

Interscholastic



Notes and Updates

Eighth Graders and High School Practices—Schools are reminded that eighth grade student/athletes are not permitted to practice with high school teams. This is true for the individual sports (wrestling, indoor track, etc.) as well as team sports (basketball, ice hockey, etc.). The only exception to this policy is for schools with enrollment fewer than 60 boys or 60 girls. In these schools, eighth graders may practice and play with the high school team in the team sports of field hockey, football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, ice hockey, baseball, softball, and lacrosse.

Eligibility Committee—The final meeting of the MPA Eligibility Committee is scheduled for March 8, 2016.

Fundraising—A reminder that the use of athletes in any fundraising activity outside of the sport season is a violation of the Sport Season Policy. Boosters, along with coaches, may participate in fundraisers throughout the school year.

Athletes Competing As Cooperative Individuals—Schools are reminded that a minimal number of individuals may compete with another school in the sports of tennis and outdoor track. Principals of both the participating schools must approve the arrangement by filing the Cooperative Individual Form with the Maine Principals' Association's executive director prior to the start of the season. The school where the individual is enrolled (sending school) is responsible for registering the athlete's eligibility on the appropriate online form. The sending school is also responsible for putting the receiving school's coach on its coaches' eligibility list. The sending school is not required to submit a schedule.

The school receiving the individual on its team is responsible for filing the team's

schedule. Individuals must practice and attend meets/matches with their cooperative teams.

Ice Hockey—All ice hockey schools hosting a varsity contest must have the athletic director, administrator, or designee in attendance at all home ice hockey games. The school's representative must notify the arena management and officials who the school's representative is prior to the contest.

New England Championship Dates—Indoor Track, February 28, 2016, Reggie Lewis Center, Boston, MA; Wrestling, February 5-6, 2016, North Andover High School, North Andover, MA; and Cheerleading, March 19, 2016, Lawrence High School, Lawrence, MA.

New England Indoor Track Championships—Please note that the date of the New England Indoor Track Meet scheduled at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston is scheduled for Sunday, February 28, 2016. The Maine athletes that qualify for the meet have been granted permission to participate in this Sunday competition.

2016 Ski Dates—The dates and sites for the 2016 ski championships have now been established:

Class A Alpine—Tuesday, February 16 and Wednesday, February 17, Mt. Abram Ski Resort, Greenwood;

Class A Nordic—Thursday, February 18 and Friday, February 19, Titcomb Mountain, Fryeburg;

Class B Alpine—Tuesday, February 16 and Wednesday, February 17, Black Mountain, Rumford;

Class B Nordic—Thursday, February 18 and Friday, February 19, Sugarloaf Nordic, Carrabassett Valley; and

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MPA Hall of Excellence

Nominations are currently being accepted for the 2016 class of inductees into the *MPA Hall of Excellence*. If you have had a student, an athlete, a coach, or an administrator that has had a significant impact on school based activities in Maine, please consider nominating that individual. Also, consider outstanding officials, adjudicators, media, or health care providers that may have had a similar type of impact.

Click [HERE](#) to access the *MPA Hall of Excellence* materials.

7th Annual Larry LaBrie Award

The MPA is calling for nominations for this prestigious award. The deadline has been extended to January 11, 2016. Last year's recipients were Gerald Hutchinson, Penobscot Valley High School, Howland; Ken Roberts, Falmouth; and Harold Wilson, Medomak Valley High School, Waldoboro.

Please contact Dick Durost for further information.

Please click [here](#) for the nomination form.

Sportsmanship Voting

The following dates have been established for voting for sportsmanship this winter. Schools are encouraged to involve student athletes in the process of determining the recipients of their sportsmanship vote.

Cheering—1/25 - 1/29

Wrestling—2/1 - 2/8

Girls' Ice Hockey—2/1 - 2/8

Indoor Track—2/8 - 2/12

Basketball—2/8 - 2/12

Skiing—2/8 - 2/12

Swim—2/8 - 2/12

Boys' Ice Hockey—2/19 - 2/25

Maine Drama Festival 2016

Regional Site Assignments

As of 12/21/15

MDI

Class A

Class B

Mt Desert
Washington Academy
Summer
George Stevens
Shead
Bucksport
Searsport
Deer Isle- Stonington
Ellsworth

