

# Remaining Ohio Prep Winter Tournaments Canceled due to COVID-19 Pandemic

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COLUMBUS – The Ohio High School Athletic Association announced Thursday that the winter sports tournaments of wrestling, basketball and ice hockey, which were postponed indefinitely March 12 are now canceled due to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic.

“It is anticipated that schools will not be able to reopen for many weeks, which prevents interscholastic athletics from taking place,” an OHSAA news release said.

The spring sports of softball, lacrosse, baseball, track and field and boy’s tennis are still postponed.

Earlier Thursday, OHSAA Executive Director Jerry Snodgrass and his staff communicated with the schools that were still competing in those winter tournaments to announce the decision.

“We are just devastated that the tournaments cannot be completed,” Snodgrass said. “But our priority is the safety of our student-athletes, coaches, communities and officials. Governor Mike DeWine is asking all Ohioans to do everything they can to stop the spread of this virus. That request, along with our schools not being able to reopen for weeks, means that school sports cannot happen at this time. Even if our schools reopen this spring, it will be difficult to find facilities willing to host the tournaments. Most campuses are shut down until mid to late summer.”

“We are already planning for ways that these student-athletes will be honored at next year’s state tournament,” Snodgrass said.

The 16 schools that qualified for the girls’ basketball state tournament and the four teams that qualified for the ice hockey state tournament will all receive state tournament programs. The 672 student-athletes who qualified for the wrestling state tournament will all receive a program, certificate and their weigh-in cards.

The four winter state tournaments and a few events during World War II (1941-1945) are the only sports cancelations in the history of the OHSAA, which was founded in 1907.

Lima Senior (D-I), Ottawa-Glandorf (D-III), Columbus Grove (D-IV) and Parkway (D-IV) had reached the Regional Finals and Shawnee (D-II) was scheduled to play in the Regional Semi-Finals in boys’ basketball. Many area wrestlers, including six from Allen East, had reached the State Tournament. Minster had made the D-IV State Semi-Finals in girls’ basketball.

“This was not the news we had hoped to hear, but we realize how tormented the directors must have been while arriving at this decision,” O-G boys head basketball coach Tyson McGlaughlin posted on face book.

“Though terribly disappointed, we have to accept that the 2019-2020 basketball season has officially ended. We thank the fine young men on this year’s team whose goal was to be crowned State Champions. This dream will not become a reality, but not because they were beaten by a better team. They won 25 games and were playing their best basketball of the year when the coronavirus terminated the season. We are proud of the guys and appreciate the many thrills and highlights they provided this season. These boys were not only great players, but even greater representatives of Ottawa-Glandorf High School. The leadership displayed will assist younger boys in our communities to become solid Titan performers. Again, we thank and congratulate the players for a great season and agonize with them when in the future these two dreaded words surface - “What if?”

Seniors on the O-G roster included Jarrod Beach, Parker Schomaeker, Hayden Den, Ethan Alt, Ben Westrick, Kamron Mag and Aaron Rieman.

Columbus Grove seniors included Evan Hopkins Owen Macke, Tanner Smith and Alex Schneider.

No State Champions will be listed for these four sports in 2020. The OHSAA does not use state polls from the media or coaches’ associations to determine state champions.