

NEWS RELEASE

High School Ice Hockey Rules Changes Focus on Eliminating Dangerous Hits



INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 8, 2013) — In continuing efforts to minimize the risk of injury in the sport, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Ice Hockey Rules Committee approved changes that will strengthen the language for dangerous hits as well as give game officials discretion for issuing a game disqualification when a player illegally hits another player from behind.

Rule 6-7-2 states, “No player shall push, charge, cross-check or body-check an opponent from behind into the boards or goal frame,” and a violation would result in a major and misconduct penalty or — if flagrant — game disqualification.

The checking-from-behind change was one of four major rules revisions approved by the committee at its April 22-23 meeting in Indianapolis. The changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“Checking from behind is the most dangerous act in the sport,” said Dan Schuster, NFHS assistant director of coach education and staff liaison to the Ice Hockey Rules Committee. “With all of its rules changes, the goal of the committee is to minimize the risk of injury.”

In another risk-minimization change, Rule 6-41-3 now states, “No player shall deliver a check to an unsuspecting and vulnerable player.” This addition was implemented to eliminate blind-side hits from the sport as well as to stress legal body-checking.

“This helps protect the defenseless player,” Schuster said. “The committee is striving to take these dangerous and unnecessary hits out of the game.”

In the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play, the committee elected to institute Rule 6-42-1 and 2, which prohibits the embellishment of acts in an attempt to draw a penalty through any exaggerated or deceitful actions or to attempt to worsen an already called penalty. The infraction for both is a minor penalty call.

“Some kids are putting themselves in position where it looks like they get checked from behind, when in fact, they are merely attempting to draw a major penalty,” Schuster said. “The committee wants to eliminate these acts from the game.”

6-41-3 (NEW)

ART. 3 - No player shall deliver a check to an unsuspecting and vulnerable player.
PENALTY: MINOR. If flagrant, MAJOR or GAME DISQUALIFICATION must be assessed.

Rationale: This is a risk minimization issue addressing late and unnecessary body contact. The goal is to eliminate "blind side" hits from the game and stress legal body checking

6-7-2

ART.2 - No player shall push, charge, cross-check or body check an opponent from behind into the boards or goal frame.
PENALTY: MAJOR and MISCONDUCT or if flagrant, GAME DISQUALIFICATION

Rationale: The infraction is no less serious, with an immediate tough penalty, but reinstates officials' discretion for issuing a game disqualification.

6-42-1,2 (NEW)

Rule 42 - Embellishment

ART.1... A player shall not attempt to draw a penalty through any exaggerated or deceitful action.

PENALTY—MINOR.

ART.2...A player who has been fouled shall not exaggerate the impact of the foul. An embellishment penalty may be called in conjunction with an opponent's penalty.

PENALTY—MINOR.

Rationale: In the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play, embellishment and "dives" are to be penalized. In order for the change of culture to occur in hockey, these acts need to be eliminated, as they are gimmicks to create a penalty situation.



MHSAA 2013-14 General Information

SUPPLEMENTAL GAME SUSPENSION REGULATIONS – As approved by the Representative Council, game suspension penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct (game DQ) for players and coaches will be as follows: **First game DQ – Two game suspension. Second game DQ – Four game suspension. Third game DQ – Coach or player is suspended for the remainder of the season. Suspensions for game DQ penalties will be served on the next days of competition.**

GOAL DIFFERENTIAL RULE - The goal differential rule (mercy rule) is in effect for all regular season and MHSAA Tournament games. The rule is as follows; a running clock shall be used when a team leads by **eight** or more goals during the first and second periods. After two periods of play or anytime during the third period, the game will be terminated when a team leads by **eight** goals. During the first and second periods, if the goal differential drops below **eight** goals, regular time resumes. The rule is not optional nor shall it be modified.

PRE-SEASON CONDITIONING – Prior to the first day of official practice, school sponsored conditioning programs are permitted if they are voluntary and not part of the team selection process. Sports specific equipment such as sticks and pucks are not allowed.

