



Quick Bits

A Montana High School Association Publication
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www.mhsa.org
March 2011

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPRING RULE CLINICS

The MHSA/MOA rules clinics for all activities are presented exclusively on-line. The softball, track and field, tennis and golf clinics will be posted on our main website at www.mhsa.org. Enclosed please find an instruction sheet that details the procedure for accessing the clinics. The clinics were launched on **March 1**. Head coaches must view the clinics prior to **March 17 for golf and prior to March 25 for softball, track and field and tennis** to receive credit.

All head coaches must view the clinic for their activity in order to meet the clinic requirement. However, all other members of the coaching staff, as well as activities directors, are encouraged to view the clinics. Users must complete the registration process at the end of each clinic in order to verify their attendance. If you have questions about the requirements or about the verification process please feel free to contact the MHSA office.

OUT-OF-SEASON CONTEST GUIDELINES

This is the time of year when many out-of-season tournaments and contests take place. An information sheet with several out of season contest guidelines is enclosed. Please share this information with the appropriate administrators, coaches and student participants. If you have any questions please contact the MHSA office.

OPEN GYM GUIDELINES

Montana High School Association rules allow schools to conduct "open gyms" or "open fields" in any activity. Coaches and schools cannot be involved in out-of-season practice for athletes (except from June 1 to July 31).

However, open gyms do not violate MHSA rules if they are conducted according to the following guidelines:

1. The open gym is open to any youngster that is interested in attending.
2. There is no instruction during the open gym, whether by a coach or anyone else.
3. Coaches may supervise open gyms, but they may not instruct, organize drills etc., or participate with the students.
4. There is no organized competition, such as established teams participating in round-robin competitions etc.

The philosophy for the open gym is that youngsters may attend, for wholesome recreation, or for purposes of improving their skills, but it is something they do on their own. It would be a violation of MHSA rules to mandate attendance at open gyms or to limit participation based on athletic status.

Please note: District school gyms cannot be used for out-of-season team practices, even though coached by a non-school coach, if the team consists of a majority of the school's players. This would be a circumvention of the open gym rule.



To use the school gym, the team must be a legitimate AAU or traveling team, coached by a non – school coach and be able to provide a schedule of games. Also, they must follow the district policies for facility rental, insurance etc.

EXECUTIVE BOARD ITEMS

BOARD TO MEET APRIL 26-27

The next regular meeting of the MHSA Executive Board will be held in Helena beginning on Tuesday, April 26, 2011, at 8:30 a.m. The Board meeting will continue Wednesday, April 27 if business has not been completed.

At this regularly scheduled meeting, the Executive Board members will be focusing on the following agenda items:

1. Financial reports of winter sports season's culminating events.
2. Board and staff reports of winter season's activities final events.
3. MHSA standing committees' appointments.
4. Election of 2011-12 officers.
5. Bids for State sites for 2012-2013 and remaining sites for 2011-2012.

SOFTBALL

NOTES FOR 2011 SEASON

In February, the following information for this year's softball season was mailed to softball coaches and emailed to softball school contacts - Softball Rules Book, Softball Rules Changes and Major Editorial Revisions, Points of Emphasis, General Rules and Regulations from the MHSA Handbook, MHSA/MOA Softball Rules Clinic Information, 2011 NFHS Softball Rules Interpretations and information on Illegal Pitches. If you have any questions on this information please contact Mark Beckman at the MHSA office.

MUSIC

ALL-STATE CODE NUMBERS REMINDER

All-State code numbers have been sent under separate cover to music teachers. These codes must be used when submitting auditions for All-State Band, Orchestra and Choir. Please refer to the All-State mailing or to the MHSA website (www.mhsa.org) for details concerning the 2011 festival. If you have questions regarding these codes please contact the MHSA office after your district festivals.

All schools that had students submit auditions in 2010 will receive All-State packets. If your school did not submit auditions last year, but you would like a packet, please e-mail jpaustin@mhsa.org with your request.

GOLF

CLASS C GOLF

This is a reminder that Robert Swanson from Valier High School, who is the Class C Divisional scorer, must record individual scores from meets held during the regular season. He will send each golfer's record of eligible competitions to the state tournament manager one week before the state tournament practice round.

