



# THE 2006 MIAA SOCCER NEWSLETTER



Published by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association – Member of the National Federation

## SPORTSMANSHIP—A Unified Effort Gets Positive Results

The Massachusetts high school soccer community--school administrators, coaches, players, game officials, and the MIAA State Soccer Committee--has worked diligently over the past decade to improve the quality of interscholastic soccer, with a strong emphasis on sportsmanship. Through a unified effort and with a balance of educational programs and strict accountability measures, the goal has been to significantly reduce the negative behaviors exhibited by some soccer players, coaches, and spectators.

The MIAA has tracked game infractions over the course of each season and the results are in for the 2005 season. (*See chart on page 6*). While one might debate the accuracy of the results due to imperfections in the reporting system, it is clear that significant progress has been made—and should be celebrated. Consider the facts: a reduction in total cards, from the previous year, approaching 20%. Consider also a reduction in red cards approaching 40%! It is only through the unified efforts of the entire soccer community, that results like these have become a reality. Congratulations to all those who have made sportsmanship a priority!

The MIAA Soccer Committee would also like to recognize those schools, whose soccer teams, during the 2005 season, distinguished themselves in the area of good sportsmanship, which earned them an MIAA Soccer Team Sportsmanship Award presented at the 2005 State Soccer Finals. These are teams which, through the collective efforts of their coaches, players, fans, and administrators, demonstrated their unique commitment to sportsmanship, integrity, and ethics.

Congratulations to:

### MIAA Soccer Team Sportsmanship Award Winners 2005

Division 1 Girls----Fitchburg High School  
 Division 1 Boys----Attleboro High School  
 Division 2 Girls----Monument Mountain High School  
 Division 2 Boys----Hampshire Regional High School  
 Division 3 Girls----Savio Prep High School  
 Division 3 Boys----Hopedale High School

## 2006 Tournament News

- **August 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
Pre-Season Dinner/Clinic
- **August 24<sup>th</sup>**  
First Practice Date
- **September 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
First Contest Date
- **September 30<sup>th</sup>**  
Schedule & Commitment Form Due
- **November 1<sup>st</sup>**  
Cutoff Date
- **November 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
Tournament Seeding
- **November 14-16**  
State Semi-Finals
- **November 18<sup>th</sup>**  
State Finals

### Soccer Rules Clinic

**What:** Annual Clinic to review Rules & Policies for the 2006 Soccer Season

**When:** August 22, 2006

**Where:** MIAA Office

**Time:** 5:00pm Light Buffet, 6 pm Clinic

**For:** Commissioners, Athletic Directors, Game Officials & Coaches

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## Soccer Official's Editorial

The 2006-2007 season is upon us! The World Cup is over for another four years and it's time for us all to think about the upcoming high school season. Athletic directors, coaches, players and officials, each have their separate and important role in assuring a SAFE and successful season for the players.

There are several new rules - some are discussed in this article, the rest are available to you elsewhere in this newsletter, in the Federation rule book, and will be covered in your local preseason meetings.

The MIAA Roster and Score Sheet has undergone slight changes to encourage accurate "incident" reporting. It is the responsibility of the official to properly execute the form and it is the responsibility of the host school Contest Manager for its availability at the game site. Electronic reporting may be coming!

A significant rule change this year states that "a protective face mask may be worn by a player with a facial injury". (Rule 4.2.8) It is important to note that it is to be worn to *protect* an injury, *NOT to prevent* one! Management by coaches and officials is the same as for "Hard Casts" i.e. a medical release for the injured player signed by a physician (MD) must be available on site.

A very important emphasis this year is the relationship between the officials and coaches. Specifically, the officials and the HEAD Coach must meet, pre-game, (Rule 5.5.d), to discuss anything specific to that game and, in general, about game management and sportsmanship. The HEAD coach must affirm that his players are properly equipped and remain so throughout the game (Rule 5.2.d.3). We, coaches and officials, must all remember that it is OUR mutual responsibility to ensure the players have a safe venue for THEIR game.

This is far from a total review of the 2006-2007 rules, so please have a good look for yourselves. I hope you all have a great Fall season!

Calvin G. Perry---MA State Soccer Interpreter

## 2006 NFHS SOCCER RULE CHANGES

**4-1-1** Beginning with the 2007 fall season, shinguards must meet the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) specifications.

