



## COMMENTS ON THE 2011-12 RULES CHANGES

**CENTER CIRCLE LINE SPECIFICATIONS (1-3-1):** The center restraining circle specifications were changed to permit a minimum of a ¼-inch-wide single line but a line no wider than 2-inches to designate the outer edge of the circle. Many existing courts already have a center circle that has a single ¼ -inch line. A mathematical line between two solid colors is still permitted. The committee believes this change will provide consistency in the rule.

**ARM COMPRESSION SLEEVE REQUIREMENTS (3-5-3):** The specifications regarding arm compression sleeves were changed to require the item to be white, black, beige or a single solid school color. The sleeve must also be the same color for each team member and have only a single manufacturer's logo that does not exceed 2 ¼ square inches. Arm compression sleeves must still be worn for medical purposes. Under the previous rule, arm compression sleeves had no logo restrictions, could have been multiple colors and teammates could have worn a variety of different colors. This rules change provides clarification, makes enforcement more consistent for officials and enhances team uniformity.

**TEAM CONTROL DURING A THROW-IN (4-12-1, 2, 6):** Several definitions were changed to reflect that team control will now exist during a throw-in when the thrower-in has the ball at his/her disposal. The change primarily affects how foul penalties will be administered. By changing the definition of player and team control to include a throw-in, greater consistency in penalty administration for a common foul is achieved. Under the previous rule, because there was no team control during a throw-in, the penalty for a common foul committed by the throw-in team after the throw-in had begun resulted in free throws if the offended team was in the bonus, which was inconsistent with the penalty for a team-control foul in non-throw-in situations. The rules change will result in greater consistency in penalty enforcement and expedite the contest by eliminating the delay inherent with administering free throws.

## 2011-12 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

**1. SPORTING BEHAVIOR.** The NFHS Basketball Rules Committee continues to be concerned about the following behaviors:

- A. Pregame Situations.** Teams entering the gymnasium prior to the contest should not run through the area occupied by the opposing team or under the basket where opponents are warming up. Teams should only enter, jog or warm-up on their own half of the court. Gatherings intended to motivate a team after the warm-up period, during or following player introductions and post-game celebrations should be performed in the area directly in front of the team bench. If during the pregame or half-time warm-up period one team leaves the floor, the other team should not use the entire court; teams should only warm-up on their half of the court. Only authorized personnel should be permitted on the floor. All spectators should be in designated areas.
- B. Taunting/Self-Promotion.** Players are increasingly directing their celebratory actions toward opponents, which should be interpreted as taunting and baiting, and penalized accordingly. Further, the committee is concerned with the trend toward players "playing to the crowd," attempting to increase attention and praise for their own individual accomplishments rather than toward the game itself and team achievements. While

many of these actions are not specifically illegal by rule, extreme behaviors could and should be considered taunting and baiting of the opponent. Officials should remind captains and head coaches at the pregame conference that all actions and reactions should demonstrate appropriate sporting behavior.

**2. GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING AND OFFICIATING.** The following guidelines are excerpts from past NFHS Points of Emphasis. The committee believes sharing these guidelines again will assist in game administration.

**A. Handchecking/Body Fouls.**

- 1) Tactics using the hands, arms or body that permit any player (offense or defense) to "control" (hold, impede, push, divert, slow or prevent) the movement of an opposing player is a foul.
- 2) When an offensive player uses the hands or body to push off for position or spacing to get open or receive a pass, or to move the ball via pass or dribble, it is a foul.
- 3) "Hooking" by an offensive player is a distinct advantage. This tactic is not worthy of a warning and should be ruled a foul without hesitation.
- 4) Any illegal use of hands, arms or body (offense or defense) that slows, prevents, impedes the progress or displaces an opposing player due to the contact, is a foul and must be called.
- 5) Regardless of where it takes place on the court, when a player continuously places a hand on the ball handler/dribbler, it is a foul.
- 6) When a player jabs a hand(s) or forearm on an opponent to control his or her movement or gain an advantage, it is a foul.

**Note:** Incidental contact is contact with an opponent which is permitted and which does not constitute a foul. This includes but is not limited to contact which does not hinder the opponent from participating from normal offensive or defensive movements.

