

- Q: If a player in an individual sport (i.e. tennis) is removed during a match for unsportsmanlike conduct, are the points he/she earned during the match removed from the team score?
- A: No. Unless the rules book for the sport prescribes specific scoring procedures, all points earned by the player previously will remain part of the team score, but he/she WILL NOT receive points or awards in the event where disqualification occurred if results have not yet been determined.
- Q: If a coach or player is suspended for the balance of the playing season, are they allowed to attend the remaining games, including tournament play?
- A: Yes, however, they can not be associated with the team in any capacity before, during or after the event. The school can ban them from all events
- Q: Do the Sportsmanship rules apply to pre-season contests (i.e. scrimmages, jamborees, festivals, etc.)?
- A: Yes: Exception; Soccer Yellow cards don't count pre-season.
- Q: If a player/coach is disqualified from a contest and participates in the next scheduled event in that sport, is there a consequence?
- A: Yes, forfeiture of the event/contest in which the player/coach participates.
- Q: When is the next game suspension for the junior varsity coach who is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct while sitting with the varsity team during a contest in the same sport?
- A: The coach may not participate in any game, at any level, until a two game suspension has been served at the level in which the disqualification occurred and must take the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Course for Disqualified Coaches **prior** to returning to coach in any capacity, effective 2011-12.
- Q: When is the next game suspension for unsportsmanlike conduct for the person who serves as BOTH junior varsity and varsity coach in a sport?
- A: The coach of both levels who is ejected from a contest/day of competition may not participate in the next two contests/days of competition at the level in the game which the disqualification occurred and must take the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Course for Disqualified Coaches prior to returning to coach in any capacity, effective 2011-12.
- Q: If the coach is a parent of a team member, and is disqualified from a contest/day of competition, is that coach allowed to attend the next game as a parent?
- A: During the period of disqualification, a coach shall not be in attendance at the game(s)/event(s) for which the disqualification is imposed and must take the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Course for Disqualified Coaches **prior** to returning to coach in any capacity, effective 2011-12.
- Q: If a parent of a team member substitutes during a coach's absence and is disqualified from a contest/day of competition, is that person allowed to attend the next game as a parent?
- A: During the period of disqualification, a coach shall not be in attendance at the game(s)/event(s) for which the disqualification is imposed. If there is a violation the contest

shall be forfeited. Individual schools can determine if a disqualified student athlete is allowed to continue practice or other school activities or whether to exclude the student athlete as in the case of a disqualified coach.

- Q: If an official or school representative has knowledge of a next game suspension that was not enforced by a member school, what action can be taken?
- A: As the NHIAA is a self-policing organization, it is expected that the official or school administrator will contact that school regarding the alleged violation. A follow-up call with written documentation to the NHIAA is also required.
- Q: If, on the day a disqualification penalty is enforced, the contest is suspended, does the penalty enforcement apply to the continuation of the suspended game?
- A: No. When competition is held the penalty is enforced and it is determined that the penalty requirements have been satisfied even though the contest/day of competition is incomplete and may continue on a future date.
- Q: If a student is disqualified from the last regular season game, can a scrimmage satisfy the next contest/day of competition disqualification requirement?
- A: No. The athlete may not participate in a pre-season scrimmage prior to serving the penalty for the disqualification received.
- Q: When a coach is ejected or disqualified from a contest where is he/she expected to be for the duration of the contest?
- A: For those sports conducted indoors, the locker room is appropriate. When the sport is conducted outdoors, the options vary. Certainly the locker room is appropriate but it may be that a coach would be directed by the official to go to a team bus or some-where out of sight. An ejected coach is not allowed to become a spectator at this event.
- Q: When a player is ejected or disqualified from a contest where is he/she expected to be for the duration of the contest?
- A: Players can remain on the bench or sidelines as long as their presence does not interfere with the contest in any way. Never should a player be sent away from the site without adult supervision. Coaches are responsible for the care and safety of players and should not be placed in a position, which does not allow them to provide reasonable care and supervision.



FOR:  
PRINCIPALS, ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, COACHES  
AND OFFICIALS

**OFFICIAL  
INTERPRETATION  
OF  
BY-LAW ARTICLE IX:  
SPORTSMANSHIP  
SECTION 6:  
DISQUALIFICATION**

2023-24

**BY-LAW ARTICLE IX: SPORTSMANSHIP**  
**SECTION 6: DISQUALIFICATION FROM AN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC EVENT**

