

MIAA RULES MODIFICATIONS & GUIDELINES - FALL 2020

Updated 9/20/20

Game Management:

- Each bench area must be set up at least 10 yards from midfield. Team benches (or chairs) must be set up to ensure social distancing between players, coaches, trainers, etc. on the sidelines. Teams may end up having players stretched out far down the sideline. Each team may have no more than 3 adults in the bench area throughout the contest (coaches, volunteers, statisticians, videographers - are all included). NOTE: Trainers are not part of this limit.

- The Timeout Rule will be suspended. No timeouts will be allowed.

-All games will be played in four equal quarters of 20 minutes with a 2-minute break between quarters. Each quarter to begin with a kick off, with teams alternating each kickoff and changing sides after each quarter. Halftime will remain as 10 minutes.

-Game administrators are responsible for recording all goals and cards on the MIAA Game Sheet. Make sure you report to the admin before re-starting the game. Officials ARE NOT REQUIRED to sign the game sheet after the game. The Cape & Islands assignors would like us to report to them any cards given to coaches and any red cards given to players.

-Pre-game meeting: meet with one coach and one captain from each team, everyone to have face coverings and to socially distance. Recommended that coin toss land on the ground. When asking coach if his/her team will be properly equipped include "including face coverings" in your wording.

Card Count – there is no change in the MIAA rule that any combination of 5 yellow or red cards for a team result in the game being forfeited by the offending team.

Equipment:

-All players, coaches, referees, and other game personnel must wear a face covering during play except:

A player can take off their face covering at a point during the game when they are more than 10 feet away from an opponent. This is to take a "mask break." The default expectation is that the face covering will be on. Failure to have your face covering securely/properly worn according to these modifications/guidelines will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team as well as a yellow card for the player in violation.

Official must wear masks during all games. If a school has a no gaiter policy then be sensitive and wear a mask for that game. Having both is a good idea.

BE UNDERSTANDING AND WORK WITH PLAYERS AND COACHES, ASK THEM TO WORK WITH YOU. COMMUNICATE.

-It is the responsibility of the head coach to certify that their entire team is wearing appropriate/approved face coverings prior to each contest. When the official asks the coach if the team is properly equipped, this will also include that the team has appropriate face coverings.

If the game official feels that conditions are not safe in the bench area, as it relates to face coverings, they may issue a yellow card to the head coach for failure to enforce the face covering or social distancing rules in the bench area.

-The home team must provide at least 8 balls to have available around the playing area that may be put in play at any time. Members of each team who are not on the field may assist in retrieving balls with their feet to get them back to the sideline/goal line.

-Face Coverings – gaiters are allowed by the MIAA but are subject to league or school policies. The Cape & Islands League does allow them but many of its schools do not. Face coverings can have logos, sayings, patterns, so long as they are not offensive.

Goalkeepers may not spit on their gloves. They can wet them with a water bottle. If the coach/official sees this happen, gloves will be taken out of play.

Rules within the Game:

- **It is a violation to intentionally head the ball. It will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team. An attempted head ball that does not result in contact is not an infraction but may warrant verbal communication from an official.**

It is a violation to place your hands on any part of an opposing team member's body. It will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team. Shielding the ball with arms out is allowed but no contact can be made by player with ball or defender. Foul is on player who first makes contact.

It is a violation to intentionally make body contact with an opposing team member's body. This includes "shoulder to shoulder" tackling, backing into them or any other intentional contact. It will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team. Players contesting a 50/50 ball can do so with their feet but if one player initiated body to body contact then a foul is to be called.

- **It is NOT a violation if a player makes unintentional contact with an opposing team member by attempting to make "foot to ball" contact and the resulting contact with the opposing team member is below the torso, fleeting and minor in nature.**

- It is a violation to slide tackle or attempt to slide tackle. The penalty for both is an indirect free kick. If a player slide tackles and fouls the player with the ball then the penalty should be a direct free kick as called in the past. Make sure you differentiate foul vs no foul in your mind before blowing the whistle. A successful slide tackle that got just ball should be penalized with an IFK. If a player slides to prevent a ball from leaving the field of play or entering the goal, or stopping a long pass, this is NOT considered a slide tackle as long as there is no contact with another player. A goalkeeper may slide on the ground to gather a ball so long as there is no attempt to make contact with another player.
- Persistent infringement of any of the above modified rules may also result in a yellow card.

