

## National Federation of State High School Associations



### NFHS Basketball / 2010-11 Rules Changes / PowerPoint Script

**Slide 3:** Previous rules books for most sports included language directing officials to remove an athlete from play if “unconscious or apparently unconscious.” That language has been changed to the following: *Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.* The common signs, symptoms and behaviors of concussed athletes may be found in Appendix D, page 75, of the 2010-11 NFHS Basketball Rules Book.

**Slide 5: Concussion Recognition and Management :**

Adolescent athletes are particularly vulnerable to the effects of concussion. Once considered little more than a minor “ding” on the head, it is now understood that a concussion has the potential to result in death, or short- and long-term changes in brain function. A concussion is a brain injury that results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body.

The NFHS has been at the forefront of national sports organizations in emphasizing the importance of concussion education, recognition and proper management for the past several years. In 2008, the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) advocated that a concussed athlete be removed from play and not allowed to return to play on that same day. In 2009, this position was adopted by the leading group of sports medicine experts and the National Football League (NFL).

To highlight the continuing importance of this issue, the NFHS SMAC and each sport’s rules committee has taken the unprecedented step of including Concussion Recognition and Management as a rules change and/or point of emphasis in each NFHS sport rules book for the 2010-11 year. The purpose of this is to explain the change in verbiage in the NFHS Basketball Rules Book regarding the official’s recognition of a player exhibiting the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion and to emphasize the importance of proper concussion management.

Concussions at all levels of sports have received a great deal of attention in the past few years. Attention has increased even more so over the past year, culminating with the NFL, NCAA and NFHS testifying before the United States Congress about what each organization is doing to protect athletes from concussion.

Given that most concussed athletes do not lose consciousness, yet they often show other common signs, symptoms and behaviors of concussion, the NFHS SMAC strongly believes that officials must be empowered to remove these athletes from play, thus protecting them from potential further injury. Continued participation in any sport following a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, as well as increased risk for further injury to the brain, and even death.

**Slide 6: Concussion Recognition and Management (continued):**

Neither officials, nor coaches, are expected to “diagnose” a concussion; that is the job of an appropriate health-care professional. The previous rule called upon officials to determine “apparently unconscious” which appeared to expect some level of medical judgment. Officials are now being asked to use their best judgment again in observing the signs, symptoms and behaviors, but are no longer being asked to make what could be perceived to be a medical opinion. The well-being of the athlete is of paramount concern during any athletic contest. Officials, coaches and administrators are being asked to make all efforts to ensure that concussed athletes do not continue to participate. Early recognition of concussion and removal of the injured athlete from activity (game or practice) is a shared responsibility. Thus, coaches, players and administrators should also be looking for signs of concussion in all athletes and should immediately remove any suspected concussed athlete from play.

**Slide 7: Concussion Recognition and Management (continued):**

The game official is not responsible for the evaluation or management of the athlete after he/she is removed from play. The responsibility of further evaluating and managing the symptomatic athlete falls upon the head coach, appropriate health-care professional or other individual designated by school administrators. If an appropriate health-care professional determines that the athlete HAS NOT suffered a concussion, the athlete may return to play.

An “appropriate health-care professional” must be determined by each member state association and/or school district with respect to state laws and local preferences. Such individuals should be knowledgeable in the evaluation and management of sports-related concussions and may, depending on controlling law, include MDs, DOs and certified athletic trainers.

**Slide 8: Concussion Recognition and Management (continued):**

If there is no appropriate health-care professional available to evaluate the athlete, the athlete SHOULD NOT be permitted by the coach to return to play. Please see the “NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports” at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org) for further information on sideline management.

The official does not need written permission for an athlete to return nor does the official need to verify the credentials of the appropriate health-care professional. Ensuring compliance with the Suggested Management Guidelines is a health and safety issue and should be the responsibility of the head coach and school administration, NOT the game official.

**Slide 9: Suggested Concussion Management:**

The suggested guidelines for concussion management fall outside the realm of game management, but are clearly a health and safety issue for coaches and administrators. These guidelines should also be applied to practices and scrimmages. The position of the NFHS SMAC is that no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day after suffering a concussion. Studies have shown medical professionals that the school-aged brain does not recover quickly enough for a high school athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

Athletes with continued concussion symptoms are at significant risk for recurrent, cumulative and even catastrophic consequences of a second concussive injury. Such risks are minimized if the athlete is allowed time to recover from the concussion and return to play decisions are carefully made. No athlete should return-to-sport or other at-risk participation when symptoms of concussion are present and recovery is ongoing.