Foxcroft Academy

Piscataquis
Easton
Fort Kent
Wisdom
Old Town

Windham

Class A

Windham
Fryeburg
Oxford Hills
Morse
Leavitt

Class B

Freeport
Oak Hill
Monmouth
Poland

Oceanside

Class A

Oceanside
Medomak Valley
Camden Hills
Belfast

Class B

Boothbay
North Haven
Lincoln Academy
Vinalhaven
Wiscasset

Westbrook

Class A

Westbrook
Edward Little
Gray-NG
Lewiston

Class B

Cheverus
Yarmouth
Casco Bay
Lisbon
Maine Coast Waldorf

Skowhegan

Class A

Skowhegan
Erskine
Mount Blue
Waterville

Class B

Winthrop
Carrabec
Spruce Mountain
Madison
MCI

Stearns

Class A

Class B

Stearns/Schenck
Central
Lee Academy

* Subject to Change

Class B Indoor Track Meet—Due to a scheduling conflict the date of the Class B Indoor Track Championship meet at Bates College has been moved from Monday, February 15 to Saturday, February 13, 2016. The Class A meet at The University of Southern Maine will be held on Monday, February 15, 2016. Both meets will begin at 12:00pm.

Two Policy Interpretations

High School/Middle School Scrimmages—A high school that has difficulty filling a subvarsity schedule may apply to the MPA office for a waiver that would allow the school to schedule a scrimmage with the middle school in their district in order to fill the subvarsity schedule. This waiver is not intended to give those talented middle school teams an opportunity to play better competition.

Sport Season Policy—It is now acceptable for coaches to be present at public facilities where athletes may also be present. Coaches may not be working with or coaching the athletes at these facilities.

Notes and Updates . . . (Continued from page 1)

Class C Nordic— Thursday, February 18 and Friday, February 19, Black Mountain, Rumford.

Swim Meet Results—All regular season results need to be e-mailed to the statistician. Send both boys' and girls' results to Ritchie Palmer via e-mail (sunseekr@myfairpoint.net). The HY-TEK Meet Manager is required for reporting all regular season meet results. The host team will be responsible for e-mailing a Meet Manager back-up to the statistician within 72 hours of the meet.

Sunday Competitions—A reminder that the MPA policy prohibits the scheduling of any countable contest on Sunday. The scheduling of practices on Sunday is a local decision.

Updating Bulletins—Athletic administrators and coaches should be aware that athletic bulletins may be updated right up to the championships of each sport season.

NCAA Eligibility Requirement

With more and more schools moving to a standards-based system of technology, learning, promotion, and graduation it is crucial that schools have an understanding of the NCAA Eligibility Requirements for their student athletes. While schools continue to develop personalized-learning pathways that may include learning experiences outside of the traditional classroom it is of utmost importance that the 10 "Core Courses" must be completed prior to the start of the 7th semester. These courses must appear on the school's list of NCAA Courses on the NCAA Eligibility Center website (www.eligibilitycenter.org).

Click [HERE](#) for a quick reference for NCAA Eligibility requirements.

Basketball Practices at Regional Sites

No practice may occur at the tournament sites during the basketball season where the team will be competing. For the state final championship games, all visiting teams will be permitted the opportunity to have one practice.

Private School Policy

At the recent Interscholastic Business Meeting, the membership approved the following Proposed By-Law Changes: Article II - Eligibility Rules; Section 2 - Student Eligibility; and Sub-Section B5. "A student fully enrolled in an MDOE recognized instruction program in a private school or in an MDOE approved instruction program in a private school with 60 or fewer students combined in grades 9-12 (but only if the approved private school does not offer the same activity) is eligible to participate in co-curricular, interscholastic, and extracurricular activities at the local public high school to which the student would otherwise attend based on the student's and parent/guardian's legal residency. The principal of the public high school may withhold approval of participation under certain circumstances such as lack of capacity. The student must agree to meet established behavioral, disciplinary, and other rules applicable to regularly enrolled students."

Baseball/Softball Arm Conditioning

At the recent Interscholastic Business Meeting, the membership approved a revision to the week of conditioning for pitchers and catchers in both baseball and softball. Schools may now determine the number of athletes that will participate in the conditioning program. This week of arm conditioning is not intended to be an additional week of preseason practice. Below is a list that includes, but may not be limited to, activities that are prohibited during the week: No bats, including fungo bats; No defensive drills related to positional play; No pick off drills; No blocking drills; No base coverage drills; No footwork drills, other than proper mechanics for pitchers and catchers; No live stand-in batters; and No simulations.

Class AA Boys' and Girls' Basketball

Please note that the "quarterfinal" games will be played!

