



WASHINGTON INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

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WIAA OUT-OF-SEASON COACHING RULES

Q & A Section from the 2087-09 WIAA Handbook

17.1.0 SCHOOL YEAR

1. **When do the WIAA rules take effect?**

The school year begins with the first day of the fall sports season and ends the first day following the spring sports tournaments.

17.2.0 IN SEASON

2. **My team did not qualify for postseason playoffs. How long can we continue to practice as a team with our coach?**

The season concludes with the final day of the state event for the classification your school participates in for that sport and in that classification (the 1B state basketball tournament, for example, ends two weeks earlier than the 2A and 3A state basketball tournaments while the 2B, 1A and 4A state basketball tournaments end one week earlier than the 2A and 3A state basketball tournaments). Even though the team did not qualify, your coach could continue to coach your team until the conclusion of the state tournament for that sport.

3. **Our basketball team is planning to play in a summer basketball tournament on the Sunday after the spring tournaments. With the impending weather reports, the state softball tournament may be postponed until after that date. Will our coach violate the out-of-season rule if she coaches us on Sunday, even though the softball tournament may not be completed?**

NO. Coaches can not be responsible for the spring tournament being postponed due to inclement weather.

17.3.0 ALTERNATE SEASON

4. **When can a team that participates in the alternate fall season begin practice for the spring state tournament?**

Whether or not the team qualified in the fall for a spring state tournament, the team is allowed to begin practice no sooner than twenty (20) school days prior to the first day of the state tournament.

5. **I qualified in the fall district tournament for the state tennis tournament in the spring. Are there practice requirements and, if so, can any of my teammates hit balls with me during spring practice?**

You are required to have ten (10) days of practice prior to the state tennis tournament. Any of your teammates, whether they qualified for the state tournament or not, could participate in the practices.

17.4.0 POSTSEASON CONTESTS

6. **With the season limitation for baseball at twenty (20) games, if our team schedules and plays in only nineteen (19) games during the regular season, would we be allowed to play a game during the week between the regionals and the semifinals?**

YES.

17.5.0 OUT-OF-SEASON DEFINITION

7. **Our football team is planning a team camp in the second week in August, which we realize is during the out-of-season period for our football coach. The coach will not assist in organizing or coaching and, in fact, he will not attend. The school is not sponsoring the camp. Will it be OK for the students to participate?**

YES. The out-of-season coaching rules do not prohibit students from participating in events at any time.

17.5.2 SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP

8. **May a school hold a student benefit fund-raiser basketball game out-of-season that involves only seniors?**

NO, school sponsorship or promotion or practice and/or participation is limited to the designated WIAA season for that sport.

9. **Is it permissible for a school to sponsor a spring vacation basketball tournament and invite other school teams?**
NO, this would be a violation for each school involved.
10. **Is it a violation when a school vehicle is used to transport students to a winter freestyle wrestling tournament?**
Only if the tournament occurs outside the designated WIAA wrestling season.
11. **An ASB pays the league entry fee for summer league competition. Is this a violation?**
NO.
12. **If a school does not have a junior high program in a sport, may the high school coach of that sport work with seventh and eighth graders?**
In the absence of a sport being offered at the middle level, the local school board could designate twelve (12) consecutive weeks within the high school season for a middle level season. The high school coach could then work with those middle school students during the concurrent seasons.
13. **If our school does not have a separate eighth grade program, could those eighth graders practice with the high school team?**
The school must designate a twelve-week season, even though not sponsoring a separate program. Although they would not be allowed to compete on behalf of the school (unless in a 1B school), the school then has the authority and responsibility to determine if eighth graders would be allowed to practice.

17.5.4 SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

14. **Can school uniforms or equipment be used by students participating in all star contests?**
School uniforms may be worn ONLY if the all star contests are sponsored by the Washington State Coaches Association.
NOTE: Use of school-issued football helmets and shoulder pads is contingent upon local school district policy.
15. **Since uniforms are considered to be the school-issued contest uniform, if a school surpluses old school uniforms, or if the student athletes purchase the old school uniforms, could they be worn during a community basketball tournament?**
YES.
16. **Could a school provide facilities, sport specific apparatus (such as batting cages, football sleds, nets, etc.), school equipment (such as football helmets and shoulder pads, balls, etc.) to be used during the summer?**
YES, contingent upon local school board approval.
17. **Could a school authorize school district vehicles to be used to transport individuals and/or teams to summer camps or clinics if approved by the local school board?**
YES, contingent upon local school board approval.
18. **Are schools authorized to provide insurance to cover summer programs?**
YES, contingent upon local school board approval.

