



Quick Bits

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

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD PROGRAM

Along with this *Quick Bits* you will find NorthWestern Energy's Academic Excellence Award reporting form.

Please review the material and make plans to enter your school's students in the 2014-2015 competition. The award is very prestigious, and the interest in the award continues to grow. The deadline for returning the form is **July 1**.

MHSA DUES AND CATASTROPHIC INSURANCE

Each member school contact and business clerk will be sent, via email, applications for both MHSA membership dues and catastrophic insurance. Annual dues and catastrophic insurance premiums are payable and due on **JULY 15** of each year. Any school failing to pay its annual dues and catastrophic insurance premiums on or before that date shall be ineligible from **August 1** until such fees are paid and shall be required to pay a penalty of \$50 in addition to the regular dues before reinstatement can occur. (See Article 1, Section (2) of the MHSA By-laws). Please make certain that the dues form has the appropriate signatures and that the **original** form is submitted to the MHSA office. You may also access these forms by going to the MHSA website (mhsa.org) and going to "Top Forms".

MANDATORY COACHES' EDUCATION REPORT DUE

Attached to this publication you will find a Coaches' Education Program Certification Report form. Please complete it per the directions and return it to the MHSA office on or before **May 15, 2015**. **This report is mandatory**. Please contact Jo Austin at the MHSA office if you need assistance with the certification report.

2015-2016 MATERIALS ORDER FORM

Enclosed with this *Quick Bits* is the materials order form for the 2015-2016 school year. This form is provided for each school to order miscellaneous supplies such as extra rules books, score books, etc. from the MHSA.

NFHS PARTICIPATION SURVEYS

In a separate email, you will soon receive instructions for establishing a user profile for your school district and completing the annual National Federation Survey for Athletic and Non-Athletic Student Participation via the MHSA website. In the past, schools were required to complete this information for the use of MHSA and the NFHS. However, the process is now also required by the Office of Public Instruction.

The MHSA and the OPI have worked collaboratively to build a simple, online tool for high schools to report their participation counts for athletics and activities, as well as career and technical student organizations. This collection will occur in spring along the same timeline that MHSA has followed in the past. School personnel will access the online tool from the Montana High School Association website, select their school(s) from a drop down list, enter their participation counts and submit their data.

The MHSA will use the data for reporting NFHS participation figures. The Office of Public Instruction will use the data to report the total number of students that participate in extracurricular

activities as required by 20-7-104, MCA.

School contacts will receive the email in the next few days. Responses for the MHSA participation figures are due by May 15, 2015.

AWARD RULE - REMINDER

With all of the invitational tournaments and sports camps that occur during the spring and summer months, please review with your schools' coaches the award rule found on page 14 of the 2014-2015 *MHSA Handbook*. Item 15.1 of this rule states that no award exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) in value shall be given per event in any MHSA sanctioned sport or any MHSA sanctioned interscholastic activity by a member school, by any person or by an organization to a student in recognition of that student's achievement or participation in any interscholastic activity. An event is defined as a sports camp, an invitational tournament/meet, a post season recognition function (i.e. sports banquet) or a fundraiser or similar function. Cash cannot be awarded. However the MHSA membership approved an increase in the Awards rule to \$100 which takes effect July 15. If you have any questions about the awards rule, contact Scott McDonald by calling the MHSA office or e-mailing him at smcdonald@mhsa.org.

OUT-OF-SEASON CONTESTS – COACHING REMINDER

For team sports, the coaching rule is in effect for out-of-season contests that are not held from June 1 - July 31 (the team coaching rule does not apply during this period of time). The head coach or any member of the coaching staff of one gender's team cannot coach any of the players who have competed in their overall program unless the player is a senior and the sport season has concluded. Coaches of record (including assistant and volunteer coaches who actually coached during the season) cannot coach their own players during the off-season (except for the June 1 - July 31 period) even if the coach does not have a contract for the next season. If a coach resigns at the end of a season, he/she would be the coach of record and could not coach his or her players in the off-season. Coaches who coach one gender only can coach the other gender in that sport without penalty.

Also, for team sports, coaches can coach high school students on their teams from June 1 - July 31 in practice (cannot be required) or in invitational tournaments that are **not** sponsored by a school. Out of season contests cannot be sponsored in any way by schools or school groups (booster clubs) and rent must be paid according to school district policy. Also, anytime during the out-of-season (including June 1 - July 31) **teams cannot scrimmage against each other without paying rental fee for the facility and must follow all other out-of-season regulations**. Participants are not affiliated with your school for these events. The school is not (and cannot) be responsible for any aspect of out-of-season events (which include scrimmages) including funding, equity principles, etc. Participants are not covered by school insurance or MHSA catastrophic insurance during out-of-season events.

Note: this clarification does not apply to cheer and dance.

ANNUAL MEETING IN BILLINGS

The next MHSA Annual Meeting will be held in Billings on January 18, 2016. The Billings Hotel and Convention Center is the host facility. Reservations may be made by calling 800-537-7286 and asking for group code "MHSA-16."



