

2010 State Class A Baseball Coaches Advisory Meeting – June 4, 8:00 AM, Mandan Field.

Schools Present: Red River, West Fargo, Fargo South, Fargo North, Fargo Shanley, Williston, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Bismarck High, Bismarck Century, Mandan

Also Attending – David Carlsrud-NDHSAA, Lorell Jungling-Mandan AD and Tournament Director

Order of Business:

Tournament Awards – In order to get the entire state on the same page, the following items and timelines have been set forth:

1. Biographies for the Senior Athlete of the Year are to be sent out by the Sunday after the Region Tournaments to all coaches and the tournament director of the host state tournament site. This will allow the bio's to be put into the state tournament program as well as getting the bio to all class A coaches to help with the evaluation for the voting of Senior Athlete of the Year.
2. The All state team will be sent out the Tuesday after the state tournament and not announced at the state tournament. The coaches that are at the state tournament will receive their certificates for their players and the rest will be mailed to their perspective HS.
3. The All Tournament Team, Senior Athlete of the Year and Coach of the Year will be announced at the state tournament after the championship game.

The EDC and WDA are sitting at 9 or 10 teams for the 2011 season. The coaches have agreed to eliminate play-in games for the Class A level. Rationale:

1. We feel if you finish below 8th place that you have not earned the right through competition at the conference level to qualify.
2. This puts more emphasis on the season's success, rather than one game.
3. The bottom of the conference teams are usually there due to lack of pitching, etc. and to play a play in game will eliminate the one pitcher that could compete. This increases the competition for the 1 vs. 8 seed and the 2 vs. 7 seed.
4. This also eliminates travel expenses, umpire fees, field usage fees (for those who apply), transportation and time from school missed as this is usually the week of finals for most high schools.

A note stating that a notification of BBCOR standards that go into effect for all bats starting in the 2012 season was made to all coaches. NCAA initiates the new standards in 2011

Advisory presentations:

Set up a time to meet with NDHSCA with Gelaine Orvik and address the NDHSCA board on advisory agenda item #2.

1. Pitching innings – Justification and Rationale for Inning compliments pre region tournament –

Recommend: “Each Pitcher will have a full complement of innings for post season tournaments providing there is a minimum of 4 days rest prior to any post season tournament.”

Rationale:

- This would provide post season tournaments with consistency from region to state tournaments.
 - Innings would be full compliment with the previous Saturday being the end date for region play. Any innings used between Sunday and the Post Season Tourney will count in the 14 innings in a 7 day period rule.
 - This would allow teams to use the last weekend of the season for conference games without penalty. This weekend is also one of the best weather related weekends of the spring season.
 - This gives the same amount of rest time that a professional and college pitcher would get between starts. (4 days)
 - Student athletes are stronger at the end of the season.
 - With wood bat play, pitchers in ND are throwing an average of 13.39 less pitches per start than in the metal bat seasons of previous years.
 - This would provide the same amount of rest for the region tournaments as the state tournament is allotted.
- 2. Summer Coaching – We are not looking for a temporary exemption – we would like baseball to remain the way it has for 60 years and eliminate any mandates on baseball coaches coaching in the summer.**

Recommend: Delete the out of season coaching rule for baseball.

Revise the status of baseball from the constitution and Bylaws:

Part 3, Section 4, Subsection a, b and c which states:

4. A student participating in an activity "out of season" may not receive coaching or training from a salaried or non-salaried member of his/her high school's coaching staff in that sport except under the following provisions:

a. During June and July, coaches of team sports (baseball, basketball, football, hockey, soccer, softball and volleyball) from a NDHSAA member school's coaching staff in that sport may instruct students in a summer contest or camp who have participated in a contest as members of their school team in that sport.

b. Coaches of individual sports (cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, and wrestling) from a NDHSAA member school's coaching staff may coach students in that sport "out of season" provided that it is not under the supervision and operation of the member school. NOTE: Any non-salaried student teachers who were coaching while undergoing their supervised teaching experience are exempt.

c. Baseball is granted a one-time three-year exemption to the out of season coaching rule beginning with the 2009-10 season and ending with the 2011-12 season. (June 09)

As coaches, we would like to submit 4 major points that have come to issue on this:

