



QUESTION 1: Can a coach open the batting cage and have instruction for a batter asking for help in the off season?

ANSWER: Private instruction and coaches volunteering their time to help kids is a very positive thing. An activity like this should not be used to “get around” the practice rule or be used to augment practice for an individual player before or after practice starting and ending dates. However, in the off season should a player ask for some assistance from their high school coach and either with payment for services or not to the coach, we want our high school coaches helping kids. High School coaches have a great heart for helping kids with academics, sports, life in general. It is not the intention of practice starting dates to prohibit our coaches from continuing to help kids when they need it.

QUESTION 2: A varsity softball coach, who also makes a living giving pitching and hitting lessons offers her varsity softball team the opportunity to come and work out in her indoor facility for free. During these workouts the varsity coaching staff is there-evaluating talent and offering constructive criticism.

ANSWER: Private enterprises involving high school coaches away from school time and with no affiliation with the school is a rather common phenomenon (i.e. tennis pros, golf pros, club swimming coaches etc). The CCS is not authorized nor does it intend to restrict such private enterprises because that individual also coaches a high school team at some point during the school year. However, using your private enterprise to benefit your school team off-season is a violation of the spirit, if not the letter of this rule. Offering this special opportunity to the softball team players only from the coach's school off season would surely be considered a violation of this rule. If this occurred during the season (NOT on Sunday) it would be considered a practice and would be considered the same during the off season and would, therefore, be a violation of this rule.

QUESTION 3: A varsity baseball coach holds a team player meeting and tells the perspective players that starting after Thanksgiving he will be holding voluntary conditioning three days a week. His conditioning workout consists of stretching, wt. training, running, throwing and the use of an agility ladder.

ANSWER: Conditioning to stay in shape for your sport off season is a goal of every coach. The challenge is convincing and motivating athletes to have the discipline and drive to undertake the program. Off-season conditioning is not prohibited by these rules. Having the coach involved in voluntary conditioning in order to encourage, support and motivate athletes off season is not a problem. However, THROWING is a sport specific skill and is not part of the non-sport specific conditioning that is allowed within this rule. If throwing was involved or any other sport-specific skill program, this would be a violation of practice start and ending dates. In addition, VOLUNTARY, is the key word. NO implicit or explicit requirement of such activity is allowed. Coaches cannot wink and say it's voluntary. Coaches should follow the spirit of the practice rule and making sure that kids participation in such an off-season activity is purely voluntary and participation in this conditioning may not benefit or hurt (beyond the natural advantage of being in better shape) the tryout consideration, playing time or any other aspect of the student's role or participation in the high school season of that sport.

QUESTION 4: In the spring I coach an AAU team that is made up of only my girls basketball players from my high school team. I am signed up with the AAU and everything. Is this legal?

ANSWER: Maybe, maybe not. There are several factors to consider.

- What is the purpose of this team? To practice and play as a school team off season?
- How are signups managed? Are girls required explicitly or implicitly to participate? -Will their participation/performance on this AAU team impact whether or not they make the high school team or what role they will play on the high school team (not considering the natural benefit of becoming a more skilled basketball player from participating in some off-season program); or not make the high school team. If so, it would be a violation.
- Did the coach restrict the team membership to only members of the high school team or was it open to other players from other areas other schools? If so, this would be a violation.
- Does the name of the team, the mascot of the team, the equipment of the team, even the colors of the jerseys of the team relate in any way shape or form to the high school? If so, this would be a violation.

If the high school coach is coaching an AAU team for the benefit of the girls or boys in the community who want to get better at basketball, there would be no reason, other than trying to have practice for your high school team off season, not to invite other students in the community to participate, to require your own school team athletes to participate, to use school equipment, school name, school mascots. After all it would not be a school team and would serve a totally different purpose. What is the purpose of this activity is a key question that must be asked. Remember the rule says that the use of an "outside" organization cannot be used to get around the rules.

Do we want to restrict our high school coaches to using their coaching skills to benefit kids in their community solely during the high school season? Of course not, but we do want to restrict a high school coach from coaching their high school team to ONLY during the approved CCS practice start dates. The purpose is to protect families, kids and coaches from unreasonable demands that take away from family time, academic pursuits and other activities in order to participate in sports at their local high school.

QUESTION 5: In the spring I coach an AAU team that is made up of girls from our league. I am signed up with the AAU and have a mixture of players from the league, my school and other schools. Is this legal?

ANSWER: Maybe, maybe not. Simply having other girls signed up from other schools in and of itself does not make something that is otherwise a violation to be ok. For example: I have a team that is really only my high school girls but I invite one or two other girls to play so it is legal. Remember "outside" teams cannot be used to circumvent the practice start date rules.

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See question and Answer #4 for more specific things to consider. The bottom line will be making a determination of the primary purpose of this activity will need to be made before a determination of whether or not it is a violation of the rule.

IMPORTANT: If a student who participated for another high school coach on such an outside organization team and within 24 months of that participation transferred to the outside coach's high school, there would be an immediate declaration of a violation of CIF 510 Undue Influence!

QUESTION 6: Could basketball players condition (running on the track, lifting weights etc.) prior to the Winter Start dates. Can this conditioning be supervised by the basketball coach?

ANSWER: YES AND YES, as long at it is VOLUNTARY! See question # 3 for more details.

