



# MIAA SPORTSMANSHIP POST-GAME HANDSHAKE TOOL-KIT

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## MIAA HANDBOOK - POST-GAME HANDSHAKE RULE

*“Officials will be required to remain at the team competition site until the handshake ceremony has concluded.”* ([Ref. MIAA Handbook Rule 91.15](#))

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## POST-GAME HANDSHAKE RATIONALE

WHEREAS:

“The Mission of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) is to enrich the educational experience of student-athletes by providing leadership and support for the conduct of interscholastic athletics.”

AND...

“The MIAA is committed to encouraging and promoting the high ideals of sportsmanship, integrity and ethics at all levels of interscholastic competition.”

AND...

The MIAA has a mission “to promote a culture of fairness, respect, responsibility, and civility in sports and to foster initiatives which encourage positive attitudes and behaviors in athletes, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators of all ages in Massachusetts.”

The MIAA Board of Directors has consistently supported the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Council (MIAC) rule adoption that beginning with the fall season of 2008, game officials in the team sports of field hockey, football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, gymnastics, ice hockey, baseball, lacrosse, rugby, and softball are required to remain at the team competition site until the “handshake” ceremony has concluded.

This strategy is an opportunity to utilize the partnership of coach and official as teachers for the expected and programmed outcome of respect for opponent. It adds to providing a positive environment, which has a modeling impact on fans.

Protocols for each team sport may differ but should serve to meet the expectations that all game participants (site managers, coaches, officials, student-athletes), in full view of the spectators, conclude the contest experience with an appropriate and structured “handshake” ceremony. These protocols will also include “opt-out” procedures for game officials should circumstances so warrant.



## HOST SITE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

Per MIAA Constitution Article VII, the home team's Principal or authorized staff representative must be present at all interscholastic contests. This individual shall serve as the "Site Manager". The Site Managers are supervisors who are seeking desired objectives, be they spectator behavior, team sportsmanship or facility conditions and environment. In some sports, and at different levels of play, the home coach may be the Site Manager.

The Site Manager, working with, at times, other school personnel, game officials, security and the coaching staff, will:

- Oversee enforcement of rules for spectators consistent with the mission of the host school and of MIAA.
- Ensure that game officials, proper medical personnel and other site-related conditions are in order before authorizing the start of the game.
- Be in possession of game rules, player/coach disqualification forms, Handshake Report Form, and other sport-specific reporting forms. The home team is responsible for initiating the reporting of game disqualifications.
- Ensure that all functions and activities associated with the contest (e.g. Pre-Game Captains/Game Officials Conference, Post-Game Handshake ceremony, etc.) are executed properly.
- Forward to appropriate home and away school personnel the game score sheet and other game reports as required.

In some sports, the Site Manager has the responsibility to complete and sign the MIAA Game Sheet. Host schools are encouraged to keep one copy of this form on file with the principal and/or athletic director and to present one copy to the opponent's principal and/or athletic director. Some leagues may require that the third copy be filed with the appropriate party.

A ceremonial post-game handshake, including players, coaches and game officials will take place at the conclusion of each interscholastic athletic team event. On rare occasions, the Site Manager or Game Official may decide to suspend the handshake if circumstances so warrant. In the event the handshake ceremony does not take place, the required post-game handshake form must be completed and filed with the MIAA (see page 5 of this document).



## EXPECTATIONS OF GAME OFFICIALS

Beginning with the fall season of 2008, "Officials will be required to remain at the team competition site until the handshake ceremony has concluded" ([MIAA Handbook Rule 91.15](#)). Such an initiative was adopted previously in the sports of ice hockey and soccer and this procedure has elevated the educational culture and climate of these sports.

### **PRE-GAME:**

Welcome team captains followed by required message (ref. Game Official's Pre-Game Meeting with Captains)

### **POST-GAME:**

#### **Minimum requirement:**

The presence of Game Officials in close proximity to handshake line.

#### **Enhanced Participation (optional):**

Presence and participation in the handshake with coaches and student-athletes.

