

**ARTICLE 7**  
**LIMITATION OF SEASONS**

**Section 1. RATIONALE FOR THE LIMITATION OF SEASONS**

Since the school by virtue of the regulations of the RIASP and its Committee on Athletics has some control over what students do out of school after school hours, it would seem important that school authorities be aware of the kinds of organized competitive athletics their students participate in on their own. Various leagues are sponsored by a wide variety of community groups. If the same consideration for the health, safety, and education of the young people is not followed by these community sponsors, the health and safety of students might be impaired. The school's interest and concern with this problem should be made known and appropriate guidance given to the community sponsoring groups.

- A. After team practice starts in any sport, a student shall practice or play with only one school squad in one sport at a time, except the field events of Winter and Spring Track.
- B. No student below Grade 9 will be allowed to practice or play with any high school freshman, junior varsity or varsity team.

**Section 2. DEFINITION OF A GAME**

- A. A game (See Article 1, Section 3, paragraph I) is any competition between two or more schools, i.e. RIIL League or non-league RIIL games exclusive of scrimmages, which meets any of the following conditions:
  - 1. teams wearing game uniforms
  - 2. paid officials
  - 3. there is an admission charge, either by sale of tickets, or by collection, or by donation; and/or, results of the contest appears in any newspaper.
  - 4. A scrimmage shall be defined as a controlled practice supervised by coaches which does not meet any requirements for a game.

**Section 3. LIMITATION OF SEASONS**

- A. **Fall Sports:** Football, Soccer (Boys & Girls), Cross Country (Boys & Girls), Tennis (Girls), Field Hockey (Girls) and Volleyball (Girls)
  - 1. OPENING DATE: **August 17, 2009**
  - 2. CLOSING DATE: Immediately after RIIL games have been concluded except meets or tournaments sanctioned by the RIIL to determine championships.
  - 3. Number of League games and Non-League games:

# of League Games	# of Non- League Games	Total # of games (cap)
14	4	18
15	3	18
16	3	19
17	3	20
18	2	20

Note: For B/G Volleyball a tournament that runs over the course of one day is equivalent t to one (1) game against the cap.

1. Practice Limitations (Excluding Football):
  - a) Number of practices (prior to the first game) is ten (10). The first 5 days – no scrimmages; during the next 5 days scrimmages are allowed. Games (in accordance with our rules) may begin on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of practice.
  - b) Double sessions on the same day count as one (1) practice day.
  - c) Any student-athlete or transfer-student who joins the team after the official starting date or mid-season must have the minimum number of practices as listed above for each sport.
2. Cross Country: Maximum number of contests is 12
3. Football: Maximum number of games is 11.
4. Practice Limitations (See Article 19 Section 1A). Fall Football practice may start no earlier than seventeen (17) days before the Injury Fund game(s) with the following limitations:
  - a. Days 1 Helmets only – no contact
  - b. Days 2 – 5: Helmets and Shoulder Pads – no contact
  - c. Days 5 – 10: Full pads; contact/scrimmage – intrasquad only
  - d. Day 11 and on: Outside scrimmages/games permitted
  - e. The 10 day practice limitation period starts from the first (1<sup>st</sup>) day a student-athlete joins the football team including transfer students. Violations will be subject to penalties as outlined in the Rules and Regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.
  - f. Start Date for Football is **August 17, 2009**

**NOTE: The first (1<sup>st</sup>) Sunday after the opening day will be a mandatory day off for all players. The day will also be counted for the mandatory ten (10) day practice period.**

**B. WINTER SPORTS:** Basketball (Boys & Girls), Cheerleading, Gymnastics, Hockey, Winter Track (Boys & Girls), Swimming and Wrestling.

