



Quick Bits

A Montana High School Association Publication
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www.mhsa.org
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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPRING RULE CLINICS

The MHSА/MOА rules clinics for all activities are presented exclusively online. The softball, track and field, tennis and golf clinics are 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**. 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 coaches, including the head coach and all assistant coaches and all school-approved volunteer coaches, are required to view the clinic. If you have any questions, please contact the MHSА office.

OUT-OF-SEASON CONTEST GUIDELINES

This is the time of year when many out-of-season tournaments and contests take place. The Fundamentals of Athletic/Activity Regulations is attached. Please share this information with the appropriate administrators, coaches and student participants. If you have any questions please contact the MHSА 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 MHSА 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 MHSА 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, during out of season except June 1-July 31 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 23-24

The next regular meeting of the MHSА Executive Board will be held in Helena beginning on Monday, April 23, 2012, at 8:30 a.m. The Board meeting will continue Tuesday, April 24 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. MHSА standing committees' appointments.
4. Election of 2012-13 officers.
5. Bids for State sites for 2013-2014 and remaining sites for 2012-2013.

SOFTBALL

NOTES FOR 2012 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 MHSА Handbook, MHSА/MOА Softball Rules Clinic Information, 2012 NFHS Softball Rules Interpretations and information on Illegal Pitches. If you have any questions on this information please contact Mark Beckman at the MHSА office.

MUSIC

AUDITIONS FOR ALL-STATE

The 2012 MHSА All-State Band, Chorus and Orchestra Festival auditions will be conducted using online submissions. The All-State information has been emailed to all schools, and it can also be accessed on the music page of the MHSА website. Please feel free to contact the MHSА office if you need additional information.

GOLF

CLASS C GOLF

A major change will occur this year in how Class C golf schools will report qualifying scores. In the past Robert Swanson from Valier was the scorer, however Robert has decided to step down. We really appreciate Robert's commitment to MHSА Golf and thank him for his many years of service!

(continued)

This year the MHSa will implement a new procedure. Class C schools will report all of their scores (qualifying and non-qualifying) on Varvee, the official statistics program of the MHSa. Also, in addition to entering all scores in VarVee, Class C tournament managers will also be required to complete a form and send it to Brian Michelotti at the MHSa verifying that any golfer that shot a qualifying score had a marker present. The form is enclosed with this mailing and also is located on the golf page of the MHSa website at www.mhsa.org.

If you have any questions, please contact Brian in the MHSa office.

TRACK & FIELD

TRACK AND FIELD CLARIFICATIONS

Below are clarifications of some 2012 NFHS Track and Field Rules. Please share this information with your head track and field coach(es) and other appropriate personnel.

Crossbars

Effective January 1, 2013, the high jump and pole vault crossbar shall be circular (square with beveled edges or triangular crossbars shall no longer be legal for competition after that date). Crossbars are now being manufactured as circular cross bars and are the most commonly used crossbars. The January 1, 2013, effective date will allow for the replacement of current crossbars which are not circular.

Stitching on Visible Undergarments

A visible garment worn under the uniform top and/or bottom displaying contrasting/different color stitching to the single, solid color of the undergarment and which functions as the actual seam for the undergarment's construction is now legal. The stitching must not distract or cause confusion and must be used for actual construction of the garment and not for design purposes.

Jewelry Disqualification Rule Has Changed

The wearing of jewelry is prohibited. With a NFHS new rule change, the first jewelry violation shall only apply to the competitor. Without holding up competition, the competitor shall be required to remove the jewelry before any further competition and be issued a warning that another jewelry violation shall result in a disqualification from the meet. The event judge or the observing meet official should write on a card the athlete's name, the event, time and date of the jewelry violation and give this information to the meet referee. He/she shall notify the coach of the offending school of the competitor's violation and the warning. The protocol for communication of the violation to the coach should be established by the officials before the meet begins.

Legal Equipment the Host School's Responsibility

The host school is responsible for providing legal landing systems for competition and for properly padding hard and unyielding surfaces around the vertical jumps' landing pads. Area surrounding landing areas should be clear of other items not part of the official equipment (hurdles, chairs, other event equipment, etc.).

Risk Minimization in Throwing Events

The nature of the sport has many events taking place concurrently. Due to implements being thrown adjacent to the running track and field event venues located inside the track, it is very important for meet management to make every effort in creating an environment which minimizes risk of injury for all parties involved at a track and field meet. In throwing events the landing sector should be marked off for safety with ropes, flags or other visible means which are placed well outside the sector lines to enhance the safety of spectators and athletes. Spectators and non-throwing competitors must be restricted to a safe area.

