



# Quick Bits

A Montana High School Association Publication  
 1 South Dakota Avenue  
 Helena, MT 59601  
 Phone: (406) 442-6010 | Fax: (406) 442-8250  
[www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org)  
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## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### SPRING RULE CLINICS

The MHSA/MOA 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](http://www.mhsa.org). Enclosed please find an instruction sheet that details the procedure for accessing the clinics. The clinics were launched on **March 3**. Coaches must view the clinics prior to **March 20 for golf and prior to March 28 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 MHSA 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.

From June 1 – July 31 teams can use their own gym for practices but they cannot host games in the gyms unless rent is paid and all other out-of-season contest guidelines are followed. 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, 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.

*Reminder:* From June 1 – July 31 teams can use their own gym for practices but they cannot host games in the gyms unless rent is paid and all other out-of-season contest guidelines are followed.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD ITEMS

### BOARD TO MEET APRIL 14-15

The next regular meeting of the MHSA Executive Board will be held in Helena beginning on Monday, April 14, 2014, at 8:30 a.m. The Board meeting will continue Tuesday, April 15 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 2014-15 officers.
5. Bids for State sites for 2015-2016 and remaining sites for 2014-2015.

## SOFTBALL

### NOTES FOR 2014 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, 2014 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

### AUDITIONS FOR ALL-STATE

The 2014 MHSA All-State Band, Chorus and Orchestra Festival auditions will be conducted using online submissions. The All-State information will be emailed to all schools, and it can also be accessed on the music page of the MHSA website.

Each director receives a unique audition code that corresponds to the individual band, chorus and orchestra programs. Any music director who plans to submit student auditions should contact the MHSA office by emailing Jo Austin at [jpaustin@mhsa.org](mailto:jpaustin@mhsa.org) if an email containing a code is not received.



## GOLF

### CLASS C GOLF

This year the MHSAA will continue the procedure for reporting scores that was implemented last spring. Class C schools will report all of their scores (qualifying and non-qualifying) on Varvee, the official statistics program of the MHSAA. 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 MHSAA verifying that any golfer who shot a qualifying score had a marker present. The form is linked with this mailing and also is located on the golf page of the MHSAA website at [www.mhsaa.org](http://www.mhsaa.org).

If you have any questions, please contact Brian at the MHSAA office.

## TRACK & FIELD

### TRACK AND FIELD CLARIFICATIONS

Below are clarifications of some 2014 NFHS Track and Field Rules. Please share this information with your head track and field coach(es) and other appropriate personnel.

#### ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Technology advancements in the area of electronic audio and video devices have made such items easy to use and very accessible. Their use, if not used to transmit information or communication to the competitor during the actual competition when a competitor is on the track or completing a trial, no longer creates an advantage or disadvantage among competitors or teams and can serve as a coaching tool. Electronic devices may be used in unrestricted areas and coaches boxes, provided the location does not interfere with progress of the meet as determined by the meet referee. They shall not be used to review an official's decision. The games committee no longer has authority to restrict their use.

#### PENALTIES:

1. A competitor shall be disqualified from the event.
2. Team personnel (e.g. coach, manager, etc.) shall be disqualified from further participation in the meet for unsporting conduct.

#### COMMUNICATING "PASS" IN THE FIELD EVENTS:

To provide consistency in all field events regarding proper communication between competitor and judge when the athlete is going to pass, the competitor shall communicate his/her intentions to pass to the event judge before the start of the trial clock. A "pass" will not be granted if the clock has already started and the clock will continue to run. Failure to take a trial within the prescribed time limit will result in an unsuccessful trial.

#### IMPORTANCE OF PROPER TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS TO WORK THE MEET:

Successful meets require a core of workers who are knowledgeable about track and field rules. Athletic directors and track and field coaches recruit volunteers from parent and community groups as well as school faculty members to assist with officiating responsibilities at interscholastic meets. Therefore, it falls to these track and field leaders to educate the numerous individuals who are necessary to run a successful meet. School administrators and their track and field coaches should obtain a copy of the three NFHS track and field publications - the rules book, case book and the officials manual. Once volunteers have been secured, they should be provided with the NFHS rules materials so that they can become knowledgeable of and familiar with the NFHS rules and interpretations prior to a meet. The NFHS Rules Committee suggests that training seminars be held to help workers gain knowledge of track and field rules so that events are run by the rules and fair competition is provided all student participants.

