announcer?!? Horrors! Did they have to call off the game? Surely a football game cannot be played without the PA announcer calling play-by-play, announcing every player on both teams, introducing the cheerleaders and telling who's manning the concession stand that evening. What kind of madhouse civilization has our little community deteriorated into?

Hatchell was at a loss to fathom why a PA announcer would be so crucial to the playing of a football game. Unfortunately, I had an answer.

"Have you been to a Jr. Pro game? They have to introduce everybody and their brother before they can play a game," I pointed out.

So, those parents who are used to hearing little Timmy's name called over and over again on the PA aren't accustomed to just sitting and enjoying the competition of a good football game. When little Timmy scores, they want to make sure everyone knows about it.

That nonsense starts with the youth teams, then parents feel like the middle school and high school are obligated to provide the same type of ego-feeding monster for middle school and JV games.

And let's face it, in the grand scheme of things, youngsters playing football is not the most important thing in the world.

Just don't try telling that to some parents.

"This is the 2008 (or 2010, or 2012, take your pick) state championship team and they deserve some coverage," I've heard more than once from wannabe sports editors.

First of all, if there's a betting line, I want a piece of the action, because the odds are going to be pretty long against any Caldwell team winning a state football championship for the next 35 years. Second, why would anyone make such a presumptive statement regarding a bunch of kids?

Youth, even in our seemingly safer-than-most community, face incredible pressures every day. Why would anyone dump even more expectations on a 10-, 12- or 14-year old? "If you don't win a state championship you're going to be a failure."

I'm by no means implying that we don't have some very talented youngsters coming up through the local system. We have some outstanding coaches and mentors and they've done some wonderful things with our youth. And the kids have responded by already having remarkable success on the football field.

However, that in no way guarantees future success. I've seen players who were dominating in Little League or middle school. But sometimes those kids don't get any bigger or faster. By the time they're juniors or seniors in high school, they are no longer the dominant forces they once were when it comes to sports.

No one is a bigger fan of Caldwell County football than I am, from the youth leagues on up. And when someone starts that "state champions in" whatever stuff, I always say that would be great and that I'd be all for it. But reality may say otherwise.

Caldwell's 1998 state football championship was an exception, not the rule. Everything fell into place perfectly for that squad. Had Jerrold Fuqua or another key performer suffered an injury along the way, Caldwell may never have gotten past the first or second round of the playoffs. It also helped that, in that particular season, most of the highest-ranked teams were in the eastern half of the state, meaning the Tigers didn't have to face any of them until they got to the state finals. In short, not only do you need loads of talent, you also need a little luck.

So before we go christening any team "state champions in 2008" or 2009 or 2010 or anytime, why don't we just let the youngsters strap on their helmets and enjoy playing the game, without all the pomp and circumstance.

When I was young — and I know that was about a billion years ago — we had just as much fun playing sports in the backyard or on the playground as we did in organized games. Maybe more.

And guess what? Most of us never got our pictures in the paper either. I'll admit that I'm as guilty as anyone when it comes to placing too much importance on sports. Thankfully, it's my job, so at least I have an excuse.

I enjoy watching the younger teams play. Most of those games are extremely entertaining. And we try to do as much as we can on those teams in our Sports section but the hectic fall sports schedule doesn't enable us to cover every game.

If Caldwell is indeed fortunate enough to win a state championship anytime soon, I certainly hope I'm there to cheer them on. But there will be plenty of time for that later.

For now, parents should allow their children to enjoy the competitive nature of sports and the feeling of camaraderie from being around their friends and teammates.

Sports can provide many valuable lessons for youngsters — joining others in working toward a common goal, the responsibility of fulfilling the role various positions on any team require, persevering even when you're tired and cold and feel like giving up.

But the biggest life experience that comes out of all sports is how to handle losing. Nobody wins all the time. It's how we handle defeat that determines the kind of person we ultimately become.

If some parents persist on this "state champions in..." crusade, I'm afraid that's going to be a very painful lesson for some of our youngsters to learn.