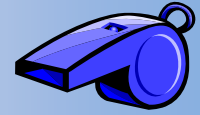




# MIAA GAME OFFICIALS WINTER 2007-08 NEWSLETTER



## From the Assistant Director...

**“All we are saying is give peace a chance” (John Lennon July 4, 1969)**

The MIAC voted during its meeting of November 8th to RECOMMEND in "TEAM" sports that game officials remain at the competition venue until the post game sportsmanship handshake has been concluded. This recommendation will be in place for both the upcoming Winter and 2008 Spring sport seasons.

Beginning with the Fall season of 2008, officials will be required to remain at the competition site until the handshake ceremony has concluded.

The Council vote also acknowledged that there may be, on occasion, unusual circumstances when either the contest officials and/or the site manager see a need to excuse the officials from remaining at the competition site after the conclusion of the game.

No other rules in recent memory, except perhaps the basketball and soccer mouth guard rules, have been the target of so much discussion and resulting controversy. Specifically, implementation of this rule in the sport of basketball has been challenged by the Massachusetts State Basketball Officials Association (MSBOA), which has required their officials to "...not remain on the floor to observe any post-game handshake."

Wearing my many "hats", including but not limited to my experiences as, a 37 year high school and collegiate basketball official (who could—and did leave the court at the final horn faster than most 6' 8" centers), a just-retired member of IAABO Board #95, a 12 year stint as Chairman of the MIAA Committee on Sportsmanship, Integrity & Ethics, and a former high school principal and varsity basketball coach, I offer the following:

- What is the statute of limitation on "we've always done it that way"?
- Are not game officials independent contractors of the local school hosting the contest, and therefore obligated to comply with both NFHS and MIAA rules and regulations applicable to the specific sport?

- FAQ from IAABO, Inc. regarding their K&K Insurance policy: "What is K&K medical insurance and what does it cover? The K&K Medical Insurance is designed to protect the IAABO official while they are 1.) On the premises assigned by the Policyholder in order to officiate the assigned activity...."
- Does not the rule allow for the site manager and/or the official the opportunity to defer remaining for the handshake, if the game environment has been a hostile one?
- The MIAA has stressed that it is the responsibility of the coaches and site administrators, not the game official, to monitor and control the conduct of the spectators and student athletes during the post game handshake
- Isn't it true that the best officials are those who understand that the contest being officiated is not the "be all and end all" event in the student athlete's life? Rather, it is an extension of the classroom, an important activity to be sure, but one designed to provide many important "life lessons" that transcend the goal of "victory at all cost".
- Since the MIAA has embraced sportsmanship as a priority, as participants and partners in educational athletics, are not game officials called to be leaders and role models during this post game celebration and demonstration of respect?
- Hasn't anyone noticed what a positive example of post-game sportsmanship the handshake "ceremonies" in the sports of ice-hockey, soccer, and wrestling represent?

In my 37 years of refereeing basketball at many levels of play, conservatively, I would estimate that less than one-percent of the games were of such a nature that there was a "legitimate" concern for the personal safety of the officials. The current rule "exempts" the official from remaining on the floor for the handshake under those circumstances. For all the rest of the games, I could have stayed and observed the handshake line, and in so doing, could have promoted good sportsmanship and supported the local schools in their mission to teach positive "life lessons". Who could deny that our presence and visibility would enhance the culture of sport? Instead, I headed for the exit. Why? You already know, "that's the way we've always done it!"

**As Bob Dylan said in 1964, "The times, they are changin". Could this finally be the time to "give peace a chance"?**

**-Bill McGuirk**

**If you would like to communicate with us, please use the following means:**

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(508) 541-7997

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# November 8 MIAC "Handshake" Vote

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Council (MIAC) voted during its November meeting to **RECOMMEND** in "TEAM" sports that game officials remain at the competition venue until the post game sportsmanship handshake has been concluded. This recommendation will be in place for both the upcoming Winter and 2008 Spring sport seasons.

**Beginning with the Fall season of 2008**, officials will be **REQUIRED** to remain at the TEAM competition site until the handshake ceremony has concluded.

Kindly note, because the Council approves rules for both High Schools and Middle Schools, this standard applies to both.