SOUTH ~ Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Girls AA @ Portland Expo

6:00 p.m. - #4 vs #5 / 7:30 p.m. - #3 vs #6

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Boys AA @ Portland Expo

6:00 p.m. - #4 vs #5 / 8:30 p.m. - #3 vs #6

NORTH ~ Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Girls AA @ Augusta Civic Center

5:30 p.m. - #4 vs #5 / 7:00 p.m. - #3 vs #6

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Boys AA @ Augusta Civic Center

5:30 p.m. - #4 vs #5 / 7:00 p.m. - #3 vs #6

The University of Maine announces the start of a new master's cohort for fall 2016

Educational Leadership Master's Cohort

The Educational Leadership master's cohort provides:

- Instruction that values working professionals
- Hybrid courses combining face-to-face meetings on evenings and weekends, as well as online components
- Career-centered learning that bridges theory and practice
- A focus on school leadership for all educators
- Completion in as little as three years

For more information, contact JoEllen Carr,
207.581.2455; joellen.carr@umit.maine.edu



umaine.edu/graduate/apply

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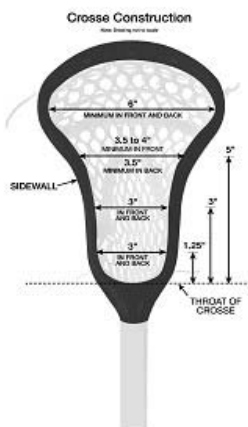


Boys Lacrosse Rules Changes – 2016

1-6-1: ART. 1 ... CROSSE DIMENSIONS SECTION 6 CROSSE DIMENSIONS

The crosse shall be an overall fixed length of either 40 to 42 inches (short crosse) or 52 to 72 inches (long crosse), except for the goalkeeper’s crosse, which may be 40 to 72 inches long. The circumference of the crosse handle shall be no more than 3½ inches. The head of the crosse at its widest point shall measure between 6½ and 10 inches, inside measurement, at the top and the bottom of the wall. (See Figure 3) There shall be one crosse 10 to 12 inches, inside measurement at its widest point, at the top and bottom of the wall. This crosse shall be used by the required designated goalkeeper. The walls of any crosse shall not be more than 2 inches high. EXCEPTION: The gut wall.

Beginning in 2018, minimum stick specifications shall be as follows:



The measurements for the crosse shall include:

Measurement from throat (inches): Minimum distance between narrowest point of head (inches)

1.25	3 (all measurements)
3.0	3 (all measurements)
5.0	3.5 to 4 on front; 3.5 on back
Widest point	6 (all measurements)

NOTE: From the 1.25-inch measurement to the widest point of the crosse, the distance between the sidewalls of the crosse must be at least 3 inches.

Rationale: The committee defined crosse dimensions and specifications at different locations to address issues with the ball being stuck in the crosse. This change in equipment will begin in 2018 to allow for phased implementation.

1-8: CROSSE PROHIBITIONS

No player shall use a crosse that does not meet the specifications of Sections 6 and 7. Furthermore, crosses in which the pocket has sagged to such a depth that it has become difficult for an opponent to dislodge the ball and crosses in which the construction or stringing at the bottom is designed to withhold

the ball from play also are prohibited. Additionally, no player may use a crosse that has stringing that retards the normal and free dislodgment of the ball by an opponent. The pocket shall be deemed to have sagged too deeply if the top surface of a lacrosse ball, when placed therein, is below the bottom edge of the side wall (this prohibition does not apply to the goalkeeper’s crosse). A crosse that has been altered in such a way as to give an advantage to an individual is illegal. Adjustable-length handles are illegal. Handles that have been altered in any fashion other than taping or adding another covering designed to improve the grip are illegal. The use of pull strings to alter the depth of the pocket is illegal. No more than one sidewall string on each side is allowed. A broken crosse is considered as no crosse.

Rationale: The committee expanded the crosse prohibitions. Specifically, the changes are intended to inhibit the use of pull strings and sidewall strings to lodge the ball in the crosse.

4-3-3 (NEW): ART. 3 ... FACING OFF

The official conducting the faceoff will start the procedure by holding the ball and bringing the players together.

a. The official shall indicate to the players the spot on which the faceoff will take place and instruct the players to prepare for the faceoff by saying “down.”

b. Once the players are down they are to move into their faceoff position as quickly as possible. Players may kneel or stand as they get into position for the faceoff.

c. The crosses and gloves shall rest on the ground along the center line, parallel to each other up to, but not touching, the center line.

d. The official shall make certain that the reverse surfaces of the crosses match evenly and are perpendicular to the ground. Each player must have both hands wrapped around the handle of his own crosse, touching the ground. The right hand may not touch any part of the head of the crosse. The player’s feet may not touch his crosse. Both hands and feet of each player must be to the left of the throat of his crosse. Each player must be positioned so his entire body is to the left of the throat of his crosse. It is legal to lean over the center line.