**Contest officials** have no additional responsibility for any activity resulting from the handshake ceremony, but rather are observers of that ceremony.

**Head Coaches (and not game officials)** are responsible for their teams and student-athletes during the handshake ceremony.

**The Contest Site Manager** (most often the home team Athletic Director) and School Administration are responsible for spectator decorum at the venue.

Any unsportsmanlike behavior following the conclusion of the game may be penalized consistent only with MIAA Handbook Rule 49.1.4, "*Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will always be within the authority of the game official. The game official's authority extends to pre-game and post-game oversight.*"

If a game official or game site administrator feels that this initiative should not be followed due to concerns which arise during the contest, or with crowd control issues, the handshake protocol may be suspended. The form developed for this circumstance must be completed (see page 5 of this document).

**A Review Committee**, under the jurisdiction of the Sportsmanship Committee will be charged to follow up on post-game handshake suspension reports.



## ADMINISTRATION REVIEW PROCESS FOR HANDSHAKE CEREMONY SUSPENSION

If a game official or game site administrator feels that this initiative should not be followed due to concerns which arise during the contest, or with crowd control issues, the handshake protocol may be suspended. If the responsible parties (Site Manager and/or Game Officials) decide to suspend the post-game handshake, the Sportsmanship Handshake Report Form (see page 5) must be completed by the Site Manager and forwarded to the MIAA Office within 24 hours.

The Sportsmanship Committee, in concert with the relevant MIAA Sport Committee, will then determine if the extenuating circumstances identified warrant a **review hearing**. The process for a review hearing is identified in [MIAA Handbook Rule 89](#).



## GAME OFFICIALS PREGAME MEETING WITH CAPTAINS

Below is a sample pre-game meeting message for Game Officials to share with team captains:

*“Welcome to this Educational Athletic Event. Today’s contest is an opportunity for all participants to demonstrate a commitment to good sportsmanship and fair play. Any unsportsmanlike conduct will be penalized. At the conclusion of the game, Players, Coaches and Game Officials will meet for the ceremonial handshake.”*

\* All Game Officials are required to conduct a pre-game conference per MIAA Handbook Rule 48.3 including a review of the MIAA Taunting Policy.



## SAMPLE PA ANNOUNCEMENT

The following announcement is recommended to be made prior to the conclusion of athletic events at all venues where a public address system is utilized.

*“Ladies and Gentlemen. At the conclusion of this contest both teams will participate in the ceremonial handshake demonstrating respect for opponent. All fans must remain off the playing field/court and exit on the end lines or wait until the ceremony is completed and game officials exit.”*



# SPORTSMANSHIP HANDSHAKE REPORT FORM\*

SPORT: \_\_\_\_\_ BOYS/GIRLS: \_\_\_\_\_ LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

SITE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME TEAM: \_\_\_\_\_ AWAY TEAM: \_\_\_\_\_

REGULAR SEASON       MIAA TOURNAMENT

School (Home Team):	vs.	School (Away Team):
EX <input type="checkbox"/> GD <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> PR <input type="checkbox"/>	Sportsmanship of Players	EX <input type="checkbox"/> GD <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> PR <input type="checkbox"/>
EX <input type="checkbox"/> GD <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> PR <input type="checkbox"/>	Sportsmanship of Coaches	EX <input type="checkbox"/> GD <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> PR <input type="checkbox"/>
EX <input type="checkbox"/> GD <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> PR <input type="checkbox"/>	Sportsmanship of Cheerleaders	EX <input type="checkbox"/> GD <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> PR <input type="checkbox"/>
EX <input type="checkbox"/> GD <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> PR <input type="checkbox"/>	Sportsmanship of Fans	EX <input type="checkbox"/> GD <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> PR <input type="checkbox"/>

**RATIONALE FOR SUSPENDING POST-GAME HANDSHAKE:**

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Completion of this form is only necessary if the postgame handshake is suspended. This form must be completed either by the Site Manager or Contest Official responsible for the decision to suspend the handshake ceremony. The form must be emailed by the Site Manager within 24 hours to [miaa@miaa.net](mailto:miaa@miaa.net).*