Last year, the MHSА Executive Board passed a new regulation for Class C Golf in regard to having markers present for qualifying scores. This change is a requirement for this Class C golf season. Here is the requirement:

For C tournaments, qualifying scores must be shot during the meet with at least three teams present **and markers must be used. Markers should walk or ride with each group from tee to green. If not enough tournament personnel are available to assign markers to each group, then markers can be assigned to each hole. Markers would be positioned to watch from the tee to green.**

The Class C State Golf Tournament is May 17-18 at Marias Valley Golf Course in Shelby, MT.

TRACK & FIELD

IMPORTANT POLE VAULT INFORMATION

Below are clarifications of some 2011 NFHS Track and Field Rules. Please share this information with your Head Track and Field Coach(es), your Pole Vault Coach and other appropriate personnel.

Only Manufacturer's Pole Rating Mark Acceptable

Rule 7-5-3 states: The competitor's weight shall be at or below the manufacturer's pole rating. The **manufacturers must include on each pole**; the pole rating that shall be a minimum of 3/4 inch in a contrasting color located within or above the top handhold position; a 1-inch circular band indicating the maximum top handhold position with the position being determined by the manufacturer. Prior to competition, the coach must verify that all of the school's pole vaulters and poles meet these requirements. Etchings, serial numbers etc. that may appear on poles shall not replace the requirement of the **manufacturer's pole rating** of the minimum 3/4-inch marking in contrasting color on each pole. Homemade marks placed on poles are not acceptable. (This includes pre-1995 poles—see below.) A competitor shall not use a variable weight pole, a pole which is improperly marked; a pole rated below his/her weight or any other equipment that is not legal during warm-up or competition. Altering the pole in any fashion renders it illegal. PENALTY: Disqualification from the event.

Manufacturer's Pole Weight Rating Mark for Poles Manufactured Prior to 1995

The NFHS rule requiring the visible manufacturer's pole rating, size and location of rating mark was adopted in 1995. From 1995 through 2000, the NFHS Track and Field rules required the manufacturer's pole weight rating to be placed on the pole. For poles purchased prior to 1995, the school coach could mark the pole based on the manufacturer's pole's etchings. However, for the 2001 season and beyond, only those poles with the manufacturer's placed weight rating label were to be considered legal for warm-up and competition, providing all other requirements for the pole were met. Coach-marked poles were not to be used in warm-ups or competition.

Therefore, if your school has older poles and no manufacturer's weight rating label on the poles, the school coach should contact the manufacturer directly to work to secure the manufacturer's weight rating label. If your school has poles without the manufacturer's weight rating label and the company is out of business, these poles would not be legal for warm-ups or competition due to the lack of the required manufacturer's weight rating label. It should be noted this rule and

application have been part of NFHS Track and Field Rule 7-5 since spring of 2001.

For your reference, on our website, www.mhsa.org under track and field, you will find the history of pole vault rules and a contact listing of pole vault manufacturers.

2011 JEWELRY RULE CLARIFIED

The rule prohibiting the wearing of jewelry by competitors has not changed; jewelry shall not be worn by competitors in track and field meets, although the penalty for a competitor wearing jewelry has been modified. If a competitor is observed wearing jewelry during competition and this is the first violation by any team member, the competitor, without holding up competition, shall remove the jewelry before any further competition. If it can't be removed, the competitor should not compete until legal. The observing meet official, should record the name of the competitor, school, event, time the violation occurred and description of prohibited item, shall notify the meet referee of the violation and the referee shall then notify the head coach of the offending school of the violation and the team warning. The referee should keep track of the school, gender and time of day the time warning was given. Any further violations of wearing jewelry by any member of the team after a team warning shall result in disqualification of the competitor from the event. The referee may exercise some discretion when a new violation is reported within minutes of the team warning being issued. The protocol for communication of a violation should be established by meet officials before the meet begins. This protocol could be to use the PA system to call the head coach to meet with the referee, or ask the violating athlete where his or her head coach is located or use the PA system to announce the violation.