e. If the players are not positioned properly, the official may adjust the players’ positioning (including crosses) to ensure the faceoff will be conducted fairly for both players.

f. Once the players are in the proper position, the official shall place the ball on the ground, in between the head of each crosse, paying close attention to placing the ball in the middle of the head of each crosse.

g. Once the official is satisfied with the placement of the ball and the positioning of the players’ crosses, he shall instruct the players to remain motionless by saying “Set.” The official will still have his hand on or near the ball or crosses when

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Boys Lacrosse Rules Changes - 2016... (Continued from page 4)

the command “Set” is given. For hearing-impaired players, a reasonable accommodation for the “set” command and whistle sound will be provided.

h. After the “Set” command, the official shall back out and blow the whistle when clear of the scrimmage area. The official does not have to be stationary, and may still be moving backwards, when he blows the whistle to start play. The whistle cadence will vary with every faceoff.

i. A violation will be called if a player picks up and carries the ball on the back of his stick. It is legal to clamp the ball with the back of the stick, but it must be moved, raked or directed immediately. Immediately is defined as within one step.

j. A player may not lie on the ball or trap it with his crosse longer than necessary for him to control the ball and pick it up with one continuous motion, or withhold the ball from play in any other manner.

k. It is illegal to kick, step on, or place any other body part to his crosse or the crosse of the opponent. It is illegal for a faceoff player to use his crosse to hold or pin down a player’s crosse.

l. It is illegal for a player to use his hand or fingers to play the ball. This shall be enforced immediately as an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. Inadvertent touching of the ball when the hand is grasping the stick should not be called as an unsportsmanlike conduct foul.

m. It is illegal for a player to grab an opponent’s crosse with the open hand or fingers. This shall be enforced immediately as an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

n. A single-wrap of tape must be applied to the handle of the crosse for any player taking a face-off. The tape is to begin (but not be touching) the plastic at the throat of the crosse and continuing six inches down the handle. Tape must be of contrasting color to the head, gloves, and shaft.

(Note was deleted because it was repeated in l)

Rationale: By deleting ART. 3 through ART. 6 and adding this revised 4-3-3, the committee improved the process of the face off by clarifying the rules to create more consistent and fair play.

4-14-3 (NEW): ART. 3... Once the ball has been successfully advanced into the goal area, a team is provided the opportunity to run its offense in its offensive half of the field. If the offensive team carries, passes or propels the ball to its defensive half of the field and the offensive team was last in possession, and last touched the ball (except on shot), the result will be an immediate a turnover or play-on. If the ball does not touch or go over the centerline, no infraction has occurred. Players may legally bat the ball to keep it in the offensive half of the field, but if it is possessed and their feet are in the defensive half, it shall be a turnover.

Rationale: The committee added a new “over and back” rule to keep the ball in play in the offensive half of the field once possession has been established in the goal area.

Girls Lacrosse Rules Changes – 2016

Rule 1, Section 9: Two small circles/dots shall be added to the field marking and placed five yards below the goal line in line with the 8-meter mark on goal line extended. These marks will designate the spot for the ball to be put in play when a foul occurs in the critical scoring area below the goal line.

Rule 2, Section 5: The ball may be lime green in addition to yellow or bright orange in color.

Rule 2, Section 8: Mouthpieces shall be any color other than clear or white and must not have graphics of white teeth. This adjustment makes it easier to determine if a player is properly wearing a mouthpiece.

Rule 2, Section 9: Eyewear used in 2016 may meet the ASTM standard of F803 or F3077. The new ASTM standard (F3077) shall be in effect on January 1, 2017.

Rule 2, Section 10: Effective January 1, 2017, the only optional headgear allowed for use must meet the new ASTM standard, F31317.

Rule 2, Section 14: Effective January 1, 2018, home team jerseys shall be light in color and visitor jerseys must be dark in color.

Rule 2, Section 16: Effective January 1, 2018, visible undergarments (long or short sleeve) must correspond to the team’s predominate jersey color, or be light in color with a light jersey and dark in color with a dark jersey.

Rule 2, Section 17: Eye black must be one solid stroke with no logos/numbers/letters and shall not extend further than the width of the eye socket or below the cheekbone.

Rule 3, Section 10: Beginning January 1, 2017, the game must be officiated by at least two certified officials. Three officials are recommended.

Rule 4, Section 7: Overtime play shall be sudden victory (first goal ends the game).

Rule 4, Section 7: In overtime, there shall be no substitutions during the changing of ends.

Rule 5, Section 1 and Rule 5, Section 19: The goalkeeper must remain below the restraining line on the draw.

