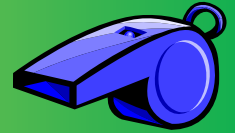




MIAA GAME OFFICIALS FALL 2011 NEWSLETTER



FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BILL MCGUIRK-----



"The Public Eye"

You never know who is watching.

Game officials in particular are always in the public eye while working a high school contest, and subject to the scrutiny of the most fickle of fans who are cheering for "their" team. While this presents a potential "no win" scenario for the game official, there are a number of instances where an official's own actions are the root cause of negative perceptions. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies.

For example, while observing a varsity level soccer game in New Hampshire at the beginning of this season, I was amazed to see one of the officials, during an on-field player injury time out, casually sit down on the field and initiate a conversation with the injured player's teammates. In the same contest one official, after a "controversial" but correct call by his partner, carried on a running conversation with the perturbed visiting coach, complete with the "arm around the shoulder" routine, creating another very negative perception that he was acknowledging that his partner had just made a terrible call, but "I'll straighten him out".

These are just two examples of things to avoid. There are many more actions that can occur during a game that we need to reflect on and evaluate under the lens of "what does this look like under the scrutiny of the public eye"? Gestures, posture, shaking hands with a spectator, socializing with one coach and not the other, tone of voice when articulating a foul, pointing directly in a player or coach's face, and indifference, are some of many actions with the potential of creating negative perceptions of an official's performance on any given day.

Projecting the image of a knowledgeable, fit, positive, impartial professional is always a challenge. Meeting that challenge takes effort and proper preparation. Good officials understand that and are a credit to their profession.

The MIAA and our member schools value good officials. The importance of the role of the game official in establishing the proper contest environment, in setting the standards of sportsmanship and "fair play" cannot ever be overestimated.

We thank you for your renewed commitment to our student athletes during the 2011-2012 school year as they compete in "the game of life".

-Bill McGuirk



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

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Concussion Rules

MIAA Handbook Concussion Rules

56.2 Each school's medical person/staff is responsible for the members of that team. These individuals annually must have taken, and been certified in, the NFHS on-line Concussion Course or other recognized education program. In the event of injury, that medical person/staff will make the final judgment as to whether a student athlete may return to play (please see Rule 56.4 below regarding concussions). Whenever a medical person is on duty at an athletic event, he/she shall be responsible for both teams (unless the other team has its own medical person present). His/her judgment will be final. Physical disqualification by the medical person renders the student ineligible. The Penalty for playing an ineligible student is forfeiture.

56.4 Any student athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or competition and must not return to practice or competition that day, and further shall not return to play until cleared (in writing to the Athletic Director) by an appropriate health-care professional (as determined by the Department of Public Health). Whenever it is decided to disqualify a student-athlete from further participation for a suspected concussion or other injury, the person making that decision must communicate about this matter with the injured athlete's coach and athletic director in a timely fashion.

MIAA PROMOTES CONCUSSION TRAINING FOR MIAA TOURNAMENT CONTEST OFFICIALS

In support of Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations cited above, and in the best interests of our student athletes, all MIAA Tournament Directors and Tournament Assignors will require successful completion of a DPH approved concussion training program as a condition for an official accepting an MIAA tournament assignment. Your acceptance of an MIAA Tournament contest assignment will be considered as implicit confirmation that you are a member in good standing with your local board, that you are enrolled with the MIAA, and that you have successfully completed a concussion training program as required by the DPH.

****This policy will be in effect beginning with the 2011 Fall tournament season.****

105 CMR: Department of Public Health – 201.007 (E) Training Program

*"Game officials **shall complete** one of the training programs approved by the Department as specified on the Department's website **annually** and shall provide independent verification of completion of the training program to schools or school districts upon request."*

To assist in concussion management education, the NFHS, at no cost, offers a course titled "**Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know.**" Successful completion of this course has been approved by The DPH as satisfying the training component of the regulations.

The only requirement is registering on www.nfhslearn.com, which is quick and easy. This 20 minute course is **designed for coaches, officials**, parents, administrators and students to learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms of concussions and a step-wise process to return to the sport. Approximately 200,000 courses have already been delivered!