**RATIONALE:**

Over the past five years, attempts to clarify the coverage, placement and size of shinguards on players within the text of the rule has fallen short. Beginning with the Fall 2007 soccer season, players will be permitted to wear only shinguards that meet the National Operating Committee for the Safety of Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) specifications. Shinguards that meet the standard will have a permanent seal or mark visible on the front of the equipment. Each manufacturer whose shinguards meets the standard will be required to indicate the height of the player that would be permitted to wear that specific equipment. Coaches should be certain that every player has shinguards with the NOCSAE seal and that the player meets the height requirement posted by the manufacturer on the equipment. During the pre-game inspection, officials need only ask the coaches if their players are legally and properly equipped according to NFHS Soccer Rules.

**4-1-1f** If visible apparel is worn under shorts, it shall be of a similar length, all alike and of a solid color (delete, "the same basic color of the uniform shorts").

**RATIONALE:**

The new rule clarifies that compression shorts or garments under the short are no longer required to be the same basic color of the uniform. As long as the undergarments are of a solid color and all are alike, they are legal. It is difficult to purchase this type of undergarment in colors other than black and white. Officials on the committee did not feel that undergarments that were a different color than the uniform would be a problem.

**4-1-1g** One manufacturer's logo/trademark "or reference" is permitted on the outside of each item...

**RATIONALE:**

This change prevents a manufacturer from adding to the uniform any verbiage or mark other than the logo/trademark. Such things as the line of apparel or words to describe a manufacturer's theme would not be permitted. This clarifies that only one logo/trademark may appear on each piece of the uniform.

**4-2-8 NEW** A protective face mask may be worn by a player with a facial injury. The mask may be made of a hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions. A medical release for the injured player signed by a physician (MD/DO) shall be available at the game site.

**RATIONALE:**

Prior to this rule, face protection of any kind was declared illegal. Manufacturers have now developed protection for the face that is safe to the player wearing it and to other players. The committee is concerned that players would play without protection, putting them at serious risk. This new rule allows players to play as long as they have a medical release from a physician (MD/DO). Officials still have the authority to declare any equipment illegal if it is dangerous or confusing.

**5-1-2** The jurisdiction of the officials shall begin 15 minutes prior to the start of the game and end with they are leaving the field of play and its immediate surroundings.

**RATIONALE:**

Officials are often confronted by coaches, players and spectators prior to contest. This rule change permits officials to caution or disqualify coaches and players 15 minutes prior to the start of play. After the game is over, jurisdiction continues until they leave the immediate surroundings of the site. Once the officials leave the immediate surroundings, they should not caution or disqualify coaches or players but instead, should file a written report with the proper authorities. In the sport of soccer, it is imperative that officials exit the immediate surroundings as soon as possible without delay. Delaying one's exit may provide coaches, players, and spectators the opportunity for inappropriate contact with officials.

## 2006 NFHS SOCCER RULES POINTS OF EMPHASIS

**1) Player Equipment (Eyewear)** – The NFHS Soccer Rules permit the use of eyewear. Eyewear may be worn for eye protection or as prescription glasses. Sport eyewear is manufactured to protect the eyes without causing injury to the player(s) wearing them or to other players. Any equipment, which in the opinion of the referee is dangerous or confusing, is illegal. Coaches are responsible for their players being in legal equipment and must confirm such when verbally asked by the referee.

**2) Participant Conduct** – Good sporting behavior and appropriate conduct need to be displayed by everyone in the team area prior to, during, and after the game. Coaches have tremendous influence over players and spectators by the words they use and the behavior they display. Officials reinforce good sporting behavior by communicating effectively with players and coaches and enforcing the rules.

**3) End of Game Procedures for Officials** – Officials must verify with their state association or the proper authority the role they play after the final whistle. The NFHS Soccer Rules Committee has extended the officials' jurisdiction to the immediate surroundings; this may differ from one site to another. Extending officials' jurisdiction to the immediate surroundings is in no way an invitation to delay their exit from the site of the competition. Once the final whistle blows, unless instructed otherwise by the governing authority, the official should verify the score and exit the site of the competition. It is imperative that officials report in writing any disqualifications or unusual incidents to the proper authority.

