

Interscholastic



High School Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Bocce

New This Spring—The MPA will be offering Unified Bocce starting this spring. The season is scheduled to be held between late April—June! Unified Bocce is one of the fastest growing sports in Special Olympics Maine and is easily accessible to schools and student of all abilities.

Unified Bocce pairs two student athletes with two student unified partners as teammates to train and compete in bocce. Schools will be able to have one or more Unified Bocce teams representing their school. The season will most likely con-

sist of schools attending 2-3 Unified Bocce festivals and we would encourage all participating schools to attend the Special Olympics Maine State Summer Games (June 6 at University of Maine in Orono) to participate in a end of the season tournament.

Special Olympics Maine is offering up to \$1,000.00 to schools for the first two years of starting a Unified Bocce Program (Click [HERE](#) for more information). This funding can help cover costs of equipment (portable court & balls), uniforms, and more!

Court and Field Diagram Guide

The 2019/2020 edition of the "NFHS Court and Field Diagram Guide" may be ordered on the State Order Form. The Court and Field Guide is a comprehensive publication containing current diagrams, descriptions, and dimensions of playing fields and courts used in 50 sports. It also contains ball specifications, metric-to-English distance conversions, a directory of national sports governing bodies and how to set up different types of tournament drawings. All of the diagrams, specifications, and information contained in this publication are accurate and up-to-date. The Court and Field

Guide is an ideal resource for athletic directors, coaches, building and grounds supervisors, architects, and others involved with athletic administration. Since first published 20 years ago, it consistently has been one of the NFHS' most requested publications, and is an invaluable resource. State associations can order copies of the Court and Field Diagram Guide on the State Order Form for only \$10.00 each. Others can order the publication by calling the toll-free number (800-776-3462) or online at www.nfhs.com at the retail price of \$20.20.

Open Gym

A reminder that any activity that involves members of one team that includes sport specific training is a violation of the Sport Season Policy. An "open gym" should involve a variety of activities and must be open to all students. Any organized activity, held at any location, for a specific team, designed to give that team an advantage by starting early, is strictly prohibited.

Notes and Updates

Cooperative Team Deadline—A reminder that a request to form a cooperative team must be submitted three months prior to the start of the season. The deadline for fall cooperative teams is June 4, 2020; the deadline for a winter team is September 4, 2020; and the deadline for a spring, 2021 team is January 15, 2021. An application may be found on the MPA website.

Middle School/High School Practices—A reminder that high school and middle school athletes may not train together.

New England Dates—Cheerleading, March 15, 2020, Worcester State University, Worcester, MA; Outdoor Track and Field, Saturday, June 13, 2020, New Britain, CT.

Sport Season Rules—A reminder that no coach, paid or volunteer, including coaches at the middle level, may work with athletes from his/her high school outside of the sport season without a waiver. This includes working with athletes at outside facilities or training centers.

Sunday Competition—A reminder that the MPA is opposed to **any** interscholastic activities on Sunday. Contests played by member schools will not be recognized for tournament selection or championships.

Outdoor Track Sites—The MPA Outdoor Track Committee has selected these sites for the 2020 Outdoor Track Championships: Class A-Noble; Class B – Freeport; and Class C– Brewer.

Baseball and Softball Pitchers Guidelines—Schools may determine the number of athletes that participate in the week of conditioning but those athletes that participate must be working on arm development for pitchers or working as a catcher for the pitchers. The intent is not an open week of arm conditioning for all position players. There is not a requirement that those athletes that participate must pitch at some point during the season.

Bat Rule

All bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of one-half inch on each side, and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum and composite bats shall be labeled as approved tamper evident, and be marked as to being aluminum or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

A bat without the BBCOR marking is illegal for use in games or practices. Coaches are responsible for making sure all bats meet the NFHS standard.

Bats that are altered from the manufacturer's original design and production, or that do not meet the rule specifications, are illegal. No foreign substance may be inserted into the bat. Bats that are broken, cracked or dented, or that deface the

ball, i.e., tear the ball, shall be removed without penalty. A bat that continually discolors the ball may be removed from the game with no penalty at the discretion of the umpire.

Rationale: Recent bat products have circumvented the intent and spirit of the current rule. Improvements in science and technology now allow this change that will require bats to be within performance limits during the life of the bat. In addition, this change will minimize the ability for the bat to be tampered with or altered.

The following bats were originally deemed legal, but after performance the NFHS has found that the bats do not meet the BBCOR specifications. Do not allow these bats to be used in practice or contests for safety reasons. Schools will be notified of any additional bats that are decertified via email to athletic directors, coaches, and umpires.

Decertified bats to date: 1) Reebok Vector TLS 32" length; 2) Reebok Vector TLS 33" length; and 3) Marucci CAT5 33" length.

Rule Book Orders

The MPA continues to sell National Federation rule books to member schools at a substantial discount. Your cost for each rule book is \$6.30, including shipping and handling. Schools have received an order form and should complete and return the form to the MPA office by **April 17, 2020**. All orders and shipments will be processed through the MPA office. Any order placed after the April 17 deadline will be charged an NFHS handling fee of \$15 plus UPS shipping costs from the NFHS. The UPS cost for a recent order we submitted for one rule book was \$11.50, so it pays to submit your order on time.

Please call Diane at the MPA office (622-0217, ext. 127) if you have questions about your order. Orders will be filled as soon as the rule books are available. **To avoid delays in receiving your rule books, it is important to complete the order form for all three sport seasons.**

You may continue to order your rule books directly from the National Federation or from your local sporting goods store. Local prices will average \$9.00 or more per book. The MPA is offering this service in order to assist schools in reducing expenses. You should continue to order all other products directly from the National Federation catalog.

