

Dear Coaches,

This is a copy of the **Delaware Interscholastic Football Coaches Association** manual. The purpose of this handbook is to communicate important information regarding dates and procedures that pertain to High School Football Coaches in Delaware along with pertinent rules and regulations as outlined by DIAA. It is our hope that this manual will promote consistency and stability within our coaching organization that fosters respect and collaboration with each and every coach.

On behalf of the DIFCA Board, I invite you to reach out to any of our board members or add comments on how we can make this manual more effective. I thank you for taking the time to read over the following pages, and I thank you for being leaders in High School Football in the great state of Delaware. Best of luck to all for a very successful season!

Sincerely,

John Wilson

DIFCA President

I. Academic All-State

- a. Criteria
 - i. Varsity Letter Winner for that current season (1st Marking Period)
 - ii. Weighted 3.75 GPA or higher
 - iii. Signed by counselor, due Thursday, December 4.
 - iv. The e-mail from the counselor will serve as verification
- b. Contact
 - i. John Wilson (jwilson@stmarkshs.net)
 - ii. Have counselor e-mail to John Wilson by due date
 - iii. Goal is to have names published in the News Journal

II. Sportsmanship Award Winners

- a. Each Head Coach will nominate one athlete that is a Varsity Football Letter Winner (Grades 9-12) that fits the following criteria:
 - i. Player should be a contributor to his team.
 - ii. Player must be in good academic standing.
 - iii. Player must be in good behavioral standing with his school.
 - iv. Player must show and demonstrate great respect for competitors, school, teammates and coaches.
 - v. Player must show the ability to accept victory and defeat graciously, convey a high degree of humility, integrity and demonstrate commitment in the classroom.
 - vi. Player must be nominated by his coach by the specified date.
- b. Please select one person from your team and send this nomination to Mike Tkach by the due date; e-mail: Michael.Tkach@cape.k12.de.us

III. All-State Selection Process

- a. Dues- must be paid before Conference selection meeting or All-State selections will not be counted.
- b. It is imperative that the head coach submits a complete ballot; the ballot is to represent the feelings of the entire staff.
- c. Players will be selected by the highest number of total points by position. In the event of a tie, the 1st tiebreaker will be number of 1st place votes. If it is still a tie, then it goes to second place votes and then 3rd place votes.
- d. Auditor: The ballots are to be sent by any of the following means to Joe Hemphil:
- e. Mail: 7 Hofsta Court, Wilmington, Delaware 19808
- f. E-mail: jwhcoach@aol.com
- g. Ballots are due on the Thursday after the State Semi-Final Games
- h. All-State Selection Meeting @ school to be determined beginning on the first Tuesday after Championship Weekend (Board members and media only)
- i. Information will be presented to Delaware Online by 8:00 pm on day of selection.

IV. COACH OF THE YEAR BALLOT

- a. Each coaching staff will receive two ballots to vote for coach of the year: 1 Head Coach Ballot and 1 Assistant Coach Ballot
- b. Coaches will not be eligible for Coach of the Year if dues are not paid.
- c. The ballots are to be sent by any of the following means to Joe Hemphil:
 - i. Mail: 7 Hofsta Court, Wilmington, Delaware 19808
 - ii. E-mail: jwhcoach@aol.com
- d. Ballots are due the same due date as the All-State Ballot

V. ED BROWN ASSISTANT COACH OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

- a. Requirements:
 - i. The assistant coach must have at least 15 years of coaching experience (minimum 10 years in the state of Delaware).
 - ii. Must currently be a high school football coach in Delaware
 - iii. Must have DIFCA staff dues paid in full
 - iv. A letter must be written and submitted by the head coach indicating the following:
 1. The number of years the assistant has coached with the school and with the head coach
 2. Other coaching experiences
 3. His job duties as it relates to football and the school community
 4. Character reference: What type of person is he?
- b. Assistant Coach of the Year will be voted on by the board.
- c. All nominations must be forwarded to **John Wilson**
 - i. Mail: St. Mark's High School, 2501 Pike Creek Road, Wilmington, DE 19808
 - ii. E-mail: jwilson@stmarkshs.net

VI. DFRC BLUE/GOLD SELECTION PROCESS

- a. Each head coach will receive Blue-Gold nomination forms from the DFRC office in October. Coaches must understand that being selected to an All-Conference or an All-State team is not an automatic selection to the DFRC Blue-Gold All*Star Football Game. All graduating seniors are eligible to be nominated for the game.
- b. Nominations:
 - i. Each player nominated must have a nomination form from the coach, and a Character Verification Form, completed and signed by the Coach, Athletic Director AND the Principal, along with a copy of each player's DIAA Medical Card.
 - ii. All forms must be returned to the DFRC office by the specified date (usually mid-November). Deadlines are strictly enforced.
- c. Blue-Gold Selection Dinner
 - i. Each head coach is expected to meet in Dover Downs for the Blue-Gold selection dinner held on the first Thursday following the state championship games.