The MIAC vote also acknowledged that there may be, on rare occasion, unusual circumstances that cause either the contest officials and/or the site manager to see a need to excuse the officials from remaining at the competition site after the conclusion of the competition. (Whenever it is decided that officials should be excused from the post game handshake ceremony, the Sportsmanship Handshake Report Form -- [click here to view](#) -- is to be completed and forwarded to the MIAA Sportsmanship Committee.)

## **This MIAC vote affects the following team sports:**

- Winter Season: Basketball, Gymnastics, Ice Hockey, Swimming (including District F Girls), and Wrestling
- Spring Season: Baseball, Lacrosse, Softball, and Volleyball (Boys)
- Fall Season: Field Hockey, Football, Gymnastics (District F), Soccer, Swimming (Girls), and Volleyball (Girls)

[Click here](#) to view a sample announcement preparing spectators for the handshake ceremony.

Questions, implementation advice or resources should be discussed with MIAA Deputy Director Bill Gaine (Executive Liaison to the MIAA Sportsmanship Committee.)

Possible confusion regarding implications of this policy on the final score of basketball games will be addressed separately.



# Assignors/Commissioners of Game Officials Pre-Season Mandatory Meeting



**PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED (see below)**

***Rule 90.18: All officials' assignors/commissioners engaged by member schools and/or leagues to assign officials to MIAA contests will be required to attend an annual pre-season meeting with MIAA staff.***

## **Purpose:**

To promote the concept of “educational athletics” with an emphasis on consistent enforcement of MIAA and sport rules, to develop a better understanding of the game official’s role in promoting sportsmanship, and to improve the communication between game official assignors/commissioners and the MIAA.

## **Format:**

The MIAA will conduct an evening pre-season meeting prior to each sport season at the MIAA office in Franklin, MA. Assignors/Commissioners will be expected to pre-register with the MIAA. A capacity enrollment figure will be determined and when reached, registrations will be closed. A light buffet dinner will be served from 6:00 to 6:45 PM and the general session will take place from 6:45 to 8:00 PM.

## **Agenda Items:**

- *MISSION: Educational Athletics*
- Game Officials’ Role in Promoting Sportsmanship
  - *Communicating with Coaches and Athletes*
- Assignors/Commissioners “Best Practices” (Panel)
  - *Recruiting and Assignment of Quality Officials*
  - *Evaluation and Accountability*
- MIAA Responsibilities and Sport Rules Update
- Fees and Tournament Assignments
  - Role of Game Officials’ Committee
  - Tournament Assignment Criteria
- Q & A

**Meeting Date: (only need to attend ONE meeting)**

**Spring: Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**[\(Click here to register on-line\)](#)**

# Attention Officials: Assignors/Commissioners Input Wanted

The MIAA is looking for feedback from those officials who have attended either the August 28, 2007 or the November 29, 2007 Assignors/Commissioners pre-season dinner meeting. Your input will be particularly helpful in shaping future officials meetings as well as our continuing relationship to provide the best educational athletic experience possible. Please contact either Nathan Bonneau or Bill McGuirk as outlined on the first page of this newsletter.

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Nathan Bonneau   [nbonneau@miaa.net](mailto:nbonneau@miaa.net)

## NFHS/ASEP Officials Education Program Contract Canceled

Human Kinetics/American Sport Education Program (ASEP) canceled the NFHS Officials Education Program contract that was scheduled for renewal in April. ASEP shared that the decision was based on poor sales over the past three years and little interest in organizational commitments for the future. The NFHS and ASEP will be working together to assist those states that had contracts with ASEP for this program. The courses posted are still excellent training and educational resources and appropriate for professional development.

- [NFHS Officiating Principles Online Course Now Available \(PDF\)](#) (.pdf)
- [NFHS Officiating Basketball Methods Online Course Now Available PDF](#) (.pdf)
- [NFHS Officiating Softball Methods Online Course Now Available PDF](#) (.pdf)
- [NFHS Officiating Football Methods Online Course Now Available PDF](#) (.pdf)
- [NFHS Officiating Baseball Methods Online Course Now Available PDF](#) (.pdf)
- [NFHS Officiating Soccer Methods Online Course Now Available \(PDF\)](#) (.pdf)
- [NFHS Officiating Track & Field and Cross Country Methods](#) (.pdf)
- [Basketball Methods ordering information](#)
- [Baseball Methods ordering information](#)
- [Football Methods ordering information](#)
- [NFHS Officiating Wrestling Methods](#) (.pdf)
- [Officiating Principles ordering information](#)
- [Officiating Principles Online Course Kicks off](#)
- [Soccer Methods ordering information](#)
- [Softball Methods ordering information](#)
- [Track & Field and Cross Country Methods ordering information](#)
- [Wrestling Methods ordering information](#)