QUESTION 7: A High School coach is hired by the local JC to have a night basketball classes at the local JC campus under the jurisdiction of the college. All of his players sign up for the class along with others. Is this legal?

ANSWER: Lots of questions must be asked in such a scenario. Does the high school coach "normally" teach JC classes? Are they an employee of the JC and only coach high school seasonally? Is there any implicit or explicit requirement for the high school players to sign up for this basketball class? What is the curriculum and description of the class? Who can sign up for the class? How are teams formed, activities organized within the curriculum? Are teams formed that match up players from the same high school to play against players from another high school? REMEMBER, "outside" organizations cannot be used to circumvent these rules.

We must ALL evaluate activities and talk to our coaches about the spirit of these rules, not just the "letter" of the rules. Remember activities that look like, smell like, act like a high school practice or competition off season during the school year not only are a violation of this rule, but put the school or school district in a situation to encumber liability for any outcome of any such activities.

QUESTION 8: Is the coach allowed to request the gym usage and supervise off-season activities or would that have to be a parent?

ANSWER: Any concern would not revolve SOLELY on who requested gym time for any off-season activity. Open gyms, off-season activities cannot be practices. Please review the definition of practice. Who requests the gym is irrelevant if the activity held in the gym is not a violation. If it is a violation the gym request of the coach would probably be a confirmation that the intent of the activity was an attempt to conduct practice in violation of the practice rules.

QUESTION 9: What if school begins August 1st . Can we start fall practice although it is before the CCS Start date for practice?

ANSWER: The start dates for the fall of 2009 is August 14. Whether or not your school as begun is irrelevant. No one can start practicing before that date.

QUESTION 10: There is a Baseball Homerun Derby scheduled to happen the first weekend in June-is this a violation?

ANSWER: It may be, again, it depends on the specifics of how it is set up, organized, etc. It would be much easier to host such an event after the second Saturday in June when summer starts and when CIF officially goes "dark" and does not control the sports activities of its member schools. One of the rules that does apply all year long is CIF 510 Undue Influence. Recruiting or trying to influence students to enroll in a particular high school is forbidden 365 days a year.

QUESTION 11: If a high school volleyball coach has his club volleyball program begin at his school at 3:30 pm and goes to 5:30 pm and only his players can get there to participate. Is this a violation?

ANSWER: This certainly has the potential of being a serious violation and a clear attempt to circumvent the practice start date rule by the use of an "outside" organization. However, it may also be just fine. If the club team was formed so that players from the area were invited to tryout, but it happened in this rural area that only the high school players were realistically available and able to participate and it truly was a matter of circumstances that kept others from being on this team just because all the players were from one high school by itself, everything else being rationally based and reasonably structured, that by itself might not make it a violation. Remember, the determination will be based on the intent and primary purpose of the activity with a discerning eye to be able to establish that an "outside" organization/activity has not been used to circumvent the rules.....

QUESTION 12: If a coach has an open gym, can the coach play in any pickup games during that open gym without violating any "open gym" Interpretations?

ANSWER: Just by having the coach play would not necessarily make this any type of violation. In fact, some may argue that while the coach is playing, he can hardly be coaching...It may not be prudent however. Remember courts involved in injury lawsuits involving minors often consider whether the "match up" of those participating in an athletic contest resulting in injury, was reasonable and safe. A grown man playing against young high school students may be deemed a mis-match and may lead to a negative finding of a court. Of course some may say the mis-match is really that the varsity players are so good, the older coach may have more exposure for an injury to himself ☺. Just be thoughtful about what you are doing with SAFETY of the student-athletes involved ALWAYS being your primary concern. The title of Open Gym cannot disguise what is otherwise by its activity a practice. It's not the name you put on the activity, it's the content of what goes on during that activity that will determine whether it's a violation or not.

QUESTION 13: If a team already has 2 scrimmages in pre-season and they make the CCS Playoffs and want to scrimmage another CCS playoff team after the CCS seeding meeting and before their first contest in the playoffs can they do this since they can only have 2 scrimmages in a year?

ANSWER: Yes, they can have an additional scrimmage with another team in the playoffs, as long as it is before either team's first CCS playoff contest and after the seeding meeting for that sport.

QUESTION 14: If the track team sends 2 individuals to one invitational track meet and the rest of the team goes to another invitational the same day how many contests does that count for the team and for the individuals?

ANSWER: This counts for 1 for the individuals. It also counts for 1 for the team since both invitational meets occurred on the same day. If one of the students ran in both meets on the same day, it would count for 2 for the individual, but still count as 1 for the team.

QUESTION 15: A coach goes to a college workout/club practice on Sunday during the high school season and when he walks in he see two of his athletes in the room working out? What should he do?

ANSWER: While what students do in their own time during the season cannot be controlled by coaches, the CIF Sunday rule is designed to protect students from overuse injuries and provide for a respite from the physical demands of a high school season of practice and competition. Parents should be encouraged to discourage additional training sessions during the high school season on Sunday in the same sport in which they are participating at the high school level. Coaches generally should not be ANYWHERE their student athletes are on a Sunday during the season of sport.

If a coach coincidentally stumbles unknowingly into this type of scenario, the coach should immediately excuse themselves and leave the premises. They should upon the first opportunity contact their school AD or Administration and notify them about what happened. This provides some protection for both the coach and the student from a possible determination that there has been a rule violation