#### THROWING IMPLEMENTS RETURNED TO COMPETITORS BY OFFICIALS:

Coaches and officials, including all those who may volunteer to assist with administration of the throwing events, must always work together to minimize the risk of injury due to improper return of throwing

implements, lack of throwing sectors being cordoned off and/or lack of adequate training for those individuals working the event. A throwing implement should never be thrown or tossed back to the competitor once the trial is completed. There should be a predetermined process and individuals designated to have the responsibility to walk the implements back. This process should also include the path to follow when walking back to avoid walking through the throwing sector. This process should be carefully reviewed with all those working the event prior to any warm-ups commencing as well as at the coaches meeting and with the athletes as they report to the event for warm-ups and competition. Everyone involved should always be alert, as the unexpected can always happen. Equally important is the coach following similar procedures with his/her athletes during practice.

#### Legal Implements in Warm-ups

To reduce the likelihood of illegal implements being used in competition, only legal implements are allowed in warm-ups. By permitting only the use of legal implements in warm-ups as well as competition, the risk of injury is reduced and likewise, the risk of using an illegal implement in error during competition is very unlikely.

## WRESTLING

### STATE TOURNAMENT COMPLETED

The 2014 State Wrestling Tournament went very well again this year. The All Class Tournament has been in place for many years, and everyone involved in this event is part of that success. Once again the skin condition / grooming checks went very well. The coaches and school administrations are to be complimented for making skin checks a part of their post season preparation. Several wrestlers needed to be further examined by our tournament doctors, and in almost every case the wrestlers had paperwork explaining the treatment of the areas of concern. We must continue to take preventative measures to protect our wrestlers from the spread of infectious diseases.

As we look forward to next year's All Class State Wrestling Tournament, we will continue to make improvements. We will be adjusting some of the starting times on the schedule to minimize the amount of time between rounds, while still allowing for ample rest time for the wrestlers and the workers.

There was one negative from this year's tournament: a significant amount of garbage was left in the cooler room. We have had this issue in the past and we will need everyone's assistance next year to make sure this room is kept cleaner, or we will not be able to have the luxury of wrestling teams bringing coolers in future years.

Thanks to everyone for a great tournament, and we will look forward to the next State All Class Wrestling Tournament.

## VOLLEYBALL

### UNIFORM REMINDER

Beginning July 1, 2016, the volleyball uniform rule will be changed. It will state that either the libero or her teammates shall wear a solid-colored uniform top and which shall meet the following guidelines:

- a. The solid-colored uniform top shall clearly contrast from the predominant color(s) of the teammates' uniform top. Predominant color(s) is the color(s) appearing on approximately half of the uniform.
- b. Sleeves shall be the same color as the body of the uniform top.
- c. Piping/trim not exceeding 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.
- d. Lettering and collars may be different color(s) than the uniform top.
- e. Numbers shall be a contrasting color to the uniform top and meet all other specifications in Rule 4-2-4.

The rationale for this change is when both the libero and her teammates are in multi-colored uniforms of the same color combinations, it can be very difficult to discern the libero's legality when playing the ball.

Requiring either the libero or the other team members to be in a solid colored uniform of contrasting color will assist the referees in determining legal playing actions.

Schools should plan now for this new uniform requirement. There are several options as to the use of the solid-colored uniform top by the individual team: The team may choose to have only the libero wear the solid-color top and thus purchase special uniforms. The team may choose to have one set of solid-colored uniforms opposite a second set of contrast.

On the MHSa website ([www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org)) under the Volleyball Section, you will find a power point presentation called "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 question about this uniform rule change, please call 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 who 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](http://www.mhsa.org)) including the form to use to nominate a team(s).

## DATES TO REMEMBER

<b>March 10</b>	MOA Qualifying Exam for softball opens
<b>March 17</b>	First date for practice in softball, track & field, tennis and Classes B & C golf
<b>March 20</b>	First date for competition in golf (Classes B and C)
<b>March 28</b>	First date for competition in softball, track & field and tennis (all classes)
<b>April 1</b>	District Music Festival – 9 (large groups only)
<b>April 3-4</b>	District Music Festival 6
<b>April 4-5</b>	District Music Festival – 5, 13
<b>April 7</b>	District Music Festivals – 9 (solos and ensembles only)
<b>April 10-12</b>	District Music Festivals – 1, 4
<b>April 11-12</b>	District Music Festival – 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
<b>April 14-15</b>	MHSa Executive Board Meeting - Helena
<b>April 20</b>	Easter

## ATTACHMENTS

[2014 Track & Field and Cross Country Rules Interpretations](#)  
[2014 Volleyball Rules Changes](#)  
[2014 Golf, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field Rules Clinic Instructions](#)  
[2014 Class C Golf Qualifying Scores Report Form](#)  
[MHSa/Your Local Ford Stores Spotlight Team of the Week Nomination Form](#)  
[Fundamentals of Athletic/Activity Regulations](#)