Rule 5, Section 2 and Rule 5, Section 19: The goalkeeper may not draw, shoot, or score for her own team.

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Girls Lacrosse Rules Changes - 2016... (Continued from page 5)

Rule 5, Section 20: The throw shall be eliminated and replaced by a procedure of alternate possession. The winner of the coin toss shall have the option of choosing ends of the field or having the first possession that occurs.

Rule 5, Section 23: The penalty administration for an illegal player discovered after a goal and before play is restarted shall be **at the center**.

Rule 5, Section 28: Stick check requests must include the number of the player whose stick is to be checked.

Rule 6, Section 1: A new foul for dangerous contact has been added. Dangerous contact shall be any action that thrusts or shoves any player, with or without the ball, who is in a defenseless position. This includes blind side, head down, or from behind.

Rule 6, Section 1j: The free position for a three seconds violation will be the spot of the ball.

Rule 7, Section 28: The delay of game progression has changed. The first violation remains the same. On the next delay of game, the official will show a green and yellow card to the offending player and award the appropriate penalty (major foul). The offending player must leave the field for two minutes of elapsed playing time. No substitute is allowed. Any subsequent delay of game calls will result in a yellow card for misconduct.

Rule 7, Section 31: On goalkeeper misconduct, if a second goalkeeper is dressed, she must enter the game. A field player may not substitute for the goalkeeper.

Rule 8, Definition of Terms: The Critical Scoring Area shall be defined by the 12-meter fan in front of the goal and the area behind the goal between the 12-meter marks at the goal line extended and extending to the end line.

Swimming and Diving Rules Changes - 2015-16

3-3-5, 6: The prohibition of wearing jewelry has been removed from the rules for swimming and diving competition. As in previous years, the wearing of a medical alert with the alert visible continues and is encouraged for the purposes of risk minimization.

Rationale: The prohibition of jewelry is not necessary in swimming and diving. The wearing of jewelry ordinarily presents little risk of injury to either the competitor or opponents. Elimination of the rule allows officials to focus on meet administration directly related to competition. Coaches continue to have the obligation to see that competitors are properly equipped.

4-1-7: Requires swimming and diving officials dress in the same uniform attire as approved by the state association and no longer considers white as the default uniform.

Rationale: Due to the many variations in the officials uniform, it is more practical that the state association determine the appropriate swimming and diving uniform for officials.

4-3-1a, b: The starter may designate another individual to sound a device for the lead swimmer during the 500-yard/400-meter freestyle when the lead swimmer has two lengths plus 5 yards remaining in the race.

Rationale: During the 500-yard/400-meter freestyle event, the starter may have multiple tasks occurring at the same time. The starter may designate another individual to sound a device for the lead swimmer during the 500-yard/400-meter freestyle with two lengths plus 5 yards remaining to swim in the race.

9-6-1: The judging panel in diving may or may not include the diving referee.

Rationale: Clarifies the diving referee may be one of the judges on the panel or a separate official.

Wrestling Rules Changes 2015-16

3-1-4a (NEW): The duties of the referee before a dual meet begins each day were further clarified. The referee shall perform the skin checks or verify that the designated, on-site meet appropriate health-care professional has performed the skin checks.

3-1-5 (NEW): The duties of the referee before a tournament begins each day were expanded. Specifically, the referee shall perform the skin checks or verify that the designated, on-site

meet appropriate health-care professional has performed the skin checks.

10-2-9a (NEW): A new criterion was added for wrestler advancement in a bracket that emphasizes sportsmanship during competition.

Track and Field Rules Changes – 2016

3-6-4 New, 3-19-3: Changes the responsibility of checking the starting blocks from the implement inspector to the head starter.

Rationale: Placing the responsibility of inspecting all starting blocks is more appropriate with the starter, who has this expertise, rather than with the implement inspector who has expertise with throwing implements.

3-10-7 New: Head event judges may use white and red flags to signal fair or foul for a field event trial.

Rationale: The use of flags will assist with efficient administration of the field events. Communication between officials, coaches and fans is enhanced by the visual signal, similar to the use of flags by umpires.

6-1-1 thru 5, 6-2-9: Expands and clarifies definitions of trial/attempt, flight, round, pass, foul and what determines the initiation of purposeful action of completing the specific throwing event.

Rationale: Expands the definitions for throwing events for greater clarity in application of the throwing rules and updates to accepted current sport terminology.

6-5-2 New: Establishes a maximum diameter for the boys and girls indoor shot puts to account for the synthetic cover.

