

Press Release



Battle Ground Public Schools

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Varsity BGHS baseball program sanctioned after ineligible student allowed to play

The Battle Ground High School varsity baseball team will be barred from post-season play in 2012 because a player who was ineligible under state rules was knowingly allowed to participate in a game this season.

The Tiger baseball team also is on probation for the next two seasons under the ruling. Probation does not carry any punitive measure itself but it would result in a harsher penalty than would otherwise be the case if there is a violation during the probation, said Karla Kalian, BGHS athletic director.

Senior Luke Heyer was inserted in the April 30 home game against Heritage High School by BGHS Coach Billy Hayes.

Heyer was ineligible under Washington Interscholastic Activities Association rules that require a transfer student to wait a year before playing varsity for his/her new school. Heyer had transferred to BGHS in May 2010 from Heritage in the Evergreen School District and Kalian said then that he was ineligible to play varsity in 2011 under the WIAA transfer rule.

The Heyer family appealed to WIAA District 4 (Southwest Washington). At a hearing in Kelso on March 1 this year the appeal was denied. On April 1 the family appealed to the full WIAA in Renton but lost that appeal as well

Consequently, Luke Heyer didn't play varsity ball this year – until Coach Billy Hayes inserted him in the April 30 game, which the Tigers lost 10-0.

When Kalian heard about, and confirmed, that Luke Heyer had played last Saturday, she called Coach Hayes and told him it could have severe consequences

to the team going forward. She instructed Hayes not to coach in the Tigers' final game of the year that afternoon at Columbia River High School.

At a meeting of Greater St. Helens League athletic directors on Wednesday, May 4, the violation was discussed and the sanctions were issued. On May 19, District 4 of the WIAA will consider the league's action and either approve it or send it back to the league for reconsideration.

Kalian said Friday that "Coach Hayes' status as varsity baseball coach at Battle Ground High School is being evaluated." Hayes, head baseball coach at BGHS since the 2005 season, is a non-district employee working under contract.

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