**4) Game Supervision/Management** – Proper supervision and pre-planned procedures are critical to proper game management. The NFHS Soccer Rules Committee has encouraged state associations to require contest supervision by individuals other than the coach for soccer games. Host schools should develop a game management plan which includes the following: greeting the game officials, storage of officials' gear, providing dressing rooms if available, and development of an exit strategy after the final whistle. The committee believes this will reduce unsporting behavior of players, coaches, and spectators as well as keep the school informed of unusual incidents.

**5) Field Markings** – Fields are to be marked according to the rules. Properly sized team and officials' areas need to be marked. The NFHS provides a diagram of the field of play and its immediate surroundings in the rules book. It is important to note that the most common and most effective placement for the team and officials' area is depicted in the diagram. With the team and officials area on the same side of the field, it allows for easier communication between game officials and coaches and more consistent handling of substitutions by the referee.

**6) Reporting Incidents** – Officials must report game disqualifications and unusual incidents to the proper authorities. This includes unsporting behavior by players, coaches, and spectators prior to, during and after the contest. The proper authorities may include the state athletic/activity association, a league commissioner, or a school administrator. Without a written report, the proper authorities cannot follow-up with those parties involved or determine the appropriate consequences for any inappropriate actions.

**7) Handling Apparent Concussions** – The action plan for handling apparent concussions states that if one suspects that a player has a concussion, the following steps should be taken: 1) remove athlete from play; 2) ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional and do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself; 3) inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the known or possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion; and 4) allow the athlete to return to play only with permission from an appropriate health-care professional.

## MIAA SOCCER ROSTER AND SCORE SHEET REQUIREMENTS

After three years of reviewing thousands of MIAA Soccer Roster and Score Sheets, it is an understatement to say that some schools take their responsibility to properly execute the three-part forms more seriously than others. Consequently, the MIAA Soccer Committee is currently considering major changes to game infraction reporting. Building more accountability (i.e. penalties for non-compliance), and requiring submission of Roster and Score Sheets for EVERY game played, are just two of many potential changes.

In the meantime, it is important that all schools hosting interscholastic soccer contests (**both genders—all levels**) be aware of their responsibilities to properly execute the 2006 MIAA Roster and Score Sheet. Among those responsibilities are the following:

- They must be available for game officials at the scorers table PRIOR to the start of the game
- They must be sent **to the MIAA Office** by the host school athletic director for **all games in which a contest infraction occurs**
- A copy must be provided to the visiting team prior to their departure
- Game officials must fill out the Contest Infraction section with appropriate codes and required specifications
- If a red card violation occurs, both Player and Coach Disqualification forms **MUST** be available **at the game site** for game officials to fill out and sign prior to leaving the field
- Both game officials must sign the Roster and Score Sheet
- Roster and Score Sheet must be properly dated, with the gender and level of play (varsity/subvarsity) indicated
- For Boys Varsity games, the execution of Roster and Score Sheet is the responsibility of the Contest Manager---not the Head Coach
- The 2006 revised Roster and Score Sheet is the only form that should be used. **All other forms are outdated and inaccurate**
- The host school administrator (athletic director or contest manager) must sign the Roster and Score Sheets sent to the MIAA Office

## SOCCER CONCUSSION AWARENESS

There has been considerable discussion in the past year about concussions in the sport of soccer. It is a topic of conversation nationally and in Massachusetts legislation was proposed to “ban heading in the sport of soccer” and subsequently to “mandate the use of helmets”.

In the interest of increasing awareness about concussions in the sport of soccer, the following information has been selected from a detailed report provided to the MIAA by “SoccerHeadInjuries.org”, a not-for-profit website dedicated to “providing third party information on head injuries in soccer free of rampant hyperbole from manufacturers and organizations and biased opinions on both sides”:

- Concussions do occur with significant frequency in soccer
- Comparing concussion rates in soccer to football, the rates, while not identical, are comparable even though football is considered to carry a much higher risk than soccer
- Concussions in soccer are seldom caused by heading the ball
- Most soccer concussions are caused by impacts between a player’s head and some hard object (e.g. goal post, opponent’s head/elbow/knee)
- Even some recognized concussions (by a player) are not reported
- After a player has suffered one concussion, he is 4 – 6 times as likely to have a second compared to a player who has never been concussed
- If a player who has been concussed returns to physical activity before his/her brain has fully recovered, he/she is at risk for “Second Impact Syndrome”, in which a seemingly minor head impact may cause severe brain swelling and a potentially dire outcome
- Women are nearly 2 ½ times as likely to sustain a concussion than men
- The only type of impacts for which mouthguards would be beneficial in concussion prevention are blows to the chin, which cover only a small number of concussions incurred in soccer