**Slide 10:** For further details, please see the “NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports” at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

**Slide 11: 2.8.5 SITUATION:** A1 and B1 hit heads in diving for a loose ball and both appear injured. However, A1 is immediately removed from the game by the officials as he/she is exhibiting signs consistent with a concussion. Later in the game, A1 reports to the scorer’s table to reenter the contest.

**Ruling:** The rules permit A1 to return to the game once he/she has been cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. The responsibility for obtaining that clearance rests with the coach/school, and need not be verified by the officials (unless state procedures require verification). If A1 appears at the scorer’s table to reenter the game, the officials shall assume the coach/school followed the appropriate return-to-play procedures and A1 is eligible to participate.

**Slide 12:** The rule was changed to give the student-athletes more color options for head/wristbands. The committee felt that provided it was a school color and all team members wore the same color, it didn’t have to be the same color as the torso. All head/wristbands must still be a single solid color.

**Slide 14: 3.5.3 SITUATION:** Team A’s school colors are blue and gold and the predominate color of Team A’s jerseys are white. Prior to the game, an official notices that several Team A members are wearing (a) blue headbands and blue wristbands; and (b) beige pre-wrap around the entire head and blue wristbands. **RULING:** Legal in (a). Illegal equipment in (b); the headband color does not match the wristband color. The official shall inform the player and the head coach that these items are illegal and may not be worn during the game.

**Slide 15:** In 2005, the rules were changed to penalize a player leaving the court for an unauthorized reason from a technical foul to a violation. The committee’s focus at that time was the live-action play where a player extended the playing court by going out of bounds (perhaps to go around a screen) and returned to the playing court in another location (perhaps a more advantageous position). That rules modification remains a positive change; however, it created a gap in the rule when the act was by a player, while during a dead-ball situation, left the court for an unauthorized reason to demonstrate inappropriate or unsporting behaviors. Therefore, a new rule was added, very similar to the rule prior to 2005, but specifically relating to the demonstration of resentment, disgust or intimidation.

**Slide 16: 10.3.6 SITUATION:** With 4 minutes remaining in the second quarter, B1 commits his/her third foul against airborne shooter A1; the try is unsuccessful. Team B's coach immediately sends B6 to the scorer's table to replace B1 after A1's first free-throw. B1's replacement may not enter the game until after A1's first free throw. B1, disgusted with the official's call and realizing he/she will soon leave the game, goes and sits on the end of Team B's bench just after the official reports the foul. **RULING:** B1 is assessed an unsporting technical foul for leaving the court for an unauthorized reason to demonstrate disgust. A1 will attempt the two shooting-foul free throws followed by any Team A member attempting the two free throws for the technical foul. (10-3-6i; 3-3-2)

**10.5.5 SITUATION A:** Airborne shooter A1 is fouled by B1 after the ball is released on the try. Playing time for the second quarter expires while the unsuccessful try is in flight. Since no players are required to line up for the free throws, Team B's head coach takes the team to the locker room to begin the intermission. **RULING:** Team B's head coach is assessed a direct technical foul for permitting team members to leave the bench/court for an unauthorized reason. Even though no time remains on the game clock, the quarter doesn't end until A1's free throws are completed; therefore, the technical foul is part of the second quarter. A1 will attempt the two shooting-foul free throws followed by any Team A member attempting the two free throws for the technical foul. The third quarter will begin with the alternating-possession procedure. (5-6-2 Exception 3)

**Slide 17:** While the committee was addressing the individual actions of a player, it also addressed similar actions by an entire team or bench personnel. The new rule gives specific rule backing for assessing a technical foul when a team or bench personnel is not at the team bench area while the game is in progress.

**Slide 18: 10.5.5 SITUATION B:** A spectator heckles Team A member, A9, while he/she is sitting on Team A's bench. A9 leaves the bench area and goes into the stands to confront the fan. **RULING:** Team A's head coach is assessed a direct technical foul for permitting A9 to leave the bench area for an unauthorized reason. Team B is awarded two free throws and the ball for a division line throw-in.