- d. Coaches Selection for Blue-Gold game
 - i. All paid DIFCA head coaches are eligible to be head coaches in the game (season record is not a factor in the selection)
 - ii. All paid DIFCA head coaches and assistants are eligible to be assistant coaches in the game.
 - iii. Practice gear, game gear, and a small stipend will be provided to all participating coaches.
 - iv. Head will be selected by the DIFCA Board with DFRC approval. Decision will be made a week prior to the selection dinner.
 - v. Head Coaches/Assistant Coaches will be announced at the Blue-Gold selection dinner

VII. DIFCA All-State Banquet

- a. Head Coach will receive invitations through e-mail for the All-State banquet. Copies will also be provided at Blue-Gold selection meeting.
- b. Head coach will provide highlight video (5-6 clips)for 1st Team All-State players only. E-mail hudl or other link to Chris Larson at jcl398@hotmail.com or call (302) 242-4696 with questions or concerns.
- c. Head coaches will be expected to make a one minute presentation about 1st Team players only and present that player with his plaque. The head coach will designate an assistant coach if the head coach is unable to attend.

VIII. DFRC BLUE-GOLD KICK OFF CLASSIC

- a. An e-mail will be sent to all head coaches in regards to hosting the game in early spring. Head coaches interested in the game can reply to the e-mail with interest in participating in the game.
- b. The selection will be made by the DIFCA Board, in conjunction with DFRC.
- c. The DFRC KO Classic signifies the start of the Delaware High School Football season and helps to create awareness about DFRC (Blue-Gold).
- d. Teams (players, coaches, managers) are supplied with t-shirts for this game and the winning team receives a trophy.
- e. The KO Classic will be held on Thursday, 6:00 PM at the home school's site.
- f. DIAA will already approve this early start so there will be no further DIAA action required and the schedule change can be made on the website.
- g. DFRC will handle the PR release of this game and it will also be listed in the Blue-Gold All-Star Football Game Day program.
- h. Each school will raise \$500 (check payable to DFRC) to offset the costs of running this game. Sponsor logos may be placed on the back of the DFRC KO Classic Game Day t-shirts.
- i. In late spring, an organizational meeting will take place with all coaches and the home school's Athletic Director. Visiting school's AD is welcome to attend.
- j. Direct all questions and concerns to John Wilson, DIFCA President

- k. A waiver must be submitted to DIAA for approval of the game in spring. Teams may not begin practicing early if they have the required 21 days of practice before their first game.

IX. DIFCA FILM EXCHANGE/SCOUTING POLICY *Edited August 8, 2017

For the betterment of Delaware High School Football and to improve the coaching relationships throughout the state, DIFCA has placed several recommendations on film exchange and scouting.

1. Each head coach will make arrangements to view each other's film from the two most recent games.
2. It is the responsibility of each head coach to provide the opposing coach a full and complete game that is of good quality.
3. Regardless if a team has a chance to see your game or not, it is still recommended as a general courtesy that all coaches exchange the last two games of the regular season or final pre-season game.
4. Coaches are prohibited from scouting or filming scrimmages unless arrangements have been made with all teams involved in the scrimmage to allow scouting and filming. Sending a parent or associate to film the game without the consent of the opposing coach is prohibited.
5. It is recommended that players be reminded by their coaches not to attend the opposing team's scrimmages.
6. It is highly suggested that all state tournament teams exchange any four games from the regular season. This will be up to the opposing coaches to decide and select which games to exchange.

XII. DIAA HANDBOOK: HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL RULES

4.0 Sports Seasons, Practices Sessions and Maximum Game Schedules and Designated Sports Seasons

4.1.1 The fall sports season shall begin on or after August 15th and end with the start of the state championship in that sport. Any regular season contest that was postponed must be rescheduled and played before the beginning of the state tournament in that sport. A conference championship game must also be completed before the start of the state tournament in that sport and practice for any fall sport shall not begin earlier than August 15th. The first allowable competition date in the fall sports season shall be the first Friday after Labor Day.