Rationale: To account for the thickness of the synthetic covering of an indoor shot, which is not present on the outdoor implement, a maximum diameter is needed in the specifications for the implement.

6-6-1: The javelin shall be constructed of metal or other suitable material, which could be wood or newer materials, with a metal point or rubber tip.

Rationale: Updates the current javelin specifications by eliminating reference to wood, which is no longer a commonly used material. The change will permit use of newer materials, such as carbon fiber, in the construction of the javelin.

7-1-1 thru 7, 7-2-1: Expands and clarifies definitions of trial/attempt, flight, round, pass, foul and what determines the initiation of purposeful action of completing the specific jumping event.

Rationale: Expands the definitions for jumping events for greater clarity in application of the jumping rules and updates to accepted current sport terminology.

7-6-3: Updates size of takeoff board to accepted sport specifications by recommending it be 8 inches wide, but permits up to 24 inches.

Rationale: Updates to accepted current sport equipment specifications for the takeoff board while not resulting in existing boards becoming non-compliant.

7-2-2, 6-2-5: Clarifies language regarding when the order of competition may be changed for consistency in all field events and removes duplicate language.

Rationale: Removes duplicate language contained elsewhere in existing rules and adds language regarding when the order of competition may be changed for consistency in all field event rules.

The University of Maine is accepting doctoral students for a new Ph.D. cohort starting fall 2016

Educational Leadership Ph.D. Cohort

The Educational Leadership Ph.D. cohort provides:

- An opportunity for experienced educational leaders to grow professionally and academically
- A focus on school leadership for all educators
- Coursework in a collaborative educational environment where Ph.D. students in educational leadership learn and share classes with Ph.D. students in literacy education and prevention and intervention studies
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For more information, contact JoEllen Carr, 207.581.2455; joellen.carr@umit.maine.edu

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Cheering Coaches' Responsibilities

NOTE: The following guidelines have been developed and reviewed to serve as a useful reminder of basic procedures for coaching cheering teams. No such review is a substitute, however, for an ongoing program of education about coaching and safety techniques, or for ongoing attention to the abilities and physical condition of each team member.

1. Spirit teams should be placed under the direction of a knowledgeable coach.
2. The coach should be knowledgeable in first aid techniques and emergency procedures. Coaches must develop an emergency plan for dealing with injuries at practice, games, performances, and competitions. Participants must be made aware of these procedures.
3. Coaches should remain up-to-date on all new techniques, progressions and safety regulations by frequently attending conferences, clinics and rules meetings. The coach should also belong to appropriate professional spirit organizations.
4. Placement of spirit teams at athletic events:
 - a. Spirit coaches must coordinate the placement of the spirit team with the school administrator in charge.
 - b. Whenever possible, spirit teams should be at least 3-4 feet from any boundary line. When teams cheer:
 - (1) At a wrestling match, they should be ten feet from the edge of the wrestling mat unless the facility does not permit otherwise.
 - (2) At a volleyball match, they should not stand in any playable area unless the facility does not permit otherwise.
 - (3) Along the end line at a basketball game, they must not stand within the area of the free throw lane extended. (See 2-1-12)
 - c. Spirit teams should be aware of actions occurring within the contest and be prepared to move as play advances. They should be aware of the movement of game officials and not interfere with their game responsibilities.
 - d. No actions by the spirit team should be made to purposely distract the players.
5. Rules and eligibility requirements should be shared with every team member.
6. Coaches should conduct pre- and post-season meetings with parents.
7. The coach or other school approved adult representative must be in attendance and accessible at all practices, games, performances, competitions and other spirit activities.
8. The coach should establish a good line of communication with school administrators, the athletic director, coaches and the band director.
9. All spirit activities should be held in a location suitable for spirit teams, free of obstructions, and away from excessive noise or distractions.
10. Warm up and stretching should precede all spirit team performance activities. Suggestions for stunting warm ups at a basketball game when an alternate area is not available may include:
 - a. Arrive early to warm up stunts before player warm ups begin.
 - b. The coach could enlist others to stand between player warm up and stunting warm ups on the sidelines to deflect balls or individuals.
 - c. Warm up stunts when players return to dressing room after their warm ups.
 - d. Stunting might have to be delayed until after halftime of the first game if halftime is the first time an appropriate warm up area is available.
11. Coaches should recognize a team's particular ability level and limit its activities accordingly. "Ability level" refers to the team's talents as a whole, and to individuals who should not be pressed to perform specific activities nor be limited by the ability level of the team.
12. Coaches should not permit loose, slick, baggy clothes, nylon hose/tights which are not appropriate for the specific activity in which they are participating.
13. Coaches and participants should be trained in proper spotting techniques.
14. Proper progression, spotting techniques and when appropriate, matting should be used until stunts are mastered.
15. The coach should approve all cheers, chants, posters, signs, music, etc., and ensure good sportsmanship. All team activities should be approved by the coach.
16. The coach should inform the team that all new skills must first be reviewed and approved by the coach prior to performing them.
17. Coaches should be aware of how the demands placed on a spirit team member might impact the student athlete's academic achievement.
18. Travel arrangements for participants should be approved by the coach and/or the school administration.
19. When a team member is required to wear an insulin pump/pack or similar device during team activities, it shall be the responsibility of the coach to obtain competent medical advice concerning the protection and safety of that individual and other team members with whom she/he may be performing or stunting.