Concussion Resources

The following represents a menu of FREE and credible materials/resources for administrators, coaches, parents and student athletes:

NATIONAL FEDERATION - www.nfhslearn.com

- Free on-line concussion course (What you need to know)
- Concussions – NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook

CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL - www.cdc.gov/concussion

- CDC Resources on Concussions:
 - Facts about Concussion and Brain Injury: Where to Get Help
 - [Heads Up: Brain Injury in Your Practice initiative](#)
 - [Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports initiative](#)
 - [Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports initiative](#)
 - [Help Seniors Live Better, Longer: Prevent Brain Injury initiative](#)

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF MASSACHUSETTS (BIA-MA) – www.biama.org

- Prevention Programs include:
 - Brains at Risk
 - Gateway
 - Think A Head
 - Keys
 - Falls
 - Jose and Maria
- Sport Concussion Cards
- DVD's for athletes, parents & coaches—excellent resource for pre-season meetings

MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION – www.miaa.net

- Concussion Information Resource Page

MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY (MMS) – www.massmed.org

- Concussion / A Coach's Guide for Sideline Evaluations
(Concussion Education Brochure)

2011 Fall Sport Rule Changes

Selected Rule Changes Passed for the 7/1/11-6/30/13 MIAA Handbook

Page 23	#16.	Medical Emergency Evacuation/ Thunder & Lightning
Page 62	#65.14	Baseball – Mercy Rule
Page 63	#66.5	Basketball – Time outs
Page 63 (and 72&74)	#67.4	Cross Country, Indoor & Outdoor Track – Medical exam @ site
Page 75	#77.1.6	Soccer – Uniforms
Page 79	#80.1.4	Tennis – Coaching
Page 80	#80.2.3	Tennis – Less than 7 players
Page 81	#80.4	Tennis – Tournament
Page 83	#82.1.1	Wrestling – Girls
Page 101	#90.18	Game Officials – Assignors/Commissioners

16. Medical Emergency Evacuation/ Thunder & Lightning

- 16.2** Thunder or lightning necessitates that all outdoor practices and competitions be suspended.
 - 16.2.1** Each Member School shall have a plan for shelter prior to the start of any contest.
 - 16.2.2** When thunder is heard or when lightning is seen, the following procedures must be executed:
 - 16.2.2.1** Suspend play and direct participants to the previously identified shelter, a building normally occupied by the public or if a building is unavailable, participants should go inside a vehicle with a solid metal top (e.g. bus, van, car).
 - 16.2.2.2** Do not permit people to stand under or near a tree; and have all stay away from poles, antennas, towers and underground watering systems.
 - 16.2.2.3** After thunder and/or lightning has left the area, wait 30 minutes after the last boom is heard or strike is seen before resuming play or competition.

65. Baseball

- 65.14** A regulation game shall be declared, if a team is leading by 15 or more runs after 5 complete innings (or 4 ½ if the home team is ahead). The 15 run rule applies in tournament play, prior to sectional semi-final rounds. This rule is also in effect for all games played during the regular season. Individual leagues are allowed to include a by-law or rule that reduces the number of runs, (less than 15) that places this rule into effect.

66. Basketball

- 66.5** Five 60 second time-outs may be charged to each team during a regulation game. Each team is entitled to one additional 60-second time-out during each extra period. Unused time-outs accumulate and may be used at any time.

2011 Fall Sport Rule Changes

67, 73 & 75 Cross Country, Indoor & Outdoor Track

67.4 Medical personal authorized by the Games Committee or Referee to do so may perform a hands-on medical examination during the progress of an event for any athlete who appears in distress. If in their opinion it is in the best interest of the athlete's health and welfare, they may remove the athlete from the competition (this rule change is the same for Rules 73.3 and 75.3 – Indoor & Outdoor Track)

77. Soccer

77.1.6 The home team shall wear white or light jerseys and socks, and the visiting team shall wear dark jerseys and socks (which maintains the current 2010 NF Rule indefinitely).

80. Tennis

80.4 If a singles player or doubles team in the MIAA Tournament cannot participate in the next round, then their next scheduled opponent would receive a victory by default and advance to the subsequent round (i.e. a previously defeated opponent may not play in their place).

80.1.4 Coaching, by the high school team coach only, is allowed on side changes during the entire match except after the first game of each set and during a tie-break game. Coaching may not interfere with the USTA rule governing side changes which states as follows:

When the players change ends at the end of a game, a maximum of ninety (90) seconds are allowed. However, after the first game of each set and during a tie-break game, play shall be continuous and the players shall change ends without a rest. The maximum time starts from the moment that one point finishes until the first service is struck for the next point.

82. Wrestling

82.1.1 Note: Girls wrestling has been approved as a recognized sport, but the MIAA Wrestling Committee must recommend to the Board of Directors for its approval: 1) the season of practice and competition; and 2) the rules that will govern the sport. Before an MIAA sponsored tournament is offered, the MIAA Tournament Management Committee must approve the format for such an event.

90.18 All officials' assignors/commissioners engaged by member schools and/or leagues to assign officials to their contests will be required to attend an annual pre-season meeting with **Member School and/or Leagues that hire them as assignors/commissioners.**

GAME OFFICIAL FEES

The Recommended Game Officials' fees for 2011-2012 have increased by one dollar for all sports with the exception of Gymnastics. The entire list of fee's can be found in the [MIAA Handbook](#).