During both practice and competition, implements shall be carried outside the throwing sectors and returned to the throwing area. Implements shall never be thrown back. Following competition, all

implements shall be removed from the competition area. Once competition begins there shall be no further practice in any area. Head event judges should declare how the event will be conducted and cover safety rules for the event. Competitors violating safety rules shall receive a warning, and for a second offense, shall be disqualified from the event. Spectators violating safety rules at the site should be warned once and for a second violation shall be removed from the competition area.

WRESTLING

STATE TOURNAMENT COMPLETED

Last year, the state wrestling tournaments were assigned to separate locations due to the repairs to MetraPark. The Class AA State Tournament was held at CM Russell High School (Great Falls), the Class A State Tournament was held at Butte Civic Center and Class B-C State Tournament was held at Hamilton High School. All three facilities did an outstanding job hosting this event and thanks to those communities and volunteers for stepping up and making those events a memorable experience for everyone involved.

This year, we were back to the All-Class format and the 2012 State All Class Wrestling Tournament was held again at MetraPark in Billings on February 10-11, 2012. Everyone expressed excitement to return to MetraPark for the All Class format. There was one significant change at the tournament this year. On Saturday, the championship matches began at 4:00 p.m. instead of having the championships begin at the traditional 6:00 p.m. start time. The MHSa was able to move this time up because the consolation championships were wrestled on twelve mats instead of six mats. This change was well received and allowed traveling schools to drive home sooner, or if teams were staying overnight in Billings, they were 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 MHSa Office.

The MSHA appreciates all tournament personnel including volunteers for making this All Class event such a success over the years and we will continue to work on making the next State All Class Wrestling Tournament even better for wrestlers, coaches and fans.

VOLLEYBALL

SOLID WHITE VOLLEYBALL TO BE USED IN THE 2012 VOLLEYBALL SEASON

For 2012 MHSa 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 2012 MHSa 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 MHSa office.

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 12	First date for practice in softball, track & field, tennis and Classes B & C golf
March 12	MOA Qualifying Exam for softball opens
March 15	First date for competition in golf (Classes B and C)
March 23	First date for competition in softball, track & field and tennis (all classes)
March 27	District Music Festival – 9 (large groups only)
April 8	Easter
April 13-14	District Music Festival – 1, 2, 4, 10, 13
April 16	District Music Festivals – 9 (solos and ensembles only)
April 19-20	District Music Festival 6
April 20-21	District Music Festivals - 5, 7, 8, 11, 12
April 23-24	MHSa Executive Board Meeting

SAT/ACT

eKnowledge

eKnowledge, a leading provider of educational material, continues its program of distributing free SAT and ACT test prep programs to schools and students in NFHS member state associations.

The SAT or ACT Power Prep™ program, which contains more than 170 video lessons, hundreds of practice questions and detailed explanations, 18 quizzes and more than 40 hours of class work, has a retail price of \$200. However, this package is offered for free by the eKnowledge Alliance Partnership. There is a nominal charge for shipping and handling for each program donated. In the past seven years, the Alliance Partnership has donated more than 200,000 programs valued at more than \$39 million and continues to grow each year to help more students and families. With the help of a free SAT or ACT Power Prep™ program, students can prepare for the spring and summer ACT and SAT test dates. Please help support this valuable program by alerting your students and, most importantly, parents. Orders can be placed online at www.eknowledge.com/NFHS or by phone at 951-256-4076 (reference NFHS).

The MHSА and NFHS are pleased to help make this valuable resource available to the high school students we serve.

If you have any questions regarding this program, please feel free to contact Lori Caputo, eKnowledge, via e-mail at loricaputo@eknowledge.com.

SPOTLIGHT TEAM OF THE WEEK

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The MHSА and Montana Ford Stores are excited to continue a very successful program as part of our partnership. The MHSА/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 MHSА website (www.mhsa.org) including the form to use to nominate a team(s). The nomination form is enclosed in this Quick Bits.

ATTACHMENTS

[2012 NFHS Football Rules Change Press Release](#)

[2012 Track & Field and Cross Country Rules Interpretations](#)

[2012 Volleyball Rules Changes Press Release](#)

[2012 Golf, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field Rules Clinic Instructions](#)

[2012 Class C Golf Qualifying Scores Report Form](#)

[MHSА/Montana Ford Stores Spotlight Team of the Week Nomination Form](#)

[Fundamentals of Athletic/Activity Regulations](#)

[April Calendar](#)