17.5.5 A COACH

19. **At what point does an individual become a "coach" and at what point does the out-of-season rule apply to that new coach?**
A newly hired coach is considered a coach when a verbal/written agreement is made with the school district.
1) If the new baseball coach was hired by the school district after the first day of fall sports practice for that school year, then he/she may continue to coach through the school year up to and through the baseball season.
2) If the new basketball coach was hired by the school district in April of 2008 for the 2008-09 school year, that coach must end involvement with current and/or potential athletes on July 31, 2008.
20. **Could a gymnastics coach be coaching in the same training facility with current and/or potential athletes if those athletes are being coached by someone else?**
YES, a coach may be in the same facility, as long as that coach is not coaching any current and/or potential athletes.
21. **We have a former NBA player now living in our community. Is it permissible to bring him in to assist in practices once in awhile?**
This person would be considered a volunteer coach and must be approved as a volunteer according to local school district policies. Volunteer coaches are subject to the out-of-season rules in the same manner as paid coaches.

22. **Are there any restrictions regarding alumni returning to the school during the winter break to assist with the wrestling program?**
Alumni assisting in any manner with a school sports program must be approved volunteers according to local school district policies.
23. **Could a middle level coach work with the high school team outside the middle level season?**
NO, not unless the person is hired by the school district to coach at both levels and then, only during the designated season for each level. The specific sports coaches are considered to be coaches of all student athletes within that school district.
24. **Since a coaching contract is typically four to five months in length, could a coach work with students outside the parameters of the coaching contract during the school year?**
NO, when a coach is hired to coach an interscholastic team, that coach has committed to following the WIAA school year.
25. **Could a coach be involved in coaching one of his/her athletes who has been nominated as a member of a regional or national team in that sport during the out-of-season time period?**
NO.
26. **Could a coach work with his/her student athletes at a club, YMCA, YWCA, college, etc., during the school year out of his/her sport season, if that position was his/her primary source of income?**
NO.
27. **May a coach take a player to a clinic for his/her sport during the school year?**
YES, during the sport season. NO, during the out-of-season time period.
28. **Could the high school basketball coach work with the middle school basketball team during the fall (which is the designated season for this middle level basketball league)?**
ONLY if the school district has a contract with this coach to coach at both levels. A high school coach could coach middle level players during the time period that the middle level season overlaps the high school season.
29. **Could a middle level softball coach hit balls with his/her daughter in the neighborhood park?**
YES, WIAA out-of-season rules do not prohibit immediate family obligations. However, if another member of the daughter's team participates, the out-of-season rules would be violated.
30. **Although not coaching the team, could a basketball coach take his/her players to a spring tournament?**
NO, the coach may provide, post or distribute information to his/her players regarding the spring tournament, but could not transport them to the site or be involved in coaching.
31. **May a high school coach, coach USAV junior high age teams?**
YES, if the coaching occurs outside the WIAA season and none of the USAV team members are potential members of the high school team. There is no such restriction if done during the time period the junior high and high school seasons overlap.
32. **May a high school coach serve as the head or assistant coach for an AAU basketball team comprised of high school players from different high schools?**
YES, only if the athletes are not from the coach's high school team.
33. **Is it a violation for a coach or school designee to distribute information for clinics and camps prior to the last state tournament?**
NO, this is not a violation. The distribution of materials should be approved by school administrators and is permitted.
34. **The swim coach of our high school, who is employed to coach swimming only, also works for the community pool and serves students from the school in the following situations:**
This individual coaches an AAU swim team during the summer. Violation?
NO.
This individual coaches an AAU swim team during April. Violation?
YES.
35. **A coach receives a free trip if he/she solicits five participants for an interscholastic athletic trip. Is this permitted?**
This is a violation if it occurs during the school year and outside the designated season.
36. **During the summer, a school coach attends camp along with squad members who have remaining eligibility and, while at camp, instructs squads of students from that coach's school. Is this permitted?**
No violation.