CALL FOR MHSA ATHLETES' HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS

The Montana High School Association and Wendy's of Montana are excited to induct another Athletes' Hall of Fame Class which will be inducted in January of 2016. The Athletes' Hall of Fame was established in 1993 and to date there are 81 members that have been inducted into this distinguished Hall of Fame. Through the generosity of Wendy's of Montana, a physical location was established to honor these great athletes on the campus of Rocky Mountain College in Billings at the Fortin Center.

There are many worthy candidates that could be inducted in future years if time was taken to nominate these deserving individuals. All of these candidates will be strongly considered even if the minimum amount of paperwork is submitted (cover letter, MHSA Athletes' Hall of Fame Nomination form, two letters of recommendation and a photo). Here are the criteria and the categories where candidates can be nominated:

1 - Modern era - a person who has experienced outstanding achievement as a competitor in interscholastic athletics as sanctioned by the MHSA while enrolled in a Montana high school. A modern competitor is eligible for nomination a minimum of seven years after graduation. (i.e. to qualify for the 2016 Athletes' Hall of Fame the athlete must have graduated in 2009 or earlier.)

2 - Old timer - a person who has experienced outstanding achievement as a competitor in interscholastic athletics as sanctioned by the MHSA while enrolled in a Montana high school. An old timer has graduated fifty years before the induction date for that year's Athletes' Hall of Fame (i.e. to qualify for the 2016 Athletes' Hall of Fame the old timer must have graduated in 1966 or earlier.) At least one old timer will be inducted.

The MHSA Athletes' Hall of Fame Nomination Form is enclosed in the Quick Bits. A current list of the MHSA Athletes' Hall of Fame inductees and other Hall of Fame induction information can be found by visiting the MHSA website at www.mhsa.org, and then proceeding to the Hall of Fame Page. Please review the current Athletes' Hall of Fame inductees and consider nominating the exceptional former athletes from your community. The deadline for nominations has been extended and nominations are due by August 31, 2015.

FINE ARTS

FESTIVAL REMINDERS

All music festival forms are now available online. At this time virtually all directors have visited mhsa.org to obtain the form templates for district music festivals. In addition, the State Solo & Ensemble forms are also available on the sites.

Reminder! Schools must follow all applicable copyright laws when performing at district and state festivals.

Also, music adjudicators now prepare for the festivals by viewing the [online](#) adjudication clinic. Adjudicators view the online clinic prior to arriving at the festival site.

Festival Managers and music directors who have suggestions for future improvements to any festival procedure are welcome to send them to the MHSA Music Committee in care of the MHSA office.

MFEA NEWS

The Montana Forensics Educators Association held their annual convention on March 5-7, 2015, in Bozeman. From that meeting, a summary of recommended rules changes will be presented to the MHSA Executive Board in April for their consideration.

A copy of the minutes of that meeting will be posted on the MHSA website as soon as they are available.

TRACK AND FIELD

2015 STATE TRACK AND FIELD GAMES COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Two (2) Turn Stagger Events: For all post season track and field meets, a 2 (two) curve stagger will be used in the 800 meter run, 1600 meter run and 3200 meter run. The 4 x 400 relay event will use a 3 curve stagger.

Video or Other Recorded Images: Other than the official recording and electronic device(s) approved for timing the meet by the Games Committee, digital images, video replay, television monitoring equipment, camera phone recordings and other recorded media shall not be used to make decisions related to the meet.

Throwing Event Warm-Ups for all Classes/Genders: For all 2015 MHSA post season track and field meets during warm-ups for throwing events, each athlete will be allowed only one implement/attempt at a time. To bring multiple implements into the throwing areas is unfair to the other athletes who wait in line with only one implement.

Hair Devices: Jewelry is prohibited from being worn in competition and this includes various items worn in the hair. Items such as rubber bands, headbands or scrunchies used to control the hair are not considered jewelry and are legal to be used to control the hair. It is the responsibility of the coach and athlete to be sure the hair control device, if worn, is legal. If the hair device is questionable, the contestant should check with the meet referee prior to competition.

Relay Exchanges: Only tape will be allowed in the relay exchange zones. No chalk will be allowed.

Headwear: No headwear, except headbands, will be allowed unless inclement weather is encountered or in special circumstances, such as health conditions or religious considerations. A headband is any item that goes around the head (including elastic strips/bands, pre-wrap, moisture-absorbing terry cloth etc.) If worn, only one headband is permitted. Headbands may be a maximum of 2 inches wide and must be a single, solid color and be non-abrasive and unadorned except for a manufacturer's logo and/or a school logo. The headbands shall have no jewelry attached.

Successive heights in the pole vault and high jump:

Successive heights in the pole vault will be 6" raises until three or fewer competitors remain, then 3" raises will be used. High jump successive heights will be 2" raises until three or fewer competitors remain, then 1" raises will be used. When only one competitor remains and he/she is determined to be the winner of the event, he/she can determine the increments.

