



EXECUTIVE CORNER

BITS AND PIECES

Fall activities are under way! Last year we had a reprieve from smoke filled air and hot temperatures but they are back this year with a vengeance. However, the smoke filled air and warm temperatures have not stifled the enthusiasm shown by participants during the beginning of another fall season. As this season begins it is important that schools and local officials' pools work together when scheduling officials for contests now and throughout the year. As most of you have come to realize, there is a shortage of officials in some areas and for some sports. If schools and officials' pools cooperate in scheduling game times and even possibly adjusting game days, contests can be covered adequately. I have received numerous calls from both school administrators and from officials expressing their appreciation for the cooperation exhibited in the scheduling, and sometimes the rescheduling, of contests to accommodate the availability of officials. The MHSА appreciates these cooperative efforts between administrators and officials. But, if there are any major problems or conflicts with the scheduling of contests that cannot be solved between schools and officials' pools, please contact the MHSА office and hopefully we can help facilitate a solution to the problem.

In the September Quick Bits I like to reemphasize the importance of reviewing the eligibility of each of your student participants, whether transfer students, foreign exchange students or established students. The areas that have to be monitored closely for all students' eligibility are age, academics and semesters. Remember that students who are academically ineligible are not eligible to compete at any level of play (sub varsity or varsity) for the entire semester. They can participate in practices if your school allows. If they establish academic eligibility at the end of the semester they become eligible the Monday morning following the week the semester ends.

Transfer student issues continue to surface and the following are important points that must be reviewed before declaring a student varsity-eligible after a transfer:

- 1) First, as stated above, they must be academically eligible, age eligible and semester eligible.
- 2) Transfer students have to be checked for residency – **A change of residence is the actual physical relocation by the parents or legal guardians (guardianship must be established one year before the transfer) of a student at a new residence and termination of all occupancy of a previous residence. The change in residence must be bona fide, include other minor siblings and involve transfer from one school district attendance area to another school district attendance area. For the purpose of eligibility, there can be only one residence. Mom or Dad cannot establish a second residence (for whatever reason) for transfer eligibility. By MHSА By-Laws it is the responsibility of the principal to verify and validate residency.**
- 3) Is it a parent-to-parent move? – A parent to parent move can only be from parent to parent, not parent-to-grandparent or parent-to-aunt/uncle or parent-to-legal guardian etc. Also it must be the first parent-to-parent move in the student's high school career for him/her to be varsity eligible. A transfer can occur to a legal guardian, but for the student to be varsity eligible that guardianship must have been established one year before the transfer.

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1 South Dakota Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
(406) 442-6010 (406) 442-8250 fax
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- 4) Transfer – Return-to-Parent (new last year) - A student who has attended high school and resides in a district other than where the student's parent(s) resides, and who subsequently returns to live with the student's parent(s) becomes immediately transfer eligible for varsity competition in the parent's district. This can be applied only one time during the student's career. The new Return-to-Parent Form must be completed.
- 5) Foreign Exchange students are transfer students and must meet all eligibility requirements except that these students will be living with a host family in your attendance area. Foreign Exchange students cannot have graduated from a high school in their country and they must be placed through a CSJET approved program.
- 6) Also, the membership, by two-thirds majority vote at the 2008 Annual Meeting eliminated the transfer exception for court orders, ward of the court and ward of the state designations. Now, if a transfer student has been court ordered to a school's attendance area, a hardship petition could be filed if the court order was a protection order and not because of criminal or bad behavior by the student in question.
- 7) Hardship Petitions – A request to waive the transfer rule can be filed for a student whose transfer was not a bona fide family move if the transfer was absolutely necessary, not athletically motivated and beyond the student's control (again no drug or alcohol use, criminal behavior or attempting to avoid a penalty).
- 8) Reminder – there is no provision for an emancipated 18 year old student to be varsity eligible. Transfer Rule Interpretation # 6 states - For the purpose of these rules a student cannot establish a residence apart from his/her parents. If he/she habitually makes his/her home with a relative and the student changes schools because the relative changes residence, the student will lose varsity eligibility in accordance with the transfer rule. A student, both of whose parents are deceased and who has no legal guardian, may change high schools without loss of varsity eligibility. However, a student may not change school systems within a city or school district.