Source: SoccerHeadInjuries.org

## 2006 NFHS Padded Headband Interpretation

**QUESTION:** Are padded headbands made of soft material legal for field players?

**RULING:** Yes, as long as the product does not contain any hard or unyielding material.

*Note: The change brings the NFHS into line with the other principal soccer rule makers. As a cautionary note, the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee has concluded that while padded headbands may assist in reducing the incidence of abrasions, the risk of concussions and other serious head injuries will remain a concern in the sport of soccer. A headband is not a substitute for an appropriate post-injury recuperative period.*

## 2006 Selected MIAA Soccer Rules

### 75.2 Sportsmanship:

- 75.2.8 Any team whose players/coaches receive collectively a total of more than four red cards during the regular season shall not qualify for the MIAA tournament.
- 75.2.9 After a combination of five red cards, subsequent violations will result in a team forfeiture of the next MIAA contest. These penalties will carry over to the next season should the violation occur in the final match of the season.
- 75.2.12 A coach who receives a third yellow card in a season shall be suspended from coaching for a period of two matches. A fourth yellow card in a season shall result in a one year suspension.
- 75.2.15 Any varsity team exceeding four red or thirteen yellow cards also must assign a contest manager other than a coach to away contests, as well as for all home matches (as required by Rule 75.2.21). This rule pertains to both boys' and girls' soccer and to matches played at all levels.
- 75.2.16 For purposes of obtaining tournament eligibility, no team may exceed four red or thirteen yellow cards during the regular season. Delay of game, encroachment, and deliberate (intentional) handball are infractions which will continue to be enforced and penalized. The impact of these infractions will be assessed and will be considered towards tournament ineligibility.
- 75.2.17 Any team whose players/coaches receive collectively five (5) yellow and/or red cards in a match will result in immediate termination of the match and result in forfeiture by the offending team.
- 75.2.18 Game officials must complete the infraction section of the MIAA score sheet for all infractions. Each school must forward to the MIAA all score sheets where infractions are reported. This rule applies to boys' and girls' teams at all levels. Infraction reports must be submitted by October 30<sup>th</sup>.

## Sportsmanship: Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions

- 49.1 The contest official who excludes a student or coach under the provision of this rule should immediately inform the coach of each team, official scorer (if any), and state the violation. If the game official fails to file his/her written report, the individual is nevertheless bound by the suspension. An official who fails to complete the form required as a result of an athlete or coach ejection shall be suspended from officiating any MIAA contest in that sport for at least two weeks or until the form is completed and received by the principal of the disqualified athlete or coach.
- 49.2 The athletic director in charge of the contest, or his/her designee, is responsible for: (1) having the official suspension forms available for game officials, and (2) sending copies to the principal of each school involved, the athletic director of each school involved, and the executive director of the MIAA. Contest official(s) should complete the forms before leaving the site of the contest.

## Soccer Mouth Guard Rule 75.1.5 and Interpretation

- All players shall wear a solid color (not clear) mouth guard that must cover all molars as well as front teeth.
- Mouth guards must be worn in all practices and competitions.
- Mouth guards are required of all participants at all levels of interscholastic competition (Freshman, Junior Varsity, Varsity), both boys and girls.
- Coaches shall assume the responsibility to make certain each player is wearing a mouth guard.
- In the event a player is participating without a mouth guard the game official shall remove the player from the match and cannot return until the next dead ball whistle. The removed player may re-enter during a dead ball after reporting to an official who shall be satisfied the player's mouth guard is in place. There will be no substitution for the removed player.
- If a player is found to (1) have cut down the mouth guard (2) hides the mouth guard in a part of the uniform (e.g. socks) or (3) discards the mouth guards on the field of play- **A YELLOW CARD WILL BE ADMINISTERED.**