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Cheering Coaches' Responsibilities ... (Continued from page 8)

Organizing an Effective Practice Schedule

All safety rules must be adhered to at every spirit activity including practice. A key element in any spirit program is effective use of practice time in preparation for games, pep rallies and other team appearances.

1. The coach or other school-approved adult representative must be in attendance and accessible at all practices, games, performances, competitions and other spirit activities.
2. Team members must realize that practice is just that - a time for the team to practice and prepare for upcoming events.
3. When appropriate, begin practices by critiquing the last performance and/or game situation. Discuss things that need improvement, were successful or need to be eliminated.
4. A portion of most sessions will include perfection of material for upcoming events. This segment of the practice schedule may be spent reviewing all of the traditional material that the team uses at every game (cheers, chants, dances and especially the material that has an incorporation of any jumps, tumbling, stunts and pyramids). Some of this time may be used to work on new material for crowd involvement.
5. The last segment of practice time might focus on improving individual skills, tumbling, dance, or in whatever area the team needs improvement.

Strength and Conditioning

The following is a recommended list of activities that will help participants reach their athletic potential for the demands of the activity.

WARM UP - Warm up should include general activities that warm the body, and are independent of specific skills. Walking, jogging and stretching are examples of warm up activities. A thorough stretching program should follow the general warm up. The stretch should be an organized routine covering all parts of the body.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES - The squad should include specific activities during practice which include flexibility, endurance and muscle strengthening. Flexibility exercises incorporated in the practice are used to decrease the possibilities of pulled muscles. Endurance training is essential for increasing the efficiency and capacity of the cardiopulmonary system to maintain a high level of performance throughout spirit activities. Participants who incorporate exercises for muscle strengthening in their practices will be less injury prone.

As spirit activities develop more and more into a physical and athletic activity, the participants need to develop as well. As the physical strength of the team members increase, so too must the technical skills of the coach. These are the directions in which the spirit program should be moving.

For questions or concerns regarding specific health and/or

medical/orthopedic issues, please refer to the most recent edition of the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

Spotting

The active spotter is an integral part of the safety of a program. The spotter is a person who assists in the building of, or dismounting from, a partner stunt or pyramid. The primary responsibility of a spotter is to watch for safety hazards and be in a position to minimize the potential of injury with special emphasis on the head, neck and shoulder areas. Spotters shall not provide primary support for others in the performance of a stunt.

Characteristics of an Effective Spotter

1. CONSTANT ATTENTION
 - Concentrates on the top person
 - Has a positive attitude of responsibility
2. KNOWLEDGE
 - Understands the capabilities of team members
 - Recognizes positioning for effective safety

Safety Tips for Spotters

1. Primarily focus on the top person's head.
2. Reach upward to assist the descent of the top person keeping the top person's weight as near the spotter as possible.
3. Listen for cues from the designated person.
4. It is better to come down safely from a poorly built stunt than to force it to stay up.

Progressions

As with any athletic activity, it is the coach's responsibility to ensure that team members demonstrate proficiency with lower level skills before progressing to more advanced skill. Just as the prudent football, field hockey or volleyball coach does not allow a player to take the field without adequate skills and preparation, the prudent spirit coach will not allow his/her participants to perform skills for which they are not adequately trained.

These progressions are general in nature, and do not attempt to list every skill. All spirit stunts should be learned according to accepted progressions which means from lower to higher and from easy to more complex.