2011 Fall Sport Rule Changes

Football Rule Changes

NCAA Football Rule 1, Section 4, Article 9 (Coaches' Equipment Certification)

The head coach or his designated representative shall certify in writing to the umpire before the game that all players:

- a. Have been informed what equipment is mandatory by rule and what constitutes illegal equipment.*
- b. Have been provided the equipment mandated by rule.*
- c. Have been instructed to wear and how to wear mandatory equipment during the game.*
- d. Have been instructed to notify the coaching staff when equipment becomes illegal through play during the game.*

This editorial change now requires the Coaches' Certification in writing. Each assignor should determine how this requirement will be handled in their league.

For additional information about NCAA Rule Changes and Modifications for the 2011 football season, please [click here](#).

MIAA Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions (from the MIAA Handbook)

- 49.1 The contest official who disqualifies a student or coach under the provision of this rule should immediately inform the coach of each team, official scorer (if any), and state the violation. If the game official fails to file his/her written report, the individual is nevertheless bound by the suspension. An official who fails to complete the form required as a result of an athlete or coach ejection shall be suspended from officiating any MIAA contest in that sport for at least two weeks or until the form is completed and received by the principal of the disqualified athlete or coach. Judgments of game officials are not subject to appeal. If the event does not have officials (e.g. golf, tennis) it is the responsibility of the site manager to report any disqualification to the Athletic Director who in turn will complete the MIAA Coach or Student Disqualification Form.
- 49.2 The athletic director in charge of the contest, or his/her designee, is responsible for: (1) having the official disqualification forms available for game officials, and (2) sending copies to the principal of each school involved, the athletic director of each school involved, and the executive director of the MIAA. Contest official(s) should complete the forms before leaving the site of the contest.

MIAA Game Officials Enrollment

FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS

- The partnership between and among game officials, the MIAA and member school administrators, coaches, and student athletes, especially the shared responsibility to promote sportsmanship and respect, is the fundamental component of a successful interscholastic athletic program.
- Enrollment with the MIAA is NOT solely for the purpose of eligibility to officiate MIAA sponsored tournament contests. The primary purpose of enrollment IS to establish the aforementioned partnership with the organization whose member schools, either individually or through their league assignors/commissioners, independently contract with game officials for individual services during regular season contests.
- Enrollment with the MIAA provides individual officials with access to MIAA sponsored programs, including but not limited to, pre-season sport-specific dinner meetings, a seasonal Game Officials' Newsletter, eligibility to be nominated to serve as a voting member of a specific statewide MIAA sport committee, seasonal updates on rule changes and MIAA individual sport rule modifications, and eligibility for assignment to officiate MIAA sponsored tournament contests.

ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY

- To be eligible to enroll, a game official MUST be a member in good standing of an MIAA recognized board/chapter of officials. A member in good standing is defined as an individual who has satisfied his/her local board membership requirements, which may include attendance criteria, professional development participation (e.g. interpretation meetings, rule refresher exams/clinics, etc.), and ethics standards.

TYPES of ENROLLMENT

Board Enrollment

- An officials' board may choose to enroll their members with the MIAA as an entire group at a reduced cost of six dollars (\$6) per member.
- In choosing this option, to be eligible for the reduced enrollment fee of six dollars (\$6) per member, the officials' board agrees to enroll one-hundred percent (100%) of their members who officiate high school contests AT ANY/ALL LEVELS, varsity and sub-varsity.
- A board which enrolls any less than one-hundred percent of their members who officiate high school contests at any/all levels, (e.g. selectively enrolling only those who officiate varsity contests, or those with a minimum of three (3) to five (5) years of experience, etc.), must pay the full twelve dollar (\$12) per individual enrollment fee.
- Board seasonal enrollment deadlines, established to ensure the enrollment process is completed prior to the beginning of each sport season, are as follows:
 - **FALL** -- August 1st
 - **WINTER** -- November 1st
 - **SPRING** -- March 1st

**Enrollments submitted after the deadline without prior MIAA approval will be assessed a one dollar (\$1) per official late fee.*

Individual Enrollment

- A game official whose board does not enroll their membership as a group under the conditions stated above, is eligible to enroll as an individual at the cost of twelve dollars (\$12) per sport.
- An individual game official who is a member in good standing of an out-of-state board (e.g. New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New York, etc.), may enroll with the MIAA and be eligible for assignment for MIAA tournament contests provided he/she will have officiated a minimum of ten (10) Massachusetts regular season high school varsity contests, and/or, who satisfies the requirements established by the respective MIAA sport committee.

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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