Restarts:

- All players on the field MUST properly wear their face covering on every restart. No restart may be taken without an official whistling for play to begin. ALL RESTARTS are to be ceremonial, there are NO QUICK RESTARTS. These include: goal kicks, corner kicks, all free kicks, penalty kicks, kick-ins (formally a throw in). On each restart, the referees will whistle as usual upon the violation or stoppage of play, then they will pause to make sure all players are properly wearing the face covering. A second whistle is given to indicate that play may resume. All players must maintain 6 feet of distance between themselves and all teammates and opponents at the commencement of all restarts.
- All indirect kicks MUST be played on the ground except for a goal kick which is addressed below. Ball leaves the spot of kick in the air it is considered incorrect. Ball goes to opposing team with an IFK at the original spot. All players must be 6 feet apart. No tapping the kick to a teammate standing next to the kicker.
- Throw-ins are now to be called kick-ins. When the ball crosses the touchline, the restart will be a "kick-in," which will be treated the same as all other indirect-kicks- including that the opposing team members must be at least 10 yards from the ball. The ball will be placed on the spot on the touchline where the ball went out of bounds or behind it. All players must be at least 6 feet from each other. The kick-in may be taken once the official has blown a second whistle. If the kick-in is improperly taken then the re-start is a kick-in for the opposing team. There is offside on a kick-in as this is now considered an IFK. It is also recommended that the second whistle for a kick-in be given by the official on the ball side of the field regardless of whether he/she is the lead or trail official. The ball side official has a better view of that touchline and the players involved in the kick in.
- Corner Kick

Corner kicks are now considered an indirect free kick. The ball must be played on the ground, it cannot be flighted into the air. Defenders must be 10 yards away. All players must be 6 feet apart. There is no offside on a corner kick.

- **Goal Kick**

NFHS rule changes now state that on a goal kick the ball is in play once it is kicked and moves. Once properly taken the ball may be touched by any player except the kicker. The ball no longer is required to leave the penalty area to be in play. The next touch can be inside or outside the penalty area. However, all players defending the goal kick must be outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.

MIAA rule modifications state that it is a violation to kick a goal kick in the air beyond the midfield line. If the ball does travel in the air beyond the midfield line without touching a player, the resulting restart is an indirect kick for the opposing team from the spot it crossed midfield.

It is a violation for the goalkeeper to kick, punt, dropkick or throw the ball in the air beyond the midfield line. If the ball does travel in the air beyond the midfield line without touching a player, the resulting restart is an indirect kick for the opposing team from the spot it crossed midfield. Once the goal kick is taken, then the ball may be played by any player other than the kicker. A keeper may kick the ball to a teammate 6 ft away and then that teammate may flight the ball over midfield. Once it was kicked by the keeper, the goal kick was taken and it is considered a ball in play on the field. A goalkeeper who saves and collects a shot on goal cannot drop the ball on the field and then kick it over midfield. This is considered a distribution from the keeper and is not allowed. IFK from the spot where it crossed midfield.

Drop Balls

The use of a dropped ball is suspended. To replace this procedure, an indirect kick will be awarded to the team whom the referees deemed to be in possession at the time of stoppage. Reasons for stoppage may include: injury, issuing of a card, or any other reason deemed necessary by the official.

Defensive Walls

The use of a traditional defensive "wall" is not allowed on any restart. Players may attempt to impede the path of the ball to the goal by standing in the way but they must be at least 10 yards away from the ball and at least 6 feet away

from other players. In free kick situations near the goal where there is not much time left in a period and the defending team is dragging their feet in setting up for the re-start, an official may stop the game clock and a verbal warning may be warranted. If this happens again then a yellow for persistent infringement may be considered.

Penalty Kicks

The game clock is stopped for the taking of all penalty kicks. The clock remains stopped until the taking of the re-start following the PK. The PK will be handled in the same manner as a penalty shootout in that the ball will be dead once it has hit the goalkeeper or goal *and its momentum has been spent. The kick has ended once the momentum has been spent.* No rebounds allowed. If a goal is scored - it is a goal. The re-start is a kick off. If the ball goes over the goal line but is not a goal, it is either a goal kick or corner kick depending on the call of the official. If the ball rebounds off the goal or goalkeeper and comes to rest in the field of play, the restart will be a goal kick for the defending team. If the keeper dives and save the kick, the re-start is a goal kick for the defending team. All players except the keeper and kicker should be behind the penalty area arc for the taking of the penalty kick.

Advantage

The MIAA and the Commonwealth of MA (Governor) expressly and clearly want hands off and minimal contact during the games for COVID reasons. Therefore for us to ignore these modified rules would be wrong. If there is a foul that creates contact and the player with the ball maintains possession, ADVANTAGE IS NOT TO BE PLAYED. The goal is to minimize contact and if we allow advantage it is legitimizing the contact. Need to blow the whistle and re-start with the appropriate free kick.

Referees/Game Officials:

- If a player steps in the direction of the referee with intent to complain/argue, that player will be given a yellow card. If the player comes within 6 feet of an official to complain/argue, a red card will be issued.**

Referees are instructed to exit the field and facility immediately upon the final whistle. They are not expected to sign the game sheet this year. It is the responsibility of the game administrator/coaches to make sure the information on the game sheet is correct. Keep notes on your own game card if there are questions or discrepancies that come up.

Officials shall use alternative whistles such as electronic whistles; air horns are permissible.