SCRIMMAGES– MHSAA schools sponsoring hockey are allowed one scrimmage, which must take place before a school's first game. Schools may not charge admission. If a timing device is used, normal time shall be altered. When schools have scrimmages, it is a scrimmage for both. It cannot be a scrimmage for one school and a game for the other.

JV PROGRAMS – If a JV hockey program is connected in any way with a member school, all MHSAA regulations apply. When a school affiliated JV team plays against a non-school team, National Federation playing rules and MHSAA adaptations must be followed and MHSAA registered officials used. There are no special provisions or exceptions to MHSAA regulations for JV teams when they are school affiliated; they simply follow all MHSAA regulations as do all other school JV teams in all sports. If a JV age program is not affiliated with a school, it may not use school uniforms, nickname, mascot, logo, school name or colors, school funds or have any connection to the school in any way. Non-school programs conducted outside the MHSAA season must be entirely separate from school affiliation.

OUT- OF- COACHING SEASON RESTRICTIONS – Outside the school season during the school year (from Monday the week of Aug. 15 through the Sunday after Memorial Day observed), school coaches are prohibited from providing coaching at any one time under one roof, facility or campus to more than four students in grades 7-12 of the district or cooperative program for which they coach (the limit is **three** students if the coaching involves practice or competition with students or others not enrolled in that school district such as fall or spring leagues). This applies only to the specific sport(s) coached by the coach, but it applies to all levels whether the coach is paid or volunteer, assistant coach and all other school coaches. When school coaches are in contact with students during the summer, they do so un-sponsored by the school where they coach. These activities must be entirely non-school programs:

During the summer prior to Aug. 1, except as limited during the summer “dead period” coaches are limited to 15 days when they can coach in competition students in grades 7-12 of their school district.

Summer “Dead Period”- Member schools shall designate a minimum of seven full consecutive calendar days during the summer when school is not in session and after the school’s last participation in any MHSAA Tournament sport and prior to August 1 when open gyms and conditioning programs, including weight training, are not permitted to be conducted on school premises or sponsored by the school at other facilities. None of the 15 days of competition shall occur during this dead period. The summer dead period applies to all levels of MHSAA member schools, coaches and students in grades 7-12. During the summer dead period, coaches may not provide coaching instruction to any students from the district in which they coach in any setting (including camps).

Pre-Season Down Time - Beginning 14 days prior to the first practice date for hockey, no open gyms which involve that sport or sport-specific camps or clinics shall occur at the school or be sponsored elsewhere by the school; and no competition (intra-squad or inter-squad) between groups that resemble school teams (more than three students of grades 7-12 of the district) may occur in that sport at any school facility or any other location with any of that school district’s personnel present.

ALL-STAR COMPETITION – Under MHSAA Regulations, a student may not participate at any time in any All-Star event in any sport under MHSAA jurisdiction. If an event calls itself “All-Star” or there is no open tryout, participation in the event is a violation. Coaches may not assist directly or indirectly in coaching of All-Star competition.

ROLLER HOCKEY – The MHSAA Limited Team Membership Rule prohibits athletes on a school team from participation in non-school competition in that sport during the MHSAA season. For purposes of this rule, roller hockey is considered ice hockey if the standard hockey stick and/or puck are used. Therefore students on the school team may not participate in roller hockey during the MHSAA season.

PERIOD LENGTH – *The MHSAA has adopted the 17 minute period for use in all MHSAA Tournament games.* For regular season games, a league or conference (or opposing schools in a non-conference game or regular season tournament) may adopt the use of a 17 minute period or use 15 minute periods. Such adoption should be done in advance of the season and communicated to all coaches and officials, not left for debate at the rink prior to a game.

MHSAA NECK GUARD REQUIREMENT- All players, including goalkeepers must wear a neck guard as required protective equipment.

1. The neck guard must be commercially manufactured and unaltered.
2. The neck guard may be either separate or part of an undergarment with a neck guard extension.
3. The neck guard must carry the BNQ certification mark.
4. Coaches are responsible for all players being equipped properly.
5. The penalty for a player that does not have a legal neck guard will be a team warning, the offending player sent from the ice (excluding goalies). Subsequent violations of this rule by any player shall result in a two minute minor penalty.