If you have any eligibility questions/concerns please feel free to contact me.

And finally, as our student-activity participates and our coaches take part in thousands of contests this fall activity season, we appreciate your continued efforts to stress good sporting behaviors by coaches and players. Important behaviors to promote include good character, loyalty, class and respect. Knute Rockne said, "One person practicing sportsmanship is far better than ten preaching it."

On behalf of the MHSА Executive Board and MHSА Staff, we hope for continued good days for fall activities at your school.

Mark Beckman
Executive Director



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

2012-13 DIRECTORY OF SCHOOLS

Please note: the 2012-13 Directory of Schools will be sent to all MHSAs member schools this month. Please review your school's entries and confirm their accuracy.

If you notice any errors, please contact the MHSAs office. If some of your coaches have not yet been hired or if your administrative staff or coaching staff change, please call the MHSAs office or e-mail jholmes@mhsa.org so we can update the Directory and our database.

TOURNAMENT MANAGERS' WORKSHOP

Anyone who will be managing a MHSAs Basketball, Golf, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field, Volleyball or Wrestling Post-Season Event during the 2012-13 school year is, by MHSAs Executive Board Action, required to view the new on-line Tournament Managers' Workshop for their activity once every five (5) years. The workshop focuses on pre-tournament preparation, on site procedures during the event and MHSAs guidelines and regulations.

The Volleyball and Fall Golf Tournament Managers' Workshops are now available for viewing. Go to www.mhsa.org; click on Tournament Managers' Workshop and read the instructions provided. Tournament Managers will be sent an e-mail reminder of this requirement.

If you have any questions or concerns about the workshop, please call Scott McDonald at the MHSAs office or email him at smcdonald@mhsa.org.

MIAAA ATHLETIC DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Montana Interscholastic Administrators Association would like to encourage educators around the state to nominate deserving individuals for the MIAAA Activities Director of the Year Award. One award is given to each classification, as well as an All-Class Activities Director of the Year Award.

Also, the MIAAA is sponsoring a Gold Pass Award of Merit for long time athletic directors or principals who have made significant contributions to Montana student activities. This is a very prestigious award that presents the recipient with a lifetime pass that is valid at any MHSAs contest or tournament.

Application forms for these recognition opportunities are attached.

2012 STATE CROSS COUNTRY MEET IN HELENA

The 2012 State Cross Country Meet will be staged in Helena on October 20. The competition will take place at Bill Roberts Golf Course. Jim Opitz, Activities Director of Helena Public Schools, is the meet director. Information will be mailed shortly from his office with logistics concerning the State All Class Cross Country Meet. Mr. Opitz can be reached at 324-2107.

To view the 2012 MHSAs State and NFHS Cross Country rules addressing uniform and sportsmanship items that all coaches and competitors will be expected to adhere to go to www.mhsa.org, click on "Cross Country" and then click on the "2012 State Cross Country Policies and Procedures and NFHS Rules" link.

The schedule for the 2012 State Cross Country meet is as follows:

Class A Girls	11:00 am
Class B Girls	11:35 am
Class A Boys	12:10 pm
Class B Boys	12:40 pm
Class C Girls	1:10 pm
Class AA Girls	1:45 pm
Class C Boys	2:20 pm
Class AA Boys	2:50 pm

Entries must be entered online using Direct Athletics by October 16 by 4:00 p.m.

MHSAs HANDBOOK ON WEBSITE

The MHSAs Handbook is available online. Visit our website at www.mhsa.org to view the Handbook in PDF format. We hope this will assist administrators, coaches, counselors, and fine arts directors in obtaining copies of MHSAs information that is most useful to them. It's also a means of making information available to parents, especially the sections which include student eligibility and other participation information.