1. OPENING DATE: **Monday after Thanksgiving ( All sports except Ice Hockey and Wrestling)**
  - a) **Boys Ice Hockey** opening date is **Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>** and **Girls Ice Hockey** opening date is **Monday, November 9, 2009**. **Wrestling** opening date is **Monday, November 23<sup>th</sup>**. No practices/scrimmages/games on Thanksgiving Day and the day after.
    - For all other sports, the season begins the Monday after Thanksgiving (**Monday, November 30, 2009**). First five (5) days of practice – no scrimmages; during the last five (5) days scrimmages will be allowed.
    - Games may begin on the 11<sup>th</sup> day.
2. CLOSING DATE: Immediately after RIIL games have been concluded or the scheduled manual date for the beginning of practice for the Spring sports, whichever is later, except tournaments or meets sanctioned by the RIIL to determine championships.

Hockey Round Robin or RIIL contests shall not be scheduled before the first Friday of December. Basketball, Swimming, Track, Wrestling, or Gymnastic Round Robin or games shall not be scheduled before the second Friday of December.

3. Number of League games and Non-League games:

<i>Sport</i>	<i># of League Games</i>	<i>Maximum # of Games (Cap)</i>
Basketball	18	22
Ice Hockey	18	24
Gymnastics	6	14
Indoor track	4	14
Swim	7	18
Wrestling	16	20
		<b>Note: This includes a max of 5 tournaments)</b>
Cheerleading	10	10

4. PRACTICE LIMITATIONS:
  - a. Number of practices (prior to the first game) is ten (10). The first 5 days – no scrimmages; during the next 5 days scrimmages would be allowed. Games (in accordance with our rules) may begin on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of practice.
  - b. Double sessions on the same day count as one (1) practice day.
  - c. Any student-athlete or transfer-student who joins the team after the official starting date or mid-season must have the minimum number of practices as listed above for each sport.
  - d. Student-athletes who participate in Fall sports and come out for Winter sports shall be exempt from practice limitations and conditioning periods.
5. The official start time for winter sports (boys’ and girls’ basketball and wrestling) will be 7:00 pm. However, schools may schedule their home contests at a different time, provided they contact the visiting school to confirm the starting time.

C. **SPRING SPORTS:** Baseball, Golf, Spring Track (Boys and Girls), Lacrosse (Boys and Girls), Softball (Girls), Tennis (Boys) and Volleyball. (Boys).

1. OPENING DATE: **March 15, 2010**

**Start of the Season for Baseball Only:**

Teams may allow two catchers and up to eight pitchers the report one week prior to the start of the spring season. Date to be determined by the RIIL.

- o Pre-season conditioning is for 5 days only. No grade 9 students will participate
  - o Recommend a pre-season conditioning program developed and coordinated by a certified athletic trainer or other medical doctor.
  - o All athletes must be eligible by all RIIL Rules
  - o Athlete can not simultaneously be playing on another RIIL team i.e. winter sport.
2. The first league games, meets or matches shall not be scheduled prior to **April 1st** with the exception of boys’ volleyball which may be scheduled one (1) week earlier.
  3. CLOSING DATE: Immediately after RIIL games have been concluded except meets or tournaments sanctioned by the RIIL to determine championships.
  4. Number of League games and Non-League games:

# of League Games	# of Non- League Games	Total # of games (cap)
14	4	18
15	3	18
16	3	19
17	3	20
18	2	20

Note 1: For B/G Volleyball a tournament that runs over the course of one day is equivalent to one (1) game against the cap.

**Note 2: For Golf: The maximum number of golf matches is twelve (12) i.e. eight (8) league and four (4) non-league.**

5. PRACTICE LIMITATIONS:
  - a) Extend the number of practices (prior to the first game) to 10. The first 5 days – no scrimmages; during the next 5 days scrimmages would be allowed. Games (in accordance with our rules) may begin on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of practice.
  - b) Double sessions on the same day count as one (1) practice day.
  - c) Any student-athlete or transfer-student who joins the team after the official starting date or mid-season must have the minimum number of practices as listed above for each sport.
  - d) Student-athletes who participate in Winter sports and come out for spring sports shall be exempt from practice limitations and conditioning periods.
  