# 2007-08 Winter Sport Rule Changes

## Basketball

(click for all Basketball rule changes)

### **MIAA Basketball Rules Changes for 2007-09 Approved by MIAC 5/10/07**

**66.1:** Mouth guards are highly recommended for all basketball players while on the court.

**66.4:** All varsity contests shall be played in four, 8 minute quarters. Sub-varsity contests also shall be played in equal quarters of no more than 8 minutes.

**66.7.2:** No member of a high school basketball squad shall participate in more than four quarters per day. (This does not include official over-time periods.)

## Wrestling

(click for all Wrestling rule changes)

**3-1-1:** The referee's uniform consists of a short-sleeve knit shirt, with alternating black-and-white 1-inch stripes, or gray with black pinstripes.

**4-2-3:** A clarification was made on communicable skin conditions or any other condition, in that the current written documentation from a physician needs to be on an approved form from either the NFHS or a state association.

**4-2-5 New:** Each contestant who has braces or has a special orthodontic device on his or her teeth, shall be required to wear a tooth and mouth protector.

**5-31-1:** The head coach shall be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct if wrestlers report to the scorer's table not in proper uniform, not properly groomed, not properly equipped or not ready to wrestle. Exception: The head coach shall not be penalized when a wrestler reports to the scorer's table with shoelaces that are not properly secured.

## Swimming & Diving

(click for all Swimming & Diving rule changes)

- **One of the most important changes dealt with clarification of when the dolphin kick can be used. Rule 8-2-2c now says that the dolphin kick may be executed after the initiation of the arm stroke and before the breaststroke kick.**
- **Another significant rule change dealt with the changing of the equivalent distance when converting from yards to a metric race for the 500-yard freestyle. Rule 5-1-1 now states that the metric race equivalent of the 500-yard freestyle is 400 meters.**
- **Other changes dealt with diving, including Rule 9-5-1, which now allows divers to have their arms in the position of their choice for the forward starting position.**

## Ice Hockey

(click for all Ice Hockey rule changes)

**Rule 3-4-1a:** (Change): "PENALTY: First offense, MISCONDUCT" to "First offense, TEAM WARNING; Further offense, MISCONDUCT."

**Rationale:** The responsibility for players wearing proper equipment for games should lie with the coach, not the officials.

**Rule 6-1-11:** (Add): "No player, coach or bench personnel shall use any obscene gestures or racial/ethnic/gender slurs directed at officials or others during the warm-up, during the progress of a game, during the intermission or after the game."

**PENALTY:** GAME MISCONDUCT

**Rationale:** Racial/ethnic/gender slurs or obscene gestures shall never be tolerated and must be treated more severely.

For all other Winter sport rule revisions, please [CLICK HERE](http://www.miaa.net/sport-rule-revisions.htm)  
(<http://www.miaa.net/sport-rule-revisions.htm>)

## Sportsmanship Awards

The MIAA Tournament Management Committee has approved an Annual Sportsmanship Award to be presented to one school in every sport at the MIAA State Championship.

We would like to encourage game officials to nominate a boys or a girls varsity team for consideration by that MIAA Sport Committee for recognition at the MIAA State Championship Contest. Nominated teams do not have to be tournament teams but should exemplify the tenets of good sportsmanship to the highest degree.

Please look on the MIAA Homepage: [www.miaa.net](http://www.miaa.net) – click on the “Tournament Formats” link and scroll down to the “**Team Sportsmanship Award Nomination Forms**” then click on the specific sport form.

**Please be sure to submit the completed form by the due date.**

## Just a Reminder

All game officials must be enrolled before the first competition of the fall season in order to be eligible to officiate MIAA fall tournament contests. Registration information has already been mailed to board secretaries as well as posted on the Game Officials’ section of the MIAA website:

[www.miaa.net/game\\_officials\\_main\\_page.htm](http://www.miaa.net/game_officials_main_page.htm)

Enrolling all officials in a timely manner will help ensure the best officials will be considered for post-season play. Please provide email addresses whenever possible so the MIAA can more effectively communicate with its officials.