1. Our biggest concern is the effect on baseball as a HS sport. Currently in the state of North Dakota, there are 70 schools that have the sport of baseball. 18 currently at the class A level, 52 at the class B level. This integration of the rule not allowing high school coaches to coach legion will make a giant impact on baseball at the HS level. Of the 55 coaches that responded to my email requests, there are currently 24 head coaches and 37 assistant coaches in ND that also coach legion. Most have indicated that they would choose legion over HS if forced to choose. Currently there are 4 class B schools that have not even named a head coach for baseball, even with practice starting in 10 days due to the lack of coaches with baseball experience. Responsible adults with baseball coaching experience in ND that can work with a school sports schedule are hard to find. Making the choice would be devastating to the class B level, as 23 of the 24 head coaches that coach legion are at the class B level. This is almost half of the coaches in ND. In small rural towns, coaches are very hard to find in all sports. Baseball is even tougher. We feel this is going to cause schools to have to hire parents or former players just out of college to coach. There are many problems with this as you know. This may also cause many of the rural programs to fold, or end up with massive co-op applications in order to share coaches. We already have many rural towns forming massive cooperatives to make baseball a reality – ex: Dickinson-Dickinson Trinity–New England-Kildeer-Richardton-Taylor-South Heart and Steele-Dawson-Napoleon-Wing-Tuttle-Pettibone-Robinson-Kidder are great examples of small towns not only struggling to provide sports for small towns with low enrollment, but finding coaches to coach them in towns with low populations.
2. Class A baseball began in the 2000 season, and class B began in 1950. Up until this point, 60 years and counting, coaches have been allowed to coach both without any instances of coaches “creating a year round dynasty” with athletes all becoming one sport athletes playing baseball only. We are wondering why after all of these years this is now an issue. At the class A and B level, new champions are crowned with more variance

than most other sports. 6 different teams in 11 years at the class A level, and 31 different teams in 60 years at the class B level.

3. Subsection b states that cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, and wrestling are individual sports. But yet the NDHSAA gives out team championship awards in all of these sports. Does this not make them team sports as well? What keeps a Fargo head tennis coach from having all his or her players sign up at courts plus and have team practice throughout the summer? As coaches we should all encourage our athletes to be multi-sport athletes. 58 of the 70 schools that have baseball also have a school population under 320. We rely on our athletes to compete in multiple sports, for the sake of the other programs as well as for the concept of competition and the drive to be competitive, all in the name of good sportsmanship. The coaches in ND are an honorable group, and up until this point there has never been an issue with coaching both. It falls back to the old saying, if it is not broken, don't fix it.

4. In talking with Mr. Elliot Hopkins of the NFHS, he has informed me that this rule is not a NFHS rule, and one that has been decided by you, the board members of the NDHSAA. In ND, we do not come across a situation in baseball where weather allows us the option of playing year round, and having multiple leagues forming like the southern states do, even if we wanted to. Our weather often prevents us from being seen by major colleges in the United States. Our HS and Legion season combined is shorter than hockey, football and basketball. Division 1 athletes are not rolling out of North Dakota, and the few that are work very hard to overcome the handicap of ND weather. To take quality coaches out of the HS ranks will prevent many of the top athletes from receiving the coaching needed to get to the next level, and the average HS athlete the highly knowledgeable coach to teach the game in a positive and correct way to prevent serious injury to players and pitchers arms by overthrowing in cold weather. The good experienced coaches know how to monitor this. Inexperienced coaches do not.

As coaches, we do realize the significance of this rule, as many other team sports will use us as an argumentative piece as to why they should also be able to coach their kids out of season as well. In the state of ND, we have many players that only play during the HS season, or play only during the legion season. Most of the legion programs in the state of ND are a cooperative of multiple schools or school districts – Fargo for example encompasses Fargo North, Fargo South, Shanley and Oak Grove. Most of the legion coaches do not coach the same players during the summer, or they coach some of their players in addition to other schools players.

The American Legion program has a tradition that extends back to the first year in 1928. This rule, due to the tradition and summer season that legion baseball is played in, will cause coaches to choose legion over HS. This again would devastate the coaching ranks.

The Athletic Directors have brought this issue to you already, as a great amount of concern on their part has been shown as many of their programs will fold with this rule.

High School sanctioned baseball is not a sport with long standing traditions like basketball and football. We are trying, but it is limited to a select few who participate every year both in the spring High School season as well as the legion. We do not have enough experienced coaches, as former players or coaches, to fill the HS needs in the sport of baseball like there is in other team sports.