



# Quick Bits

A Montana High School Association Publication  
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[www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org)  
 March 2015

## 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 2**. Coaches must view the clinics prior to **March 12 for golf and prior to March 20 for softball, track and field and tennis** to receive credit.

**All coaches, including the head coach, 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 high school student (grades 9-12) from your high school who 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 your high school students 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:**

There is no such thing as an open gym during a sport-specific season (i.e. no volleyball open gym during volleyball) or during the allowed coaching window of June 1 – July 31.

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 13-14

The next regular meeting of the MHSA Executive Board will be held in Helena beginning on Monday, April 13, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. The Board meeting will continue Tuesday, April 14 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 2015-16 officers.
5. Bids for State sites for 2016-2017 and remaining sites for 2015-2016.

## SOFTBALL

### NOTES FOR 2015 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, 2015 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 2015 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 MHSAs office by emailing Jo Austin at [joaustin@mhsa.org](mailto:joaustin@mhsa.org) if an email containing a code is not received.

## GOLF

### CLASS C GOLF

This year the MHSAs 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. 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 MHSAs 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 MHSAs website at [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org).

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

## TRACK & FIELD

### TRACK AND FIELD CLARIFICATIONS

Below are clarifications of some 2015 NFHS Track and Field Rules. Please share this information with your head track and field coach(es) and other appropriate personnel.

#### Jewelry Prohibited

By MHSAs Handbook guidelines, for the 2015 MHSAs track and field season, MHSAs member schools will follow the last year's NFHS track and field rules concerning jewelry. The wearing of jewelry by Track and Field competitors will not change; jewelry shall not be worn by competitors in any MHSAs 2015 track and field meet. Any 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 event. If the jewelry can't be removed, the competitor should not compete until legal. 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 a description of prohibited item and give this information to the meet referee. The meet referee shall notify or cause to be notified the head coach, of the offending school, of the competitor's violation and the warning that any further jewelry violation by the competitor shall result in disqualification of the competitor from the event. If the incident recurs, the competitor will be disqualified from further competition in the meet. The protocol for communication of the violation to the coach should be established by the officials before the meet begins. This protocol could be to ask the violating athlete where their head coach is located or have an announcement made to have the head coach to meet with the referee or use the announcement system to announce the violation.

#### Jewelry--Medical Alerts Medals

Medical alert medals are not considered jewelry. The alert should be visible because having the alert visible increases the efficiency by which the attending health-care professional may treat the student's injury/illness who has a special medical condition. There are several new styles of medical alert bracelets made of pliable materials such as cloth or rubber. These new styles and materials do not pose a risk of injury to the participant or others. These styles do not require being taped to the body but the new styles must indicate that they are a medical alert. When a medical alert medal is attached to: a bracelet made of **metal** or an **unyielding material**, it shall be taped to the body and if attached to a **necklace**, it shall be taped to the body.

#### Jewelry--Religious Medals

Religious medals are not considered jewelry but must be worn under the uniform and taped to the body.

#### Jewelry--Hair Control Devices

Hair control devices such as rubber bands, headbands or scrunches used to control the hair are not considered jewelry and are legal to be used. Also, 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, 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 single manufacturer's logo and/or a single school name or insignia as per NFHS rules. The headband shall have no jewelry attached. Unadorned devices, such as bobby pins, barrettes and hair clips, no longer than 2 inches, to be worn to control the competitor's hair and are legal and are not considered jewelry. 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.

#### Initiating a Field Event Trial

Within the rules for all throwing and jumping field events, it now clarifies that a competitor shall be charged with a foul if he/she does not initiate a trial within one minute (or other prescribed time limit) after the competitor's name has been called with completion of that trial allowed beyond the prescribed time. The rule change now states that the actual completion of the trial does not have to occur during the prescribed time limit.

#### 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 2015 State Wrestling Tournament went very well again this year. The All Class Tournament has been in place for many years, and everyone involved allows it to run smoother each year. Once again the skin condition / grooming checks went very well this year. I must compliment the coaches and school administration for making skin checks a part of their post season preparation. We had some wrestlers that needed to be further examined by our tournament doctors, and in almost every case, the wrestlers had paperwork explaining the treatment of the area in question. 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 look at improvements to this event. We will continue to tweak the schedule to make it better for the wrestlers. Also, this year we used the Track Wrestling software to manage our post season, but at next year's state tournament, we will use Track Wrestling to the fullest extent. This will mean that our marshalling process will change for wrestlers as there will be screens that will display (to wrestlers) which mat where they will wrestle. Also, we will utilize laptops on each of the 12 mats to incorporate live scoring for the 2015 State Wrestling Tournament.

Thanks to everyone for a successful event 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

- March 9** First date for practice in softball, track & field, tennis and Classes B & C golf
- March 12** First date for competition in golf (Classes B and C)
- March 16** MOA Qualifying Exam for softball opens
- March 20** First date for competition in softball, track & field and tennis (all classes)
- March 31** District Music Festival – 9 (large groups only)
- April 5** Easter
- April 9-11** District Music Festivals – 4
- April 10-11** District Music Festival – 5, 8, 10, 12
- April 13** District Music Festivals – 9 (solos and ensembles only)
- April 13-14** MHSa Executive Board Meeting – Helena
- April 16-17** District Music Festival 6
- April 17-18** District Music Festivals – 1, 2, 7, 11, 13

## ATTACHMENTS

- [2015 Track & Field and Cross Country Rules Interpretations](#)
- [2015 Volleyball Rules Changes](#)
- [2015 Golf, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field Rules Clinic Instructions](#)
- [Class C Golf Qualifying Score Reporting Form](#)
- [MHSa/Your Local Ford Stores Spotlight Team of the Week Nomination Form](#)
- [Fundamentals of Athletic/Activity Regulations](#)