## Soccer Time-Out Rule and Interpretation

- Each team may use one (1) time-out per half and each extended time period.
- Unused time-outs do not carry over to the next period of time.
- The time-out may be called by a head coach or field player by verbal or visual request to either field official.
- The total time of the time-out should not exceed one (1) minute unless both teams are ready to play prior to the sixty seconds. The official will blow the whistle at 45 seconds to warn the teams, and will beckon the teams onto the field at 60 seconds. If a team refuses to play after being instructed to do so, the game may be terminated.
- The calling official will blow the whistle, give "stop the clock" signal, and indicate which team has called the time-out. The time-out will begin when the table and coaches are notified of the time-out by the official. The official on the field will then keep the time.
- During the time-out period, teams should go to area of the field near their bench. Players must remain on the field, coaches can come onto the field, and bench personnel should remain on the bench.
- During the time-out period, each official should observe one team from about half the field.
- During the time-out period, both teams will be allowed unlimited substitution; however, during a penalty kick, the kicker must be a player who was in the game when the penalty kick was called. Substitutes must check in at the center table and be beckoned in. This can be done during the time-out period.
- When a caution is given, the player receiving the caution must remain out of the match until the clock has been restarted.
- At the conclusion of the time-out, the game will be restarted by the proper method of restart dictated prior to the time-out. The officials will check with each other, assess the readiness of the players, warn both teams play is about to commence, make eye contact with fellow official, and blow the whistle to continue the game. The clock will start when the ball is properly put back into play.
- **Which team is allowed to call a time-out?**  
**Either Team:** after a card (yellow or red), after a goal is scored, after an injury time-out and when a drop ball.  
**Only the Team Having the Offensive Restart:** penalty kick, corner kick, goal kick, throw in, direct free kick and indirect free kick

### Comments:

1. The intent of this rule is to allow coaches a time to plan, calm down, or talk to their team.
2. This time should never be used to confront officials.
3. Teams should never assume a time-out has been granted until a whistle and signal are given.
4. Teams should be very clear and emphatic about requesting their time-out.
5. Once a ball is properly put into play, a time-out request will be ignored.
6. The request of an excess time-out will be ignored by the official. A caution may be given if this persists or is done tactically against the other team.
7. Once asked for, a time-out cannot be retracted.
8. Consecutive time-outs can be awarded (this should not be done in an unsporting manner).

## Summary Rule Infraction Reporting System

Infraction <u>Code and Name</u>	<u>Total Cards</u>			<u>No. of Red</u>			<u>No. of Yellow</u>		
	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
1. Delay of game	59	49	49	0	0	1	59	49	48
2. Encroachment	36	30	21	0	1	1	36	29	20
3. Tactical handball foul	7	11	15	0	1	0	7	10	15
4. Equipment violation (including mouthguard)	31	15	19	0	1	0	31	14	19
5. Persistent Infringement	64	75	87	0	1	0	64	74	87
6. Dissent	148	163	171	0	10	6	148	153	165
7. Incidental Language	78	57	53	0	9	2	78	48	51
8. Holding, Shirt or Shorts	42	48	28	0	1	0	42	47	28
9. Kick, Trip, Hold, Push	272	328	286	0	9	4	272	319	282
10. Taunting	17	35	4	0	16	4	17	19	0
11. Subsequent Caution	9	12	5	0	12	4	9	0	1
12. Violent Conduct	45	40	25	45	12	14	0	28	11
13. Serious Foul Play	72	60	28	72	14	9	0	46	19
14. Insulting, Abusive Language	57	33	25	0	13	12	57	20	13
15. Fighting	17	35	23	17	35	21	0	0	2
16. Other	312	270	194	0	18	15	312	252	179
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>1261</b>	<b>1033</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>1132</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>940</b>

# November 2006/MIAA Soccer Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>First Practice</b> <b>August 24<sup>th</sup></b> <b>First Contest</b> <b>Sun. Sept.</b> <b>3rd</b>			1	2	3	4
			<b>Cutoff Date</b>	<b>Seeding</b>	<b>Sectional Games Begin</b>	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
						<b>Sectional Finals</b>
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<b>Sectional Finals</b>		<b>State Semi-Finals</b>	<b>State Semi-Finals</b>	<b>State Semi-Finals</b>		<b>State Finals</b>
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<b>State Finals</b> <i>(Rain/Snow Date)</i>				<b>Thanksgiving</b>		
26	27	28	29	30		