AWARDS REMINDER

TROPIES AND AWARDS

Because of questions received in the MHSAs office concerning conference trophies, the following information from the MHSAs Handbook is offered:

1. Conference trophies are given in football (except for Class AA), Class A softball and Class A soccer (they are considered district or divisional trophies).
2. In other sports, if a conference would like to award a trophy (first place only) for its conference champion it must be ordered through the MHSAs office and must be paid for by the conference. The MHSAs office staff does not automatically order conference trophies because some conferences choose not to award them.
3. Trophies that are awarded by MHSAs rule will be given to both schools if the activity is cooperatively sponsored, but the office will need to know which school was presented the trophy at the tournament. Also, if there is a co-op conference champion or a co-conference champion the conference still needs to order those trophies through MHSAs and pay for both.
4. Individual miniature trophies for first and second place MHSAs state championship events may be purchased from the Association's award provider.

Also, only one (1) trophy will be awarded at any MHSAs meet or tournament when a maximum of five (5) teams are participating. However, the conference may elect to buy a second place trophy through MHSAs if they so desire.
5. Divisions may purchase divisional medals beyond the first and second place medals provided by the MHSAs in speech and drama, golf, tennis, track and field and wrestling. The medals must be ordered through the MHSAs office ten (10) weeks before they will be needed.

FOOTBALL

RULE CHANGE – NO SECOND HALF COIN TOSS

For the 2012 Season, there will be a change in the second half coin toss procedure at all levels of Montana high school football. The second half choices will be done through communication with the head coaches at the end of the half. Captains will no longer be brought to the center of the field. The procedure that will be implemented for all MHSAs Contests is as follows:

- The 1st half ends – Both head coaches must communicate with the officials **before** they leave the field for halftime.
- The MOA official (wing official on their sideline) who is escorting the team with the second-half choice finds the head coach and determines from that team's head coach his second-half choice (usually this team will **receive** because they deferred in the original coin toss). This official immediately communicates this information to the referee.
- The MOA official (wing official on their sideline) who is escorting the team that **does not** have the second-half choice finds the head coach and determines from that team's head coach his second-half choice (the official should ask, "In the

event the other team opts to receive, which side of the field would you like to **defend?**"). This official immediately communicates this information to the referee.

- The referee and wing officials will write this information down and then proceed to the halftime intermission.
- After the teams come back from the halftime intermission, the MOA officials will confirm the decisions with both head coaches. **If a head coach wants to change his decision, this will be allowed but it must be communicated to the officials at this time.** The officials will come together at the center of the field for any final instructions.
- Following the **mandatory three-minute warm-up** period after the halftime intermission expires, there will **not** be a captain's meeting in the center of the field and both teams will assume their respective free-kick formations to start the second half.

HELMET TO HELMET CONTACT – TEACHING AND ENFORCING THE NFHS POINT OF EMPHASIS

The NFHS Football Rules Committee's point of emphasis is a very detailed commentary on concussions, illegal helmet contact, and proper helmet fitting. This is not a rule change this year, but because of the concerns at all levels of football with concussions recently, this is a focal point for this season and beyond. I would like to point out a few items from this point of emphasis that needs to be stressed to coaches and officials:

The committee is encouraging a renewed emphasis by both coaches and officials on other types of contact with and to the helmet, which are prohibited by the existing three rules cited above, as well as the unnecessary roughness provisions of Rule 9, which include:

- Blows to the Head by the Defender
- Initiating Contact to the Head
- Helmet-to-Helmet Contact
- Making Initial Contact with the Defender while Running with the Head Down –

The illegal acts noted above have no place in the game, and the committee believes that renewed emphasis on getting illegal acts out of the game will improve player safety. When in doubt, these acts should be viewed as illegal. Coaches and officials must focus on:

- **Teaching** – Coaches must reinforce, through continual repetition, the proper techniques associated with blocking, tackling and running. Officials must learn to recognize the illegal aspects of these techniques and ensure that study is done by all officials on the crew and within the local association.
- **Recognition** – Because of the increased focus on head injury, officials and coaches must realize that helmet-to-helmet and illegal helmet contact fouls need to be consistently recognized and called throughout the game. It is imperative that officials and coaches also focus not only on the contact WITH the helmet, but any contact TO the helmet.
- **Calling / Enforcing** – Once recognized, officials must penalize these illegal acts consistently throughout the game, without warning, regardless of the situation. Whether it is in the first quarter of the first game, or overtime of the state championship, illegal helmet contact must be enforced and must be removed from the game by both coaches and officials. It is hoped that this simplified approach will be a positive step toward reinforcing player safety!