RULES GOVERNING MHSAA HOCKEY - MHSAA member schools are required to follow National Federation hockey playing rules for all levels of school competition, regardless of the opponent. When MHSAA member schools play a non-MHSAA hockey team, National Federation playing rules must be followed and MHSAA registered officials must be used. MHSAA registered officials who are hired and/or assigned by MHSAA member schools and/or an assignor should enforce National Federation rules whenever an MHSAA member school is involved at any level.



MHSAA Regular Season Overtime Options

Option #1 - For regular season single game, one sudden victory overtime period of a maximum 8 minutes in length. If no goals are scored in the OT period the game ends in a tie. By prior mutual agreement, a league or conference may elect to not play OT. If there is no prior league/conference agreement to not play OT, a game tied at the end of regulation shall have one sudden victory OT period, maximum 8 minutes in length. The default rule for all regular season single games is one 8-minute OT period. If there is no league or conference agreement (or in non-conference games a prior agreement) to **not** play OT, then one 8-minute OT period shall be played.

Option #2 - Regular season tournaments involving four or more teams played on days not followed by a school day (weekend tournament/holiday tournament), may use any number of overtime periods up to 8 minutes in length to determine a winner. MHSAA Tournament games will use 8 minute sudden victory overtime periods to determine a winner in all games.

Option #3 - A shootout may be conducted at the end of the regulation time in conference games by prior league/conference adoption or by mutual consent of both teams in non-conference games as follows:

- At the end of regulation, the head official will instruct the timekeeper to put two minutes on the clock and immediately start the clock.
- The other two officials will request a list of three shooters from each coach.
- The head official will meet at center ice with the captains to explain the protocol during the two-minute period.
- The goalkeepers remain in the same ends as the third period.
- The home team has the option of shooting first or defending first in round one, with the order reversed in round two. Teams will have their three shooters alternate shots in each round. The shootout ends if a team scores more times in their round than the opponent does in their round. (1-0, 2-1, 3-2) Each team has an equal number of chances to shoot before a winner is declared.
- If the shootout remains tied at the end of two rounds, each coach will select a different shooter, this time in a sudden death situation. Neither team may use a repeat shooter until each skater on the smallest team's roster has shot. For example, if Team A has 17 skaters but Team B has only 12 skaters, both may use repeat shooters on the 13th penalty shot but not before.
- No goalie substitutions are allowed once the shootout begins with the exception of injury.

Option #4 – By prior league or conference adoption or by prior mutual consent in non-conference games, after one scoreless overtime period of a maximum 8 minutes in length, the MHSAA Tournament OT procedure of 4 on 4 periods may be used to break a tie.

Note: If there is no league or conference adoption to use shootouts, to not play OT, or to use the MHSAA Tournament rule the default procedure for regular season games is one 8 minute OT sudden victory period.



MHSAA Tournament Overtime Procedures

For all MHSAA tournament games that finish regulation tied, sudden victory overtime will take place beginning with a maximum of four 8-minute periods, after which if the game is still tied a series of 4 on 4 sudden victory overtime periods will be played to determine a winner in accordance with the following procedures:

- At the end of regulation play, the two teams go to their locker room. The ice is to be resurfaced prior to the beginning of overtime play.
- The overtime period shall be eight minutes sudden victory.
- Do not change goals for first overtime period.
- If the game remains tied at the end of the first overtime period, there shall be a two-minute rest period (with teams remaining at their bench), change goals and continue with the second overtime.
- At the end of two eight-minute periods of overtime play, the ice shall be resurfaced. Teams may go to their locker rooms. This cycle repeats for an additional two overtime periods.
- At the end of four eight minute periods of overtime play the ice shall be resurfaced, each team shall return to their locker rooms.
- After four overtime periods if the score remains tied, teams will begin with additional eight minute periods of 4-on-4 hockey until a winner is determined. Carry-over penalties will apply, i.e. one team may be short two players if they have a carryover penalty. If the first 4 on 4 period starts with a team down two players, the two man advantage will remain until the first player comes out of the box. The previous cycle of rest periods and ice resurfacing will continue.