6. Rescheduling of a game(s) which result in no game(s) being played during the annual spring recess will result in a forfeiture of the rescheduled games.

**Notations:**

1. The number of games allowed in each sport for one season does not count the Injury Fund and/or RIIL Playoffs or Sanctioned Championships.
2. All games and scrimmages out-of-state must be sanctioned by RIIL.
3. Any violation of the provisions of this section will result in the exclusion of the team from any playoff consideration during the year of the violation in addition to any other penalties which might be imposed under Article 6.
4. There will be no spring practice for fall sports.
5. Cancellation or forfeiting of a RIIL contest is not allowed without prior consent and will be subject to penalties as outlined in Article 6.
6. No RIIL contest will be scheduled to begin before 12 noon on Sundays.

**Section 4. NON-LEAGUE GAMES**

All non-league games, with the exception of sanctioned tournaments, must be sanctioned by the Director prior to being played.

- A. Application for any non-league game, which involves entry fees above those that would normally be incurred in the game, must be presented in writing to the Director and approved through the office of the Executive Director. The application must include in detail the distribution of the entry fee for anticipated expenses.
  
- B. Sanction of non-league games  
 No RIIL member school shall compete in any state or interstate contest, tournament or meet unless the competing school(s) belongs to their state association who are members of the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS). Further, schools must be a member of their state association in *each sport(s)* in which they wish to compete against a RIIL team.  
 RIIL members' schools wishing to compete in any state, interstate, tournament or meet may petition the Principals' Committee on Athletics for permission to schedule/play the contest. However, a RIIL member must confirm that any competing school (non-state association school) adheres or will adhere to the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL; in particular, the 8-Semester, age, academics, and contest rules (**See Agreement to Compete with RIIL Schools form**), during any such contest or tournament.

**Section 5. ALL STAR COMPETITION/ GAMES**

- A. No athletic team from any school shall compete against any all-star team
  
- B. The Committee on Athletics may sanction only one all-star game per sport provided the game is played during the regular season of the sport involved.

## **Section 6. NON-SCHOOL COMPETITION AND LOYALTY TO SCHOOL TEAM**

- A. Definition of school sports season - A school sports season shall be defined as the period beginning with the date of the school's first practice with any part of a sports squad and ending with the school's last contest, including district and state tournament contests, in that sport.
- B. Definition of Organized Non-School Competition - organized non-school competition shall be defined as any game(s) which is sponsored by an individual or organization and for which any of the following have been prearranged: coach, official(s), scorer, or team membership.
- C. A member of a school team is defined as a student-athlete who is listed on a freshman, junior varsity, or varsity Eligibility List who is regularly present for and/or actively participates in, all team practices and competitions.
1. Bonafide members of a school team are prevented from missing a practice or competition to compete with an "out-of-school" team.
  2. If a conflict arises between the high school team practice/competition and *an out-of-school practice/competition* on the same day, the high school team practice/competition must be honored by the student-athlete. Priority/loyalty must be given at all times to the high school team practices and contests unless a waiver has been granted by the Principal and Athletic Director on a case-by-case basis.
  3. *Student-athletes may be a member of and compete for "out-of-school" teams if the conditions set forth in #1, 2, and 3 above are met.*
  4. **Penalties:**
    - a. Any student-athlete who is in violation shall be ineligible for the next two (2) consecutive RIIL **League** contests in which the student-athlete is a participant. This penalty is effective from the date of his/her last participation in a high school sport and may carry over to the next sports season in which s/he participates.
    - b. Any student-athlete who is found to be in violation of the rule a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) time or subsequent time(s) shall be ineligible for participation for the rest of that sport season. *A student-athlete found to be in violation of Article 7, Section 6c at the end of that sport season shall be ineligible for the first two (2) RIIL League contests of the same sport in the following year. If the student-athlete has senior eligibility, s/he shall be ineligible for the first two (2) contests of the next sport in which s/he participates. In both instances, the student-athlete may be declared ineligible for participation in all interscholastic athletics for his/her school for the remainder of the school year.*
- D. During the academic year:
1. The high school coach(s) may not coach:
    - a. prospective member(s) of a high school, club, freshman, junior varsity or varsity team during the off season of his/her sport
- EXCEPTION: Coaches may coach students during the off season who have exhausted their athletic eligibility in their particular sport.**
3. Schools should obtain and maintain an up-to-date active roster of athletes participating on non-school athletic teams during the school year. The RIIL may request the school(s) to submit the roster of active members of a non-school team should a question of RIIL eligibility arise.
- E. Guidelines for intramurals, weight training and open gym.

