

Points of Emphasis

MOUTHGUARDS: The committee continues to support the proper use of intra-oral mouthguards. It is required that players wear an intra-oral mouthguard of yellow or any other highly visible color(s) during play. The mouthguard must cover all of either the upper or lower teeth with adequate thickness.

FLAGRANT MISCONDUCT: Unsportsmanlike conduct has no place in an athletic contest. Coaches and officials must maintain a professional demeanor and expect the same of all team members. With recent rules changes, officials have the necessary tools to address unsportsmanlike conduct swiftly to ensure that contests are played in a wholesome, competitive environment.

NFHS AUTHENTICATING MARK ON GAME BALLS: Rule 1-5 stipulates lacrosse ball specifications. In addition, a statement is included in this section indicating that game balls must include the NFHS Authenticating Mark. Coaches and officials are reminded to check all game balls prior to the beginning of each contest to make sure that they all have the NFHS Authenticating Mark. This program is in place to make sure that all game balls meet the specifications of the NFHS rules. It can only be effective if coaches and officials ensure compliance.

MODIFICATION OF RULES: From time to time state associations, coaches and officials would like to see a particular rule change, because they have a better rule, think the rule is outdated or a situation is not covered by the present rule. All of these situations are viable thoughts. What is not viable is some groups merely changing a rule for whatever reason. The rules are established by a committee that represents the nation as a whole. With that in mind, the NFHS must grant permission to experiment with a rule modification that changes the intent or spirit of the current rule. The procedure for requesting an experiment must be channeled through the state athletic/activities association, which has the proper forms for requesting an experiment. Experimenting must be requested in advance.

REMINDER: Only state associations may request of the NFHS permission to experiment.

Comments on the 2008 Rules Revisions

GOALKEEPERS CROSSE: This revision to rule 1-6-1 clarifies that the designated goalkeeper's Crosse must be used by the goalkeeper and that a properly equipped goalkeeper must be on the field at all times.

BALL STOPS: This revision to rule 1-6-2 removes the requirement to have a ball stop. Ball stops are often irrelevant with today's crosses. Playing with a crosse without a ball stop offers no advantage

JERSEY RULE: This revision to rule 1-9-1g stipulates that the jersey must completely cover the shoulder pads. This change will minimize risk for all participants and assist officials.

UNIFORM SHORTS: This revision to rule 1-9-1h stipulates that all players on the same team wear uniform shorts of the same dominant color. As with violations of the jersey rule, the penalty for violations of this rule shall be assessed prior to the start of game.

REQUIRED NUMBER OF PLAYERS TO BEGIN A GAME: This revision to rule 2-1-1 stipulates that a team must have 10 players to begin a game. This change will minimize risk for participants and bring the sport of boys lacrosse in line with other NFHS rule codes.

POSSESSION AFTER A SHOT: These two revisions to rule 4-6-3c clarify: 1) that the crosse is not considered to be a part of a player's body when determining who is closest to the ball when a shot goes out-of-bounds. The hand on the crosse is considered part of the player's body but not the crosse. 2) that, for the purpose of determining which player is nearest to the ball on a shot that goes out-of-bounds, the ball is considered out-of-bounds when it crosses the plane of the endline or sideline and not when it touches something or someone out-of-bounds.

ILLEGAL UNIFORM PROCEDURE: With the publication of the 2008 rule book, the revised jersey rule, 1-9-1g, which was originally adopted in 2003, is implemented. With the implementation of this rule, the committee adopted a revision to rule 6-5-3 which specifies a defined procedure to be followed should a team wear jerseys that do not comply with this rule. All players shall be properly attired in legal uniforms prior to the beginning of the contest.

OFFENSIVE STALLING WARNING: This revision to rule 6-10-2a specifies that an offensive stalling warning, which occurs prior to the last two minutes of the game, remains in effect until a goal is scored or until the defensive team gains possession of the ball.