In summary - this point of emphasis has excellent information to help coaches in teaching proper techniques and it will help facilitate more stringent enforcement by officials, but one principle that needs to be recognized as a general concept for coaches and officials to put all of this in the proper perspective moving forward that will help clarify this situation is **Anytime, in an official's judgment, a player uses his helmet as a weapon, he should be penalized!**

MUSIC

MUSIC COMMITTEE FALL MEETING

The MHSA Music Committee's annual fall meeting is scheduled for September 30 - October 1, 2012 in Helena. Various items were reviewed including preparation for All-State Band, Chorus and Orchestra Festival.

SPIRIT

MONTANA HOSTS STUNT EXHIBITION

The recently held MCA Clinic was home to a STUNT exhibition for the spirit coaches in attendance. It was held at CMR High School and welcomed both high schools from Helena to showcase a new cheer competition format.

STUNT is a new competitive team sport derived from cheerleading. STUNT removes the crowd-leading element and focuses on the technical and athletic components of cheer; including partner stunts, pyramids, basket tosses, group jumps and tumbling, and a dynamic team performance. It mimics a game situation with head to head competition, quarters, and points scored with strategy playing an important part in the game.

One of the most popular athletic activities for female athletes, cheer offers a base for an exciting and challenging new sport at the collegiate and high school level. While altogether new in format and complexity, STUNT complements traditional cheerleading in a way that is immediately recognizable to participants.

One of the primary objectives in the development of STUNT is the creation of new opportunities for female athletes at both the collegiate and high school level, while allowing traditional cheerleading to remain a vital and important part of a school's spirit program. USA Cheer, the national governing body of STUNT, has been working closely with the Office of Civil Rights to ensure that STUNT can help high schools, universities, and colleges fulfill their gender equity requirements in this way.

At this time, this showcase was simply an introduction to what STUNT is and how it works. There are no plans, at this time, to move forward at Montana's high school level but given time, this could be an exciting addition to the world of cheerleading.

If you would like to see what this new sport entails, please go to www.collegestunt.org for more information.

VOLLEYBALL

SUB-VARSITY PLAYERS STARTING IN THE VARSITY MATCH

From the Volleyball Section of the 2012-13 MHSA Handbook the following is the rule which addresses sub-varsity players starting in a varsity contest: The Association prohibits students of member schools from entering a preliminary contest and then starting in the varsity contest the same day, except Class C when there are insufficient non-varsity players to play a junior varsity contest, schools may, by mutual consent of the coaches involved, play no more than two (2) varsity starters in the j.v. contest. This rule is an MHSA Rule and MOA Volleyball Officials are not required to enforce this rule. MOA Volleyball Officials will enforce NFHS Volleyball Rule (6-2-1) which states: a team shall consist of six players to begin the first set of the match. If a team has fewer than six players to begin the match, a forfeit shall be declared unless the MHSA has allowed a sub-varsity team to begin the match with 5 players. (See Rule 11-2-2 for time-outs.)

PLAYERS REMOVING UNIFORM IN BENCH AREA

NFHS Volleyball Rule 4-2-1e states that removal of any part of the uniform in the playing area is unsporting conduct. This includes after warm-ups, players going to their bench and removing their warm-up shirts to change into their uniform tops. The rule is trying to stop athletes going to the bench or any playing area and removing their warm-up jersey or uniform top with only a sports bra left on.

AVAILABILITY OF ELIGIBLE OFFICIALS FOR POST SEASON ASSIGNMENT

For the 2012 Volleyball Season, Volleyball Official Pools may provide information regarding availability of eligible officials for post season assignment to a district or division representative for distribution to schools in those districts or divisions, when requested in writing. Individual officials shall not provide such information. The MOA Regional Directors are allowing pools to provide a list of officials and the dates those officials are available for post season assignment to a district or divisional representative to distribute to the schools in their respective districts or divisions allowing coaches to vote for officials who are available on each weekend of post season competition.