Click on the link below to view the list of Presidents and Secretaries of those boards that are enrolled with the MIAA. If you are interested in becoming an official, please contact the Board nearest you to learn how to become a game official.

### [BOARD CONTACT INFO](#)

*Secretaries & Presidents*

[ENROLLED  
GAME OFFICIALS](#)

## Officials Encouraged to Submit Articles

The MIAA is interested in drawing from the wealth of practical techniques, experiences and methods that successful contest officials have developed throughout their careers. In this regard, practicing officials are encouraged to submit articles for review and potential publication.

Contest officials are encouraged to submit material in one of the three formats discussed below.

### THREE FORMATS FOR ARTICLES

1. **Ideas That Work:** Single ideas, tips or suggestions that can enhance the efficiency of day-to-day practice for contemporary contest officials. Typically, these are one or two paragraph submissions that describe a resource or time-efficient procedure. These articles may also express the nature of a contemporary problem or issue within the first few lines of the first paragraph. When included, a second paragraph should focus on local response(s), procedure(s) or applications.

2. **Current Issues:** A short, one-page article focused on a contemporary issue or trend. Typically, the article contains an introductory paragraph that elaborates or defines a problem or issue of contemporary interest. In subsequent paragraphs, a short description of local response to the issue should be developed. Of great interest to readers is the use of captioned checklists that provide self-explanatory guides to practicing officials.

3. **Formal Article:** Articles comprise the main body of each Game Officials Newsletter issue. Articles should be developed as follows:

- a.) Cite a topic of contemporary, widespread interest (e.g., recruitment, training and retention of officials; safety, and insurance).
- b.) Indicate the immediate, long-term or potential effect of the issue or problem. Cite references as required.
- c.) Describe the response or management procedures you and/or others have used in responding to the problem(s). Include the impact, effect or projected effect of the response in resolving the problem(s). If possible, use checklists and other graphics to illustrate or demonstrate the applicability of the program you have used.
- d.) Summary - present a short review of the relevant issues and resolution strategies and cite their importance to the reader.

Please forward all articles c/o Bill McGuirk, MIAA, 33 Forge Parkway, Franklin, MA 02038 or email to [bmcguirk@miaa.net](mailto:bmcguirk@miaa.net)

# *Contest Officials' Code of Ethics*

In 2001, the Officiating Development Alliance, a group of individuals representing various officiating organizations, such as the NFHS, NCAA, ASA, USSF, the NFL, NBA, MLB and NASO, developed the *Code of Conduct for Sports Officials*. The *Code* outlines the personal responsibilities officials have to the game.

1. Officials shall bear a great responsibility for engendering public confidence in sports.
2. Officials shall be free of obligation to any interest other than the impartial and fair judging of sports competitions.
3. Officials shall hold and maintain the basic tenets of officiating which include history, integrity, neutrality, respect, sensitivity professionalism, discretion and tactfulness.
4. Officials shall master both rules of the game and mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm and controlled manner.
5. Officials shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interactions with student-athletes, coaches, school administrators, colleagues and the public.
6. Officials shall display and execute superior communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal.
7. Officials shall recognize that anything, which may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, must be avoided. Gifts, favors, special treatment, privileges, employment or a personal relationship with a school or team, which can compromise the perceived impartiality of officiating, must be avoided.
8. Officials shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.
9. Officials shall not be party to actions designed to unfairly limit or restrain access to officiating, officiating assignments or to association membership. This includes selection for positions of leadership based upon economic factors, race, creed, color, age, sex, physical handicap, country or national origin.
10. Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.
11. Officials shall work with each other and their governing bodies in a constructive and cooperative manner.
12. Officials shall resist every temptation and outside pressure to use one's position as an official to benefit oneself.
13. Officials shall never participate in any form of illegal gambling on a sports contest, may never gamble on any sporting event in which they have either a direct or indirect involvement, and may never gamble on events involving high school athletics.
14. Officials shall not make false or misleading statements regarding their qualifications, rating, credentials, experience, training or competence.
15. Officials shall accept responsibility for all actions taken.

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