37. **A coach organizes an after-school team of students for a summer league. Is this a violation?**
NO if done during the summer.
38. **Is it OK for a coach to organize students during the school year to attend summer “team” camp?**
YES, provided it is understood that participation is optional and not a requirement or prerequisite to turning out for the sport the following year.
39. **A coach organizes squad members to participate in a non-school activity out of the specified sport season during the school year. Is this a violation?**
YES.
40. **Could a track coach transport his/her students to an indoor track meet prior to the WIAA track season?**
NO.
41. **May the basketball coach of a school team coach one of the school’s basketball players in an AAU league during the WIAA basketball season?**
YES.
42. **I have a softball coach traveling to Southern California in January with a club team. One of our girls made the team. Can he coach the team if he is in the stands when our girl plays, and our girl is in the stands when he coaches?**
NO.
43. **Could a basketball coach use some of his/her players to demonstrate a teaching skill to other coaches during a clinic?**
YES, provided the only contact with the team is to notify them of the time and date of the clinic, and the skills they will be asked to perform. During the clinic itself, the coach can merely introduce the players and the skill.

17.5.6 PRACTICE

44. **As the 2004 state championship coach, I have been asked to assist in the drafting of high school players for an all star spring basketball tournament? Is that OK?**
You may assist in evaluating and drafting players onto all star teams only if none of your players are involved. Analyzing players on their performance and ability is a primary function and a regular responsibility of a coach during a practice and is permissible only during the designated WIAA season.

17.5.7 MEETINGS AND FUNDRAISING

45. **Since a coach may have one preseason meeting with his/her squad, is it permissible for that meeting to take place at a University of Washington basketball game prior to the start of the WIAA basketball season?**
YES, since WIAA rules allow for one preseason meeting, each school has the authority to determine the date, time and place for that meeting.
46. **Our basketball coach would like to sponsor a three-on-three spring basketball tournament to raise money for our team to go to a summer team basketball camp. Would that be permissible?**
NO, fundraising activities can not be specific to the sport coached during the out-of-season time period.

17.5.8 SCHOOLS

47. **Which students are affected by the out-of-season coaching rules?**
“Current members or future squad members grades 7-12” applies to students in the school district in which the coach is hired to coach.
- 1) The school district for public schools is defined by public school boundaries.
 - a) If a school district has specific boundaries for its high school(s) and middle school(s), a high school coach may coach students in the high school and the middle school(s) that feed directly to the high school only during their designated season (when the high school and middle level programs overlap or if that coach is hired to coach at both the high school and middle level) or during the summer.
During the out-of-season time period, the coach could coach high school students attending a different high school or a middle school that does not feed directly to the high school in which that coach was hired to coach.
 - b) If a school district has an open enrollment policy, then a high school coach may coach students only in the high school in which the coach is hired to coach during the designated high school season or during the summer.
 - 2) During the out-of-season time period, a private high school coach may not coach middle level students who
 - a) attend a designated feeder school owned and operated by the high school where the coach is hired to coach; or
 - b) in the case where no designated feeder school exists, reside in the public school district where the private high school is located.
48. **Are there any WIAA regulations governing the participation of a high school athlete between school sport turnouts or seasons?**
NO, students may participate in non-school programs as they choose. The WIAA out-of-season rules prohibit the involvement of school coaches except during the designated WIAA season or during the summer.
49. **Is it OK for a coach to work with seniors after they have finished their season?**
NO, seniors are considered to be current members of the squad until the end of the school year. Even though the seniors have completed their final year of that sport, they are still eligible to participate in any succeeding sports until the end of the school year.
50. **Could high school students participate as instructors in elementary or middle level sport camps or clinics?**
YES, high school athletes are allowed to be involved as instructors or volunteer coaches at the elementary or middle level, although their high school coach could not be involved.
51. **May high school players play on a USAV team if coached by their school coach?**
YES, current and/or prospective players may be coached by their school coach during the WIAA volleyball season, but not during the out-of-season time period.
52. **Is unsupervised use of school outdoor facilities for specific sport practice by several ‘team members’ in violation of out-of-season rules?**
This “practice” is a violation only if the school or coach organizes or promotes it. If school-owned equipment is not used and it is not during school time, it is permissible for students to practice together.
53. **May a softball coach of a school team coach a member of that school’s basketball team in an AAU league during the softball season?**
YES, as long as he/she is not under the direction of the school’s basketball coach.