4.1.1.1 The first three (3) days of football practice shall be primarily for the purpose of physical conditioning and shall be restricted to non contact activities. Coaches may introduce offensive formations and defensive alignments, run plays "on air," practice non contact phases of the kicking game, and teach non contact positional skills. Protective equipment shall be restricted to helmets, mouth guards, and shoes on the first day of practice. Shoulder pads may be added on the second and third day of practice. The use of dummies, hand shields, and sleds in contact drills is prohibited until the fourth day of practice. Blocking, tackling, and block protection drills which involve any contact between players are also prohibited until the fourth day of practice.

4.1.1.2 No member school shall participate in spring football games nor shall a member school conduct football practice of any type outside of the regular fall sports season except when participating in the state tournament. "Organized football" or "organized football practice" shall be defined as any type of sport which is organized to promote efficiency in any of the various aspects of football. Touch football, featuring blocking, tackling, ball handling, signaling, etc. shall be considered "organized football" and shall be illegal under the intent of this rule

4.1.5 A school which conducts practice prior to the first allowable date shall pay a fine of \$500.00 per each illegal practice day. The school shall be referred to the DIAA Sportsmanship Committee for consideration of further action.

What is allowed during the first three (3) days of football practice?

Day One - Helmets, mouth guard, shoes, workout clothing. NO CONTACT

Day Two - Helmets, shoulder pads, mouth guard, shoes, workout clothing. NO CONTACT

Day Three - Helmets, shoulder pads, mouth guard, shoes, workout clothing. NO CONTACT

Day Four onward – Full pads and Contact drills/scrimmaging.

4.2 Practice Sessions

The DIAA Board has granted a waiver of certain provisions of Regulations 1008/1009.4.2. The following is a summary of what is allowed due to the the waiver provisions and the regulation.

These are in effect for all practice days (school day and nonschool day):

- There must be one day of no activity per seven day period.
- There must be a minimum of 21 calendar days of practice prior to the first competition date

- A student must practice at least 7 calendar days prior to participating in a contest
- The Heat Index requirement which is as follows, must be adhered to:

The following is in effect for non-school day practice:

- A limit of no more than 2 practices involving physical activity per day.
- A single practice can be no more than 3 hours of physical activity.
- There is a limit of 5 total hours of practice involving physical activity per day.
- On days when there are two physical practices sessions per day there must be a break in between physical practice sessions of at least one hour during which film study, chalkboard, etc are permitted but done in a cool environment.
- This does not prohibit a 3rd session during which non-physical activities such as film study, chalkboard etc. may be conducted in a cool environment but there can be no physical activity including “walk through” sessions.

The regulation regarding school day practice has not changed meaning all instructional activities must be conducted within a two hour period. There is no change to the school day practice regulation from previous years.

4.2.4 A school which exceeds the two [3 hours in a single session or 5 hours daily total] hour practice limitation shall pay a \$500.00 fine.

4.2.5 Student-athletes shall have unrestricted access to drinking water and be permitted a minimum of one five-minute rest period during each hour of practice.

4.2.6 Member schools shall comply with the heat related practice modifications posted on the DIAA website.

4.2.7 Practicing on holidays and weekends shall be left to the discretion of the individual schools and conferences. However the restrictions on non-school day practice sessions apply and there should be one day of no activity (practice, scrimmage, or contest) during any seven day period.

4.2.8 Practice on Non School Days

4.2.8.1 Practice is defined as the time a participant engages in physical activity.

4.2.8.2 Each practice shall be no more than 2 [3] hours in length.

4.2.8.3 There shall never be more than two practices a day, nor more than 6 consecutive days of practices including physical activity or walk-through.

4.2.8.4 On days when two practices are conducted, neither [no]practice session shall exceed two [3] hours in length and must be separated with at least three [1] continuous hours of recovery time between the end of the first practice and the beginning of the next practice.

4.2.8.5 Students-athletes shall not participate in more than five hours of activities on practice days including a one-hour walk-through session. A walk-through shall be defined as a teaching opportunity with no protective equipment (i.e. shin guards, helmets, etc.) or equipment related to a given sport (i.e. soccer balls, field hockey sticks, etc.). (See FAQ 1 below)

4.2.8.6 The two hourly practice limitation does not include time for non-instructional activities such as dressing, showering, transportation, or training room care.