BASKETBALL

Please give the following items, which are specific to basketball competitions, to the appropriate personnel in your school.

QUARTER ELIGIBILITY FOR ALL CLASSES

The Association prohibits all students of member schools from entering more than five (5) quarters of basketball in any one day [Class C-six (6) quarters]. Should a non-varsity contest be played using a variation in the length of quarters or the number of quarters played, one of the approved variations shown on the basketball page of the MHSAs website must be used. The applicable game limit interpretations are also included on the website (www.mhsa.org).

COACHING BOX

For MHSAs regular and post-season play, a twelve-foot coaching box will be used. The coaching box shall be outlined outside the side of the court on which the scorer's and timer's table and team benches are located. The area shall be bounded by a line 28 feet from the end line towards the half court line and a line no more than twelve feet from the 28-foot line back towards the end line and team bench. These lines shall be located off the court and be two (2) inches wide.

SCORER'S SHIRT

For MHSAs regular and post-season play it is mandatory that the official scorer wear a black and white striped shirt and that his/her location be clearly marked by an "X" twelve (12) inches long and two (2) inches wide that shall be placed on the floor out-of-bounds directly in front of the official scorer to help substitutes and officials with the proper location of the scorer.

MHSAs BASKETBALL MERCY RULE

For the 2012-2013 Basketball Season, the Basketball Mercy Rule will again be used by all MHSAs member schools.

It will be used for all levels of play, (Varsity, JV, Sophomore and Frosh) in the second half only, once a team has a forty (40) point or better lead against their opponent, a running clock will ensue until the end of the game even if the difference in the score drops below the forty point margin. The only time the clock will stop will be between quarters, time outs, and when replacing an injured or disqualified player.

In the second half of a basketball game, the official scorer and timer will be responsible for running the clock continuously except for the following situations, once a team has a forty (40) point or better lead against their opponent.

1. Once the clock signals the end of a quarter or overtime period, the clock will be stopped until play is started for the next quarter or overtime period.
2. Once an official signals for a called time-out, the clock will be stopped until play is started following the time-out.
3. Once an official beckons or bench personnel come onto the floor to attend to an injured player, the clock will be stopped until play is started again.
4. Once an official informs the head coach that a player has been disqualified from further participation in the game, the clock will be stopped until play is started again.

The clock will be restarted when:

1. The ball touches or is touched by a player on the court.
2. If play is resumed by a throw-in, the clock shall be started when the ball touches, or is legally touched by, a player on the court after it is released by the thrower.

Game management must inform the official scorer and timer of this MHSAs Basketball Mercy Rule and the provisions of the rule.

If you have questions about the above issues, please call Scott McDonald in the MHSAs Office.

AIM HIGHER

AIM HIGHER CONTINUES

Last year, the MHSAs lost our corporate sponsor Coca-Cola/PowerAde for the AIM Higher program due to the national reorganization of the company. Fortunately several companies, including some of our existing corporate partners, have expressed interest in sponsoring this program in the future.

We will continue the program this year, but the number of workshops offered during 2012-13 will be scaled back. Until sponsorship is secured, workshops have been scheduled in four central areas. If we are able to add a corporate sponsor during this school year, additional workshops will be incorporated during the spring.

The AIM Higher Program will continue to include sessions on leadership, mentoring, team captain training, hazing awareness, drug prevention and sportsmanship. The 2012-13 AIM Higher schedule is included with this month's [Quick Bits](#). The cost of the workshop will continue to be \$10 per participant, which has been the cost since 1992-93. Please consider registering your school for one of the scheduled dates as soon as possible for this worthwhile opportunity for your students.

ATTACHMENTS

[MIAAA Forms](#)
[2012-13 AIM Higher Schedule](#)
[General Instructions for Football Line to Gain Crews](#)
[General Instructions for Football Clock Operators](#)
[Football Pre-Game Information - 80 yards](#)
[Football Pre-Game Information - Regulation Field](#)
[Basketball Court Diagram](#)
[Pierce Flooring Information](#)
[October Calendar](#)