17.5.9 TEAM MANAGERS

54. **Could a female swimmer serve as manager for the boys’ swim team?**
YES, as long as she is not receiving any coaching.
55. **Could an eighth grade boy serve as manager for the high school boys’ basketball team?**
YES, as long as no direct coaching is taking place.
NOTE: A manager is restricted to preparing water/drinks and providing supplies to the coach and/or players. Coaches would be violating the out-of-season coaching rules by including managers in any warm-up or practice drills in the same role as the athletes.

17.5.10 SQUAD MEMBERS AS VOLUNTEER COACHES

56. **Could a high school senior assist with the middle level basketball program in the fall?**
YES. High school students may serve as middle level volunteer assistant coaches during the designated middle school season when under the direct supervision of the middle level coach. These high school students must meet WIAA coaches standards minimum requirements to hold a valid First Aid Certification and a valid CPR card.

17.6.0 YEAR-ROUND CONDITIONING PROGRAM

57. **Could a football coach supervise the weight room in August?**
Schools may sponsor a year-round weight training and conditioning program that must be open to all students and can not include instruction in specific sport skills and/or drills. Each school has the authority to determine who will supervise the weight room.
58. **My school has advertised in the school bulletin that the weight room will be open for wrestlers beginning October 1st. Can students not interested in wrestling be denied access to the weight room?** The access to the weight room is considered to be part of a year-round conditioning program and must be open to all students within the school.
59. **Could a school district approved conditioning coach or supervisor test the participants in that summer program during the three-week period prior to the start of the fall sports season?**
YES, testing of participants is permissible as long as the testing is a normal portion of the conditioning program and the test does not include any activity that resembles a drill or specific function of any fall sport.
60. **Could a track coach run with his/her team during the winter for conditioning purposes?**
YES, running is considered as part of any conditioning program and this would be legal as long as no coaching is taking place, and the running is part of the year-round conditioning program.
61. **Could a cross country coach follow in a car behind his/her squad during the spring?**
YES, as long as no coaching takes place.

17.7.0 OPEN GYM

62. **Could a coach have an open gym time period for his/her sport during the noon hour or after school outside the regular sport season, during the school year?**
NO, schools may sponsor a year-round open gym program, with the program open and promoted to all students, with a range of activities available. No coaching is permitted. The gym supervisor must be approved by the school.
63. **A coach opens the gymnasium and supervises but does not direct drills for students. A variety of activities are available and the gym is open to all. Is this a violation?**
NO.
64. **The softball coach wants to set up the batting cage during the open gym time period each day. Is this legal?**
YES, as long as a number of sport opportunities are available for the interested students (batting cage, volleyball net and standards, basketball hoop, etc.). Coaches may not give instruction, but may provide general supervision.
65. **Is it legal for the basketball coach to be supervising the gym while the basketball team players are running drills or plays during open gym time?**
YES, as long as the players are not being coached.
66. **Is it legal for the volleyball coach to play with the students during open gym?**
YES, as long as no coaching is taking place.
67. **I play basketball at a 3A school. My coach has been asked to coach a non-school team in a tournament that is scheduled for the last weekend in February. Since our team did not qualify for the 3A state tournament, we are ok to play on his team right?**
YES. The season for 3A basketball ends on the Sunday following the conclusion of the 3A state basketball tournament, not following your final regular season contest.
68. **Is it legal for the basketball coach to supervise basketball intramurals?**
YES, provided the students form the teams themselves, and no coaching takes place. The coach can merely serve as a gym supervisor in that case.

69. **Our boys swim coach plans to apply for an open coaching position with the local swim club (not affiliated with the high school) in which one athlete from a school that coops with our school team is a member. Would it be a violation for this person to coach both programs?**

YES. This coach cannot be coaching ANY of the students in the school feeder system, grades 7-12, including all students attending the school of any cooperative program during the out-of-season time period.

17.9.0 SUMMER ACTIVITIES

70. **A local WIAA member high school has a summer football program. The middle school in the school district is not a member of the WIAA. Can the middle school students who will attend the high school during the next fall participate in the summer program?**

There is no WIAA rule to prohibit participation in the summer program as long as the last middle school sports event has been completed and the local school district allows summer participation for these students.

71. **May a high school baseball coach be actively involved in a summer baseball program before school is out, if the majority of the summer team roster is composed of that coach's high school team?**

YES, a coach may coach non-school teams and players during the season. However, requiring participation by student-athletes as a condition for playing on a school team would constitute a violation.