4.2.8.7 Split sessions may be conducted but practice time shall not exceed two [3] hours per session and five hours total daily for any individual athlete.

4.2.9 Practice on Official Student School Day

4.2.9.1 Practice sessions shall be limited to two (2) hours.

4.2.9.2 The two (2) hour limit on practice sessions on official school days includes all instructional activity on the field, court, mat, or track or in the pool, weight room, or classroom such as team meetings, film reviews, blackboard sessions, warm-up and cool-down exercises, drills or mandatory strength training.

4.2.9.3 The two hour practice limitation does not include time for non-instructional activities such as dressing, showering, transportation, or training room care.

4.2.9.4 Split sessions may be conducted but practice time shall not exceed two hours for any individual athlete.

7.5 Coaching Out of Season

7.5.1 From August 2nd through the first day after the last spring sport DIAA state tournament event, a certified, emergency, or volunteer coach shall not be allowed to provide instruction out of the designated season in his/her assigned sport to returning members of the varsity or subvarsity teams of the school at which he/she coaches or transfer students from other schools who play the coach's sport. He/she shall also be prohibited from coaching rising ninth graders (rising eighth graders if eighth grade is part

of the same administrative unit as grades 9 through 12) who participated in his/her assigned sport at a feeder school. A rising ninth grader is a student who has completed eighth grade requirements but is not yet enrolled in ninth grade. A rising eighth grader is a student who has completed seventh grade requirements but is not yet enrolled in eighth grade.

7.5.1.1 A coach shall not be allowed to participate on a team in his/her assigned sport with the aforementioned players.

7.5.1.2 A coach shall also be prohibited from officiating contests in his/her assigned sport if the aforementioned players are participating except in organized league competition.

7.5.1.2.1 The league shall not be organized and conducted by the employing school, the employing school's booster club, or the employing school's coaching staff.

7.5.1.2.2 The league shall have written rules and regulations that govern the conduct of contests and establish the duties of contest officials.

7.5.1.2.3 The league shall have registration and entry procedures, forms, and fees; eligibility requirements; and fixed team rosters, team standings, and a master schedule of contests.

7.5.1.3 A certified, emergency, or volunteer coach shall not be allowed to provide instruction or coach during the designated season in his/her assigned sport to current members of the varsity or subvarsity teams of the school at which he/she coaches outside of school sponsored practices, scrimmages, and contests.

7.5.1.4 A high school coach is not permitted to coach an eighth grade student in the coach's designated sport(s) at any time during the student's eighth grade year.

7.5.1.5 A coach who is in violation of this section shall be suspended from coaching in the specified sport at any DIAA member school for up to the total number of days in the school year from the date the charge is substantiated.

7.5.2 From the first day after the last spring sport DIAA state tournament event through August 1st, a certified, emergency or volunteer coach shall be allowed to provide instruction in his/her assigned sport to returning members of the varsity or subvarsity teams of the school at which he/she coaches. Instructional contact with the aforementioned returning school team members shall be subject to the following conditions:

7.5.2.1 A coach may provide instruction to an unlimited number of his/her returning school team members in formal league or tournament competition or in formal instructional camps or clinics provided the league or tournament or instructional camp or clinic is insured, organized and conducted by a non school affiliated organization.

7.5.2.2 A coaching staff may provide instruction to a maximum of two returning school team members in an informal setting which means student initiated and non scheduled. A coaching staff may have multiple two hour sessions in any given day. Returning school team members shall not receive more than 2 hours of sports instruction per day.

7.5.2.3 A coach shall not receive any compensation, from any source, for the instruction of his/her returning school team members. Reimbursement for out of pocket expenses (e.g. gas, food, lodging) incurred by returning school team members and coaches to attend leagues or tournaments or instructional camps or clinics are not prohibited provided that no local school or state educational funds are used.

7.5.2.4 Participation in the formal league and tournament, or instructional camp or clinic, or informal instruction, shall be open, voluntary, and equally available to all returning school team members as well as members of the student body.

7.5.2.5 Coaches are permitted to hold an organizational practice for formal league/tournament competition only as permitted by the written, pre-established rules of the formal league/tournament. In no event shall more than one organizational practice be permitted and the number of games and practice shall not exceed three in one week. If the formal league/tournament does not have written, pre-established rules regarding practice, then no practice is permitted.

7.5.2.6 A coach who is in violation of this section shall be suspended from coaching in the specified sport at any DIAA member school for up to the total number of days in the school year from the date the charge is substantiated.