Partner Stunt Progression

1. Step-up drills
2. Double-base thigh stand
3. Double-base shoulder stand
4. Single-base shoulder stand
5. Extension prep, step-off dismount
6. Cradle drills
7. Extension prep, cradle dismount
8. Press extension, return to shoulders, cradle dismount
9. Press extension, cradle dismount
10. Full extension Step-up Liberty
11. Ground-up Liberty
12. Braced liberty tick-tock

(Continued on Page 10)

The Case for High School Activities

With schools continuing to struggle to maintain their co-curricular offerings, the following article was released by the NFHS as part of their National High School Activities Month and provides school administrators with some important facts as they continue to promote these activities within their schools.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the Maine Principals' Association believe that interscholastic sports and performing arts activities promote citizenship and sportsmanship to students that participate in these activities. Activity programs instill a sense of pride in community, teach lifelong lessons of teamwork and self-discipline and facilitate the physical and emotional development of today's youth.

At a cost of only one to three percent of an overall school's budget, high school activity programs are one of the best bargains around. It is in these vital programs, sports, music, speech, theatre, debate, where young people learn lifelong lessons that complement the academic lessons taught in the classroom. Below are a few points to help emphasize the benefits of offering a wide and diverse co-curricular program:

- **Activities support the academic mission of schools.** They are not a diversion but rather an extension of a good educational program. Students who participate in activity programs tend to have higher grade-point averages, better attendance records, lower dropout rates, and fewer discipline problems than students not involved in activities. Students who spend no time in co-curricular activities are 49% more likely to use drugs and 37% more likely to become teen parents than those that spend four hours a week in activities. Participation in co-curricular activities in high school appears to be one of the few interventions that benefit low-status, disadvantaged students, those less well served by traditional educational programs; and activity programs are one of the few contexts, outside of the

classroom, where adolescents regularly come into contact with adults to whom they are not related.

- **Activities are inherently educational.** Activity programs provide valuable lessons for practical situations—teamwork, sportsmanship, and hard work. Through participation in activity programs, students learn self-discipline, build self-confidence and develop skills to handle competitive situations. These are qualities that students need if they are to become responsible adults, productive citizens, and skilled professionals. Making diverse clubs and activities available to a wide range of students gives them the opportunity to experience multiple competencies that facilitates attachment to school; activity participation is linked to affiliation with peers who are academically focused. Adolescents can benefit from a synergistic system when given the opportunity to participate in diverse activities. Students that participate in the arts nine or more hours a week are more likely to be recognized for academic achievement, win a school attendance award, participate in a science and math fair and win an award for writing. They are also three times more likely to be elected to a class office and students with coursework/experience in music performance and music appreciation score significantly higher on the SAT.

- **Activities foster success in later life.** Participation in high school activities is often a predictor of later success in college, in a career, and becoming a contributing healthy, member of society. It was found that 18-25 year olds who participate in sports activities while in high school are more likely to be engaged in volunteering, voting, feeling comfortable speaking in public settings and watching news (especially sports news). Corporate and political leaders cited the following benefits associated with their involvement in high school activities: teamwork, discipline, goal-setting, leadership, independence, self-confidence, stress relief, character development and personal growth, fair play and acceptance of others.

Cheering Coaches' Responsibilities ... (Continued from page 9)

13. Skills to cradles (i.e., toe touches and twists)
14. Basket toss drills ("rides")
15. Basket toss skill execution (i.e., toe touches and twists)

Note: No partner stunt should be attempted until each individual skill in the progression is mastered.

Tumbling Skill Levels

Level 1—Basic rolls, bridges, handstands, cartwheel, round-off handstand forward roll, back walkover, front walkover.

Level 2—Standing back handspring, round-off back handspring, standing back handspring series, aerial cartwheel.

Level 3—Round-off back handspring series, standing back tuck, round-off back tuck, round-off back handspring back tuck, layouts from round-off back handspring, whip backs, half twists, full twists.

Transitional Stunts

The area of transitional stunts is one of the fastest evolving and creative areas in modern spirit programs. These stunts involve the transition of one stunt to another. The coach and students must master the individual building block skills before attempting the transition from stunt to stunt. Most transitional stunts are considered advanced stunts and should only be performed

by well trained, skillful teams that are taught and supervised by a well-qualified coach.

Section 6 permits a greater variety of transitional release stunts. The torso of the top person is no longer required to remain upright, but the top person must not become inverted. The release must also be a continuous up-and-down movement with no pause at the top. The top person cannot lose contact with a bracer during the loss of contact with the base(s).

Training/Safety Equipment

As with other athletics, training aids may be made available to a spirit program. Training aids for spirit programs may include various types of matting, spotting belts, handspring trainers and spring-assisted equipment such as spring floors, mini-trampolines, and springboards. While some of these devices, such as spring-assisted apparatuses, may not be used for competition or performance, they may assist with the learning of a skill or allow for repetitive skill practice with less strain. Regardless of their use, it is the coach's responsibility to ensure that these aids are being used under properly trained supervision and that they are kept in proper condition.