COMPETITION ORDER CHANGES FOR MULTIPLE EVENT COMPETITORS CLARIFIED

Rules for competitors competing in multiple events (Rule 6-2-6, 6-2-7, 7-2-6, 7-6-1, 7-6-12 and 7-6-13) have been modified so there is consistency between jumping and throwing events for excused competitors to participate in other events. The rules now state that the head event judge may change the order of competition to accommodate a competitor(s) to be excused to participate in other event(s) in both preliminaries and finals. The head event judge in throwing, horizontal and vertical jumping events can now have competitors take more than one trial in succession or place him/her in a different place in the listed order of competition before being excused for another event. Remember, that in field event competitions, each competitor should compete in only his/her flight. If weather or other conditions would result in unfairness to any competitor, the referee shall alter the plan and prescribe single trials in prelims and finals. This change addresses the needs of the competitors.

POLE VAULT WARM-UPS RULE 7-5-16 CLARIFIED

Pole vault rule 7-5-16 has been changed to address competitors passing three or more consecutive heights and their warm-up time after sitting out a significant amount of time. They need the opportunity for proper warm-up rather than only one warm-up jump/run through. The rule now states that a competitor(s) who has passed three consecutive heights and has **not** entered the competition: should be permitted two minutes of warm-up jumps per the number of competitors entering at that height without the crossbar in place. The athlete shall enter the competition at that height and must take the warm-ups at a height change. When more than one competitor is entering at the same height and have not previously entered the competition, warm-up periods are added together: for 2 competitors entering = 4 minutes, for 3 competitors entering = 6 minutes. The competitors may take as many warm-up jumps as desired during the allowed time period. If competitors complete their warm-ups prior to the warm-up period expiring, competition shall commence.

Should you have any questions about the above, please do not hesitate to contact Scott McDonald at the MHSА Office.

WRESTLING

STATE TOURNAMENT COMPLETED

The State Wrestling Tournament was held in three separate locations this year for the first time in twenty-two years. The Class AA State Tournament was held at CMR High School in Great Falls, the Class A Tournament was held at the Butte Civic Center and the Class C State Tournament was held at Hamilton High School. Each of these events was very successful. The communities of Great Falls, Butte and Hamilton worked extremely hard preparing for these events and wrestlers, coaches and spectators were treated to a first class event in each of the locations.

Next year, renovation at MetraPark will be completed, and wrestling season will conclude with the All Class Wrestling Tournament in Billings. We will continue to make positive changes to the format to the state wrestling tournament. This year we implemented a major schedule change for the State Wrestling Tournament. On Saturday, we were able to start the championship matches at 4:00 p.m. instead of having the championships begin at the traditional 6:00 p.m. start time. When we reconvene at MetraPark in Billings next year we will continue this schedule change, which will allow traveling schools to get on the road earlier, or if teams are staying overnight in Billings, they will be able to eat at a reasonable hour. If you have any suggestions or concerns in regard to the earlier start time, please contact Brian at the MHS Office.

The MHS appreciates all tournament personnel including volunteers in each of the three communities for making the state wrestling tournaments this year such a success. We are looking forward to coming back together next year for the twenty-third State All Class Wrestling Tournament and will continue to examine ways to make this event even better for wrestlers, coaches and fans.

VOLLEYBALL

SOLID WHITE VOLLEYBALL TO BE USED IN THE 2011 VOLLEYBALL SEASON

The MHS Executive Board approved that for 2011 MHS Volleyball regular and post season play, a solid white volleyball shall be used for all levels of play which shall include the NFHS authenticating mark. During 2011 MHS post season play, the Mikasa® VQ2000 volleyball shall be used. Please share this information with your volleyball coaches and other appropriate personnel. Should you have any questions or concerns about the above, please do not hesitate to contact Scott McDonald at the MHS office.

