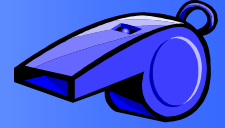




MIAA GAME OFFICIALS SPRING 2007 NEWSLETTER



From the Assistant Director...

**“We have met the enemy, and he is us.”
-Pogo**

This is the quote that came to mind during a discussion during the last Game Officials Committee meeting. The topic was the use of smokeless tobacco by game officials.

The inclination is to summarily dismiss that possibility. Just a “pinch between the cheek and gum” by a game official? During a sport contest between high school athletes who are obliged to play “by the rules”, including the MIAA Chemical Health rule? At a high school site, on which, per the 1993 Education Reform Act, the use of any and all tobacco products is banned? Please tell me it is not true!

Game officials are supposed to be the last bastion of common sense, objectivity, sportsmanship, and fair-play. Even if all the rest around us, coaches, players, and spectators fall prey to “evil influences”, you can always count on the game official to be the positive role model, the good citizen, the arbiter beyond reproach! Or can you?

Unfortunately, there are documented cases, most often in the sports of football and baseball, where game officials have been observed using tobacco products before, during, and after high school games. This act is not only reprehensible, but also illegal.

It would be unfair to portray game officials as the only “culprits”. Coaches and spectators have also been known to commit this same offense. A high school player who uses a tobacco product in violation of the Chemical Health Rule loses eligibility for the equivalent of 25 % of his/her season. What should be the penalty be for the adult who is expected to be the role model for the student athlete?

Let us be more observant, and more proactive in preventing this from developing into a trend. There appears to be a need to “police” our own and to preserve the good name and reputation of dedicated game officials across the state who still believe in “playing by the rules”!

Your help will be appreciated!

-Bill McGuirk

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

Nate Bonneau: nbonneau@miaa.net
(508) 541-9807

Bill McGuirk: bmcguirk@miaa.net
(508) 541-9810

NFHS / ASEP Officials Education Program Expands



The Officials Education Program currently consists of eight online courses: the sport-neutral Officiating Principles course and sport-specific Officiating Methods courses for baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, track & field and cross country, and now, wrestling. Officiating Volleyball will be released in spring 2007.

The courses each include a textbook and CD-ROM, providing a comprehensive, interactive learning experience focusing on NFHS-approved mechanics combined with the convenience of structured online learning. The CD for the wrestling course contains live action video of on-the-mat scenarios faced by wrestling officials.

These courses are excellent opportunities for game officials' boards to supplement and enhance their training programs for their membership and/or for individual officials to independently strengthen and expand their knowledge base of mechanics and rule interpretations.

Check it out! For information on ASEP sport education courses and resources, visit www.ASEP.com.



2007 Spring Sport Rule Changes

Baseball

(click for all Baseball rule changes)

Sporting News is no longer publishing Baseball Rulebooks, please refer to Triumph Books (www.triumphbooks.com) or [Click Here](#).

(http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/official_info/official_rules/foreword.jsp)

MLB rules will be used as referred above with the exception of those MIAA rules modifications found in the Baseball Format:

<http://www.miaa.net/baseball-2007-format.pdf>

Included in the MIAA rules modifications is the adoption of the NCAA Play-Slide Rule.

Softball

(click for all Softball rule changes)

The MIAA Tournament will be conducted in accordance with the 2005 – 2007 MIAA Handbook and the 2007 National Federation Rules and Regulations with the following exception:

The tie breaker rule will not be used. Games will be played until a winner is determined.

A full list of NFHS Rules Modifications, including the new Right-of-Way Rules, can be found by clicking the link below:

http://www.nfhs.org/web/2006/07/softball_rightofway_rules_go_into_effect_in_2007.aspx

Track & Field

(click for all Track & Field rule changes)

Several reminders included the shot put and discus throwing sector as well as javelin safety can be found using the link below:

<http://www.miaa.net/spring-track-rule-reminders.pdf>

Boys Lacrosse

(click for all Boys Lacrosse rule changes)

1. 73.9 The MIAA Board of Directors approved (at their 12-5-06 meeting) a modification of the NFHS Rule 4, Section 3, Article 5 (Facing-Off) – which states official will say "Set" and then blows the whistle.

MODIFICATION: Official will tell players "Down" and then blows the whistle when players are in position (same as NCAA Rule).

2. The MIAA Board of Directors approved (via email) the following two modifications of NFHS Rules.

Rule 1-9-1a: Helmet Color Rule: All players of a team shall wear helmets of the same color.

MODIFICATION: No penalty if a school has different color helmets

Rule 4.30.2: Each half, official shall conduct at least one random inspection of a players equipment per team.

MODIFICATION: Two stick checks per half be conducted at random times by the officials.

Girls Lacrosse

(click for all Boys Lacrosse rule changes)

New rules regarding the size of numbers on uniforms has been adopted as well as a waiver process for school using older uniforms. Additionally, overtime procedures are further clarified.

For all other Fall sport rule revisions,
please [CLICK HERE](#)

(<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 – 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 in a timely manner in order to be eligible to officiate MIAA spring 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

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

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.

**MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**
33 Forge Parkway
Franklin, MA 02038

Phone: 508-541-7997

Fax: 508-541-9888

email: miaa@miaa.net

www.miaa.net