



Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc.
9150 N. Meridian Street, P.O. Box 40650, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240-0650

Phone: (317) 846-6601 FAX: (317) 575-4244 www.ihsaa.org

NEWS RELEASE

January 18, 2016

IHSAA Issues Penalties to Ben Davis, Pike Girls Basketball Teams

The varsity girls basketball seasons for Ben Davis and Pike High Schools have been cancelled for the remainder of 2015-16 season including participation in the state tournament series, IHSAA Commissioner Bobby Cox announced today. This decision, among additional penalties, is a result of incidents on Saturday afternoon at Ben Davis High School during the varsity girls basketball game between the two schools. In the fourth quarter of the contest, a violent fight erupted between the teams where benches cleared and fans rushed onto the court.

The Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. maintains by-laws that speak to the administrative responsibilities of a member school during interscholastic competition as well as the conduct, character and discipline of students and coaches. Cox and Assistant Commissioners Sandra Walter and Phil Gardner conducted a meeting with administrators and coaches of both schools today to review specific details of this incident and to chart a course of correction to ensure future incidents of this nature are eliminated. Ben Davis High School representatives attending were Principal Sandra Squire, Athletic Director John Clark, and Girls Basketball Coach Joe Lentz. Pike High School representatives attending were Principal Troy Inman, Athletic Director Doug Schornick and Girls Basketball Coach Jason Hohlt.

The IHSAA emphatically promotes respect for the rules, sportsmanlike conduct, and fair play among its 408 member schools and their student-athletes. Good sportsmanship is one of the primary tenets of education-based athletics and has come into even greater focus in recent years with the creation of the IHSAA Sportsmanship Program, the Sportsmanship Task Force, and multiple media campaigns.

"I am deeply saddened by the events of Saturday, January 16, 2016 at Ben Davis High School. This unfortunate episode between these two schools in no manner reflects the pride and tradition of their respective girls basketball programs, yet an egregious and dangerous event has transpired which calls for swift, stern and consistent correction. The IHSAA takes no pleasure in the issuance of these sanctions, nevertheless remains staunchly committed to proper sportsmanship and decorum in the interscholastic athletic setting," stated Commissioner Cox.

It is with regret yet steadfast purpose the following sanctions have been issued to Ben Davis High School and Pike High School:

- Both member schools have been suspended from participation in next month's IHSAA Girls Basketball State Tournament. Class 4A, Sectional 11, hosted by Decatur Central, shall be redesigned as a four-team tournament. Ben Davis and Pike high schools shall not receive any sectional tournament revenue from this year's tournament.
- Remaining regular season contests at the varsity level are cancelled. Junior varsity and freshmen contests may be played with any remaining players that were not in attendance at Saturday's varsity game or can positively be identified by the school administrations as not leaving the bench area.
- The contest between the two schools of Saturday, January 16, 2016 shall stand as a double forfeit.

- Coach and Student Education Components - Each basketball coach (paid and voluntary) from both schools shall complete the *Teaching and Modeling Behavior* course available on the NFHSLearn.com website. A coach failing to meet this requirement shall not be allowed to coach in an interscholastic contest until fulfillment of this mandate. Both schools shall produce the certificates of completion of these courses to the Commissioner for inspection.
- Each student-athlete, varsity or junior varsity present at this contest from both schools shall complete the *Sportsmanship* course found on the NFHSLearn.com website. A student-athlete failing to meet this requirement shall be ineligible for any interscholastic participation until this requirement is fulfilled. Both schools shall produce the respective certificates of completion for these courses to the Commissioner for inspection.
- It is also strongly encouraged that all remaining girls basketball players in both programs complete the *Sportsmanship* course found on the NFHSLearn.com website.
- Both school's girls basketball teams shall be placed on probation for the entire 2016-17 school year. This probation is a severe type of warning. It is official notice that serious violations have occurred, are a matter of record and future, similar incidents will not be tolerated. Failure to adhere to the stated by-laws of this corporation and/or playing rules provided by the IHSAA and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) may result in additional penalties including, but not limited to, an entire school suspension of membership from the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc.

About the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. (IHSAA)

The IHSAA is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization that is self-supporting without the use of tax monies. Since its founding in 1903, the Association's mission has been to provide wholesome, educational athletics for the secondary schools of Indiana. Its member high schools - public, institutional, parochial and private – pay no annual membership fee or incur entry fees to play in the Association's tournaments. A state tournament series is conducted annually in 21 sports, 10 for girls, 10 for boys and one co-ed (unified track and field). A 19-person board of directors, elected by member school principals, governs the organization.

IHSAA 15-16/20