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 14	First date for practice in softball, track & field, tennis and Classes B & C golf
March 17	First date for competition in golf (Classes B and C)
March 21	MOA Qualifying Exam for softball opens
March 22	District Music Festival – 9 (large groups only)
March 25	First date for competition in softball, track & field and tennis (all classes)
April 4	District Music Festivals – 9 (solos and ensembles only)
April 8-9	District Music Festival – 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13
April 14-15	District Music Festival 6
April 15-16	District Music Festivals - 1, 2, 8, 10, 11
April 24	Easter
April 26-27	MHS Executive Board Meeting

Free \$200 SAT/ACT Software to MHS Members

eKnowledge Corporation's Donation Program is offering FREE \$200 SAT/ACT Test Preparation Programs to MHS members. The NFHS and eKnowledge have recently formed an Alliance Partnership, and

through this partnership are providing the availability of free world class SAT and ACT PowerPrep Programs to MHS member schools and their families. eKnowledge has delivered more than \$28 million in SAT/ACT Test Preparation Products to over 132,000 recipients. The standard price for the SAT/ACT Test Preparation Software is \$200.00.

The SAT & ACT PowerPrep training program from eKnowledge comes in a single DVD and includes more than twenty hours of virtual classroom instruction and 3,000 files of supplemental test prep material. Thousands of interactive diagnostic tools, sample questions, practice tests and graphic teaching illustrations are indexed for easy use. The PowerPrep™ software is Mac, Vista and Win7 compatible.

How do families request the FREE program? The eligible recipient must visit the eKnowledge/NFHS Donation Landing Page www.eknowledge.com/nfhs The Free SAT/ACT donation covers the total cost of the \$200.00 program; there is a small fee of \$13.84 per standard program for order processing, handling, licensure, registration and distribution.

For technical and customer support recipients of the free software may contact an eKnowledge representative M-F, 8:30AM – 7:30PM, EST at 951-256-4076, or support@eknowledge.com.

Enclosed is a flyer for your guidance department use.

SPOTLIGHT TEAM OF THE WEEK

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The MHS and Montana Ford Stores are excited to announce a new program as part of our partnership. The MHS/Montana Ford Stores "Spotlight Team of the Week" Program recognizes teams from member high schools who exemplify the values of participating in high school activities. This award recognizes teams that go above and beyond what is expected of them during practices and games, modeling behaviors in other areas including community service, championing local and national causes/initiatives, and/or exhibiting courageous or visionary acts. Our goal is to recognize teams that go well above and beyond what is expected of them during practices and contests.

Information regarding the Montana Ford Stores "Spotlight Team of the Week" Program can be found on the MHS website (www.mhsa.org) including the form to use to nominate a team(s).

The Montana High School Association is excited to announce the next two recipients of the MHS / Montana Ford Stores Spotlight Team of the Week. On February 21st, an award was given to the Helena High School Cheerleading Team and then on February 28th another award was given to the Hardin High School Wrestling Team.

The Helena High School Cheerleading Team's community service projects included:

- Cleaning up the stretch of highway where a former squad member was tragically killed in an auto accident. For the past two years, the team has taken on the task of fall cleanup of the two mile section of highway that the family has adopted in her memory.
- Involvement in the area Toys for Tots Program.
- Assistance with the benefit for a young Helena girl battling bone cancer.
- Volunteering to work the entire day presenting awards at the State Cross Country Meet when it has been held in Helena.
- Numerous other examples.

The Hardin High School Wrestling Team's community service projects included:

- Creating "Takedown Cancer" T-shirts and then selling those shirts throughout the community with the proceeds of over \$1,300 being donated to the local hospital's new cancer treatment center and MRI room.
- Mentoring younger students of Hardin in the Bulldog Buddies Program.

- Coaching youth wrestling programs.
- Numerous other examples.

High school sports and activities have the greatest number of participants of any types of outside school activities in the nation. Lessons learned by participating in high school activities go beyond developing sport/activity specific skills to include team work, dedication, service to others etc. These teams, through their shining example of community service and philanthropy, were very deserving recipients of this recognition.

ATTACHMENTS

- 2011 NFHS Football Rules Change Press Release
- 2011 Track & Field and Cross Country Rules Interpretations
- 2011 Volleyball Rule Changes
- 2011 Golf, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field Rules Clinic Instructions
- Out of Season Guidelines
- April Calendar