Ice hockey scoresheets are available from the MPA at a price of \$.35 each. Please use the rule book order form to indicate the quantity needed or contact Diane at the MPA office.

Wrestling Sites for 2021

Wrestling—The Wrestling Committee would like to hear from schools that may have an interest in hosting the Class A or Class B Regionals, Class A or B States, the Girls' Championship (two mats), the Dual Tournament (two mats), and the New England Qualifier. A host school wrestling site should be able to accommodate three mats, unless otherwise noted.

Please send your request to host to Mike Bisson at MPA office mbisson@mpa.cc prior to March 20, 2020.

Big Chill Unified School Plunge and Fundraiser, March 14, 2020!



Special Olympics Maine is hosting its fourth annual Big Chill Unified Schools Plunge in Maranacook Lake in Winthrop on Saturday March 14th, 2020 hosted by American Legion Post #40. This plunge is specific for students and is a great way to engage students to help fundraising for their school's UCS programs. The proceeds of the Big Chill will benefit Special Olympics Maine's Unified Champion Schools programs along with 30% of a school's total fundraising efforts going directly back to the school to help fund current and future Unified Champion Schools' initiatives.

Come join the fun and show your school spirit while supporting a great cause! Start promoting in your school today by posting the Big Chill 2020 Poster (click [HERE](#)) around your halls and making announcements to encourage students to take the plunge!

For more information click [HERE](#).

Spring Undergrad Tournaments

At this time of the year we field many questions about undergrad tournaments that are taking place after the close of the winter sports season. Below please find guidelines to help you deal with these outside tournaments.

1. Coaches, regardless of what sport they coach, may not be involved in organizing or coaching a team to compete in a tournament, this includes head, assistant, and middle school coaches from within your system.
2. High school facilities may not be used for practices.
3. High school uniforms, including practice uniforms, may not be worn for these activities.
4. High school equipment, including balls, may not be used.
5. School transportation may not be used.
6. Coaches may attend these activities, but may not coach their athletes.

Baseball / Softball Championships

There has been a change to the baseball and softball regional championship schedule for this coming spring. All regional championship games are now scheduled to be played on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 with Wednesday, June 17, 2020 used as the rain date. This spring the following schedule will be followed:

		Baseball	Softball
Class A	South	St. Joe's, Standish	St. Joe's, Standish
	North	Morton Field, Augusta	CMMC, Auburn
Class B	South	USM, Gorham	USM, Gorham
	North	Mansfield Stadium, Bangor	Brewer High School
Class C	South	St. Joe's, Standish	St. Joe's, Standish
	North	UMaine, Orono	UMaine, Orono
Class D	South	USM, Gorham	USM, Gorham
	North	Mansfield Stadium, Bangor	Brewer High School

The state championship games will all take place on Saturday, June 20, 2020 at the following locations:

Classes A & C	St. Joe's Standish	St. Joe's, Standish
Classes B & D	Mansfield Stadium, Bangor	Brewer High School

Youth Level Clinics

At the 2019 MPA Fall Conference, the MPA Sports Season Policy was modified to allow a school to select a three-week window where a high school coach may organize a youth clinic for students in the younger grades.

Athletes from that sport may assist the coach in the teaching of the skills to the younger athletes. The clinic may not be used as an opportunity for the high school to conduct an organized practice outside of the designated sports season.

Off-Season Conditioning Programs

Below are a few reminders about off-season conditioning programs:

- A school coach may supervise an off-season conditioning program, but the program must be open to the entire student body.
- The conditioning program may not be sport-specific and should include weight training, general agility drills, running, conditioning, and general skill development (not a sport-specific skill).
- Sport specific equipment may not be used in the conditioning program.
- A school may not offer more than one off-season conditioning program at the same time.

Do's and Don'ts of School Choice

As we enter into the Spring, many schools are looking at the "recruitment" of potential students. These efforts may be done by a private school or by a school hoping that students from those communities with school choice will attend their school.

Do's

- Provide all prospective students an opportunity to learn about your school.
- Allow prospective students an opportunity to visit your school to see the campus and all programs that are available.
- Provide information about all co-curricular offerings.
- Schedule all visits through the administration at the school.
- Conduct "academic recruitment" focused on the total programming at the school.
- Allow students to participate in programs only after they have been enrolled at the school.
- Develop a speech, slide show, video, and/or e-mail that highlights the entire school program.
- Explain to students that once they choose a school to attend they may not transfer to another school for athletic purposes.

Don'ts

- Allow coaches to meet individually with students or parents.
- Provide any type of an incentive (tickets, clothing, promise of playing time) to prospective student/athletes.
- Allow students to attend a practice to observe a specific team.
- Showcase (highlight video, championship trophy, etc.) a particular program at your school.
- Make a promise of a roster spot to a student/athlete.
- Invite athletes to visit the school because of the success of one particular program.
- Allow for the distribution of materials that highlights one athletic program.
- Emphasize the success of a particular program as compared to the same program at other schools.
- Attend middle school practices to work with athletes that may potentially attend the school.
- Invite middle school teams from school choice schools to be showcased at halftime or between periods.
- Use student athletes on the high school team to recruit athletes for a program.
- Invite middle school students with a school choice option to be a part of a summer program before enrolling at the school.
- Allow for a coach to visit a family at their home.
- Allow for potential athletes to practice with the team.
- Allow for members of a coaching staff, or a booster club, to contact potential athletes.
- Provide transportation to a prospective athlete.
- Provide financial incentive to a respective athlete that is not available for other students.

For a copy of the
MPA Athletic Recruitment Policy,
please click [HERE](#).