Schools may provide students opportunities for Intramurals, weight training and open gym during the school year provided the criteria listed below is followed.

1. the time and day(s) of the open gym and weight training are to be made known to the entire student body by the administrator through announcements, bulletin board postings, school paper, etc.
2. the weight training area and gym must be open to anyone enrolled in the school and must be on a voluntary basis. Coaches cannot mandate attendance of team members or potential team members.
3. The open gym cannot precede, follow or be in conjunction with an off-season conditioning program.

4. During the school year, no coach (including assistants, volunteers, etc) can be present in any open gym if there is participation in his/her out of season sport.
5. The person(s) in charge of supervising the open gym may not organize, coach or instruct students in any sport not in season.
6. Students participating in weight training and open gym must furnish their own clothing (sweat shirts, shorts, shoes, etc.) No equipment is to be used that is specific and/or unique to any particular sport.
7. Schools may furnish basketballs, volleyballs, basketball standards, volleyball standards, floor mats and wrestling mats, etc.

**Violations:**

1. Making the open gym available only to specific sport participants.
2. The basketball coach (or any other coach) in the gym or vicinity when his/her sport is being participated in during open, gym, except during the season of the sport.
3. The supervisor of the open gym, except during the season of the sport.
4. Select group of students working out in the gym at times other than the open gym period.

**Note:**

An “open gym” program is one in which a variety of recreational type activities are offered, i.e., badminton, basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and the like. Coaches at any level may not be present when their specific sport activity is a part of the Open-Gym program. Single sports programs in which Student-Athletes are involved are interpreted as an attempt to circumvent the out-of-season rule if those sports are not on a rotation basis with at least two or more other sports activities during a calendar week using that facility. Responsibility for monitoring Open-Gym Programs should be with the Athletic Director and Principal of the school. All specific sport activities have to be recreational in nature; therefore, practice routines, such as, softball/baseball pitching. Catching and batting, football place-kicking, golfing/putting, and similar routines are always interpreted as an attempt to circumvent the out-of-season rule.

- F. Students participating in summer programs may continue to play until the official day the eligibility listing for Fall Sports is due in the RIIL office, which is one week before the first varsity game.
- G. Summer programs involving the 50% rule and high school coaches coaching their own students can begin on June 15, of any given school year. Students still involved in RIIL playoffs may not participate until their playoffs have ended.
- H. Summer programs involving the 50% rule and high school coaches coaching their own students who will participate on fall teams must complete play prior to the submission of the varsity eligibility list to the RIIL Office.
- I. Students whose names are removed from school's varsity eligibility list are free to participate in outside programs but may not return to play for the school's varsity teams. However, they may participate in the junior varsity program(s) of that sport.
- J. Students who participate in outside programs as individuals not representing their school nor using school uniforms or equipment do not violate the simultaneous participation rule.
- C. Use of School Equipment during the summer – See Article 6, Section 14.

**Section 7. NATIONAL FEDERATION SANCTIONS**

National Federation Sanction forms are available at the RIIL office and on the RIIL web-site. (<http://www.riil.org>).