**B. Screening.**

- 1) A legal screener must be stationary prior to contact with hands and arms close to the body. When these two requirements are not met, and when there is sufficient contact delivered by the screener to bump, slow or displace, it is a foul on the screener.
- 2) When screening a stationary opponent from behind (outside the visual field), the screener must allow the opponent one normal step backward without contact.
- 3) When screening a moving opponent, the screener must allow the opponent time and distance to avoid contact by stopping or changing direction.
- 4) When a screen is set in view of an opposing player, the screener can get as close as he or she wishes in a legal stationary position. The burden is on the screened player to avoid contact that may result in a foul.
- 5) To constitute a legal screen, the screener must stay within his or her vertical plane with a stance approximately shoulder-width apart.

**C. Post Play.**

- 1) The offense may "shape up" to receive a pass or to force the defense to assume a legal guarding position at the side, in front or behind the offensive post player. When the offensive player then uses the "swim stroke," pushes, pins, elbows, forearms, holds, clears with the body, or just generally demonstrates rough physical movements or tactics, this is a foul on the offensive player and must be called without warning.
- 2) The defense can assume a legal, vertical stance or position on the side, front or behind the offensive post player. When the defense undercuts (initiates lower-body non-vertical contact), slaps, pushes, holds, elbows, forearms or just generally demonstrates rough, physical movements or tactics, this is a foul on the defense and must be called without warning.
- 3) When a player pushes a leg or knee into the rear of an opponent, it is a foul.

- 4) When a player dislodges an opponent from an established position by pushing or "backing in," it is a foul.
- 5) When a player uses hands, forearms or elbows to prevent an opponent from maintaining a legal position, it is a foul.

**D. Rebounding.** A player has a right to any spot on the court he or she may get to legally. To obtain or maintain a legal rebounding position a player may NOT:

- 1) Displace, charge or push an opponent.
- 2) Extend shoulders, hips or knees, or extend the arms or elbows fully or partially in a position other than vertical, so that the opponent's freedom of movement is hindered when contact occurs.
- 3) Bend his or her body in an abnormal position to hold or displace an opponent.
- 4) Violate the principle of verticality.
- 5) Better his or her position by other than legal means.

**3. INJURY DATA AND PREVENTION.** The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and the NFHS Basketball Sport Committees use information from the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study (High School RIO) to monitor rates and patterns of sports injuries among high school student-athletes. High School RIO is in its 6<sup>th</sup> year of collecting sports exposure and injury data.

**A. Injury Data.** The most recent High School RIO report captured the following trends in boys and girls basketball.

- 1) A large portion of injuries for both boys and girls are ankle injuries (34.7% and 33.0% respectively). However, ankle injury rates have not significantly increased over time for either gender. The ankle injuries are most often occurring during rebounding activities for both boys and girls (43.3% and 31.4% respectively).
- 2) Concussion rates in boys' and girls' basketball have not significantly changed over time. However, boys are sustaining concussions more often during rebounding activities (28.5%) and girls during defending activities (26.5%) – both primarily due to player-to-player contact.
- 3) The incidence, rate and proportion of Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) injuries to girls have not significantly changed over time.

**NOTE:** The full report may be found at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org) under the Sports Medicine link.

**B. Injury Prevention.** While the rules of the game can't always prevent the types of injuries mentioned above from occurring, coaches, players and officials all have an important role to play in keeping the risk of injury to a minimum. To assist in preventing injuries, the committee has addressed the following areas of concern:

- 1) Coaches and officials must be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion, and be well versed in and follow NFHS and the respective state association concussion guidelines.
- 2) There are several aspects of the game where injuries may be more likely to occur, but rebounding and defending were specifically noted in the data above. Officials must adjudicate all rules as written, especially regarding illegal contact in those two areas. An airborne player is especially vulnerable to sustaining a serious injury with the slightest contact. Officials and coaches must be conscientious in protecting airborne players in the area of rebounding and shooting.
- 3) Officials should not hesitate to rule a flagrant foul when "violent" contact occurs against an opponent, especially to the head.
- 4) Officials must also remain diligent in ruling excessive swinging of the elbows, even when no contact occurs (violation).