- A. Any player who is disqualified before, during or after any sanctioned event and or scrimmage at the sub-varsity or varsity level, for exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct, shall not participate in any scheduled interscholastic athletic event, including NHIAA tournament contests until the suspension is served in the sport at the level in which the disqualification occurred. Any coach who is disqualified before, during or after a game at the sub-varsity or varsity level, for exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct, shall not participate in the next two scheduled interscholastic athletic event, including NHIAA tournament contests and MUST take the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Course for Disqualified Coaches **prior** to returning to coach in any capacity, effective 2011-12. Any player or coach who is disqualified from a game and participates in the next scheduled interscholastic athletic event(s), including NHIAA tournament contests, shall cause that school's game(s)/event(s) to be forfeited in the event of a win. In the event of loss (es), the matter will be referred to the Sportsmanship Committee for action. The school may request a hearing with the Executive Director and/or Sportsmanship Committee to explain the circumstances of the situation. The Executive Director, in consultation with the Sportsmanship Committee may modify consequences. It is the coach's responsibility to promptly notify the school of any disqualification and the school must immediately impose the stated sanctions regardless of when formal notification is received from the NHIAA.
- B. A disqualified student athlete **must** view the "NFHS Sportsmanship" video on the NFHS website under the supervision of a school official prior to returning to game action. A certificate of completion must be filed with the athletic director and reported to the NHIAA effective for the 2012-13 season.
- C. If any player or coach receives a second game disqualification during the season, that individual will be required to forfeit any participation in that interscholastic sport, at any level, for the balance of that season.
- D. Should an athlete disqualification occur in the final contest of that season (including tournament play), with no remaining scheduled games in that level/sport, the suspension shall be served at the next regular season or post season contest for that student athlete. If a disqualification is administered to a graduating senior in their final game for that school, it is the expectation that the school will take immediate and appropriate disciplinary action. (CM 5.2015) (CM 5.2018)
- E. Should a coach disqualification occur in the final contest of that season (including tournament play), with no remaining scheduled games in that level/sport, the suspension shall be served in the next two regular season or post season contests for that coach. If a disqualification is administered to a coach in their final game of coaching for that school, it is the expectation that the school will take immediate and appropriate disciplinary action.
- F. Any player who leaves the bench area during an interscholastic athletic event where an altercation is taking place in the playing area shall receive a one-game

- disqualification for the next scheduled game. If the infraction is not reported by the game official, it is the responsibility of the school administration to report and enforce the consequence (CM 5.2019)
- G. \*This rule supercedes the NFHS Ice Hockey penalty rule 4-5 Game Misconduct Penalties. A player or coach who has received a game misconduct penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be immediately removed from the game and the NHIAA Sportsmanship By-Law invoked as stated above.
- H. \*Soccer Yellow/Red Card Violations
1. Any team, whose players/coaches receive 4 (four) red cards or a collective total of 12 cards during the regular season, will be required to attend a hearing with the Soccer Committee. (Preseason yellow cards are not counted towards your season total. Preseason red cards will be counted towards your season total.)
  2. If a player/coach receives his/her third yellow card of the regular a, one (1) game disqualification will be given.
  3. At the conclusion of the regular season, player/coach-accumulated yellow cards will re-set to zero.
    - If a player/coach receives his/her second yellow card of the post season, a one (1) game disqualification will be given.
  4. Any team whose players/coaches receive a collective total of five (5) cards in a game will result in immediate termination of the game and result in forfeiture by the offending team. If both teams receive the collective total of five (5) at the same time both teams will receive a forfeiture loss. This will include regular season and tournament play at the preliminary and quarterfinal rounds. In the spirit of player safety, semifinal and final soccer games **may** be terminated following the issuance of five (5) cards to a single team, at the discretion of the officials and Soccer Tournament Committee present.
  5. Game officials must report all yellow and red card infractions to the NHIAA Office via the Arbiter following their games.
  6. Athletic Directors are required to report all yellow and red cards via the soccer card report on the NHIAA website.

**Notes:**

- a. Preseason yellow cards are not counted towards your season total. Preseason red cards will be counted towards your season total.
- b. An athlete or coach, who receives two (2) yellow cards, resulting in a red card, will only be counted for the red card disqualification.
- c. Any team scheduled to play against a team that has been disqualified from tournament play will be notified prior to the game.
- d. Teams (players/coaches) that qualify for tournament play and during post season play reach a cumulative total of either four (4) red cards or 12 yellow cards

will be required to attend a hearing with the Soccer Committee.

- e. Any team (member school) attending a hearing with the Soccer Committee may result in a hearing with the Sportsmanship Committee for additional sanctions.
- f. The Soccer Committee will survey member schools next year regarding the reactions to the new sportsmanship procedures before developing sportsmanship procedures for the following season.

**NOTE:** Any player involved in a fight shall receive a two (2) game suspension for the first offense. A second offense will lead to a disqualification in that sport for the balance of the sports season.

\* This decision cannot be appealed to the NHIAA Sportsmanship Committee, as it is considered to be a judgment call by a game official.

**NOTE:** During the period of disqualification, a coach **may not be in attendance before, during, or after the game(s)/event(s) for which the disqualification is imposed. The local school administration can impose additional sanctions in addition to the two game suspension required under this By-Law should they feel such action is warranted.** If there is a violation the contest shall be forfeited, or reviewed by the Executive director as noted in Sect. 6 above. Individual schools can determine if a disqualified student athlete is allowed to continue practice or other school activities or whether to exclude the student athlete as in the case of a disqualified coach.

**INTERPRETATIONS**

- Q: If a coach or player is disqualified from the first game of baseball/softball of a scheduled doubleheader and then sits out the second game, is that person eligible to coach or participate for the team in its next day of competition?
- A: No there is a two (2) game disqualification for coaches. Yes - for players.
- Q: A player who was disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct in the last game of that student's eleventh grade season transfers to another school for his/her senior year. Is that player disqualified from his/her first game in that sport at the new school?
- A: Yes. It shall be the responsibility of the sending school to inform the receiving school of the current disqualification.
- Q: If a player is disqualified from a track event, is that player disqualified from the next day of competition?
- A: If a player is only disqualified from an event (and not disqualified from the meet for unsportsmanlike conduct), the player is NOT disqualified from the next day of competition.
- Q: If a player's or coach's disqualification occurs during the last regular season contest/day of competition, how is the disqualification administered?
- A: If the team or individual has qualified for NHIAA post-season tournament play, the player/coach is disqualified from the first game/event of the tournament. If the sports season has ended with no post-season tournament play, the disqualification carries over to the next season in any sport in which the player participates.