NFHS Track and Field Rules--Disqualification from an event includes:

A competitor shall not compete while wearing an illegal uniform or using an illegal implement.

It is an unfair act when a competitor receives any assistance. Assistance includes:

- Interference with another competitor.
- Pacing by a teammate not in the race or persons not participating in the event.
- Competitors joining or grasping hands with each other during a race.
- Competitor using an aid during the race.
- Communicating with a competitor through the use of any device including electronically during a race or trial.
- Coaching a competitor from a restricted area.

NOTES:

1. The use of an atomizer during competition containing a prescription drug designed to alleviate the asthmatic condition is not considered to be an illegal aid as long as a physician's statement documenting the need of the athlete to use the prescription is presented to the meet director/referee prior to the beginning of the meet.

2. The use of a watch worn around the wrist is not considered an aid for racing.
3. A coach may instruct a competitor provided the coach is positioned in a designated coach's box or an unrestricted area.

POLE VAULT COMPETITORS VERIFICATION FORM

Track and Field Rule 7-5-3 on page 56 of the 2015 NFHS Track and Field Rulebook requires that **prior to competition** the coach must verify that each of their school's pole vault competitor's weight shall be at or below the manufacturer's pole rating. Available on our website is a Pole Vault Competitors' Event Verification Form that is recommended for use in meeting this rule prior to competition and thereby reduces coaches' liability. The form can be found on the MHSA website under Track and Field.

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

SPOTLIGHT TEAM OF THE WEEK

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The MHSA/Montana Ford Stores "Spotlight Team of the Week" Program continues to recognize teams from member high schools that exemplify the values of participating in high school activities. Teams are recognized who go above and beyond what is expected of them during practices, games and performances, modeling behaviors in other areas including community service, championing local and national causes/initiatives, and/or exhibiting courageous or visionary acts.

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

FOOTBALL

FOOTBALL HELMET RECONDITIONING

The National Athletic Equipment Reconditioners Association members will not recondition/recertify any football helmet ten years of age or older. The National Athletic Equipment Reconditioners Association's (NAERA) policy is attached. The ten years shall be determined by the manufacturer's date as required by NOCSAE. For example at the end of the upcoming 2015 football season, any helmet dated 2006 or older will not be reconditioned / recertified.

For more information, please visit the football page of the MHSA website at www.mhsa.org.

SPIRIT

MCA CLINIC

As in the past several years the **Montana Coaches Association** offers courses for spirit coaches during the MCA clinic held in Great Falls each

August. Registration sheets for the MCA clinic are not sent from the MHSA office but will come from MCA. Please have your spirit coaches watch for information from MCA.

VOLLEYBALL

VOLLEYBALL UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS TO CHANGE IN 2016

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Volleyball Rules Committee approved new uniform requirements that will take effect in 2016. The revised rule will require the libero or her teammates to wear a uniform top that is immediately recognized from all angles as being in clear contrast to and distinct from the other members of the team. The libero or her teammates shall wear a solid-colored uniform top. The solid-colored uniform top shall clearly contrast from the predominant primary color(s) of the libero or her teammates' uniform top, with the predominant color(s) being the color(s) appearing on approximately half of the uniform.

Other requirements of the solid-colored top are 1) the sleeves shall be the same color as the body of the uniform top; 2) piping/trim no wider than 1 inch in total at its widest point may be placed along the seams and may be a different color(s) than the uniform top; 3) lettering and collars may be different color(s) than the uniform top; and 4) numbers shall be a contrasting color to the uniform top and meet all other specifications in Rule 2-2-4.

Some uniforms were affecting the officials' ability to identify the libero and determine legal playing action," said Becky Oakes, NFHS director of sports and liaison to the Volleyball Rules Committee. "The tradition is that volleyball is a sport with colorful uniforms. Because there has been increasing difficulty identifying the libero because of uniform design, the rules needed to make sure the libero was easily identified."

The rule will take effect July 1, 2016, which should give uniform manufacturers time to make the necessary changes and allow high schools to make uniform changes in their normal budgeting process and not incur additional expense, according to Oakes.

On the MHSA website (mhsa.org), under the Volleyball Section, please find the power point presentation "[Volleyball Solid Color Jersey Change—Effective July 1, 2016](#)" that will explain and give examples of this new volleyball uniform requirement. If you have any questions about this issue, please call Scott McDonald at the MHSA Office.

ATTACHMENTS

- [PV #2-Pole Vault Event Verification Form](#)
- [2014-2015 Coaches' Education Verification Form](#)
- [2014-2015 Academic Excellence Award Program](#)
- [2015-2016 Materials Order Form](#)
- [2015-2016 MOA Fees](#)
- [NAERA Press Release on Reconditioning Football Helmets](#)
- [Athletes Hall of Fame Nomination Form](#)
- [Ball Contract Summary](#)