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**IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
RULES ON WEARING SPECIAL EQUIPMENT, BRACES & CASTS FOR 2013-14**

There are provisions in the National Federation rule books that pertain to the wearing of special equipment and braces. The purpose of this handout is to provide a summary of those provisions. Administrators, coaches, officials, and medical and paramedical personnel may use this handout as an easy reference. Coaches should familiarize themselves with the rules of their sport so they do not misinform athletes, parents, and/or medical personnel regarding what an injured athlete may or may not wear during competition. **Athletic administrators are encouraged to make copies of this handout available to medical personnel in their communities.**

BASEBALL

Rule 1 - Players -- Field Equipment

Section 4 - Uniforms

Article 2 - ... A pitcher shall not wear any item on his hands, wrists, or arms which may be distracting to the batter. A pitcher shall not wear white or gray exposed undershirt sleeves or any white or gray sleeve that extends below the elbow. **IHSAA Adaptation:** Any injury sleeves worn by a pitcher must be for medical reasons. A medical note is not required, but is recommended. The sleeve shall be a solid, dark color with no lettering or design.

Section 5 - Player Equipment

Article 8 – Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, splints, etc.) must be padded with a closed-cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than ½” thick. Knee and ankle braces which are unaltered from the manufacturer’s original design/production do not require any additional padding. Each state association may authorize the use of prostheses which in its opinion are no more dangerous to players than the corresponding human body part(s) and do not place an opponent at a disadvantage.

Article 9 - Any equipment judged by the umpire to be unreasonably dangerous is illegal.

Article 12 - Jewelry shall not be worn except for religious or **medical medals**. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. ***A medical alert bracelet** must be taped and may be visible.

Rule 6 – Pitching

Section 6 – Infractions by Pitchers

Article 2f – Illegal acts include ... wearing any items on the hands, wrists, or arms that may be distracting to the batter.

BASKETBALL

Rule 3 - Players, Substitutes, and Equipment

Section 5 - Team Members’ Equipment, Apparel

Article 1 - The referee shall not permit any team member to wear equipment or apparel which, in his/her judgment, is dangerous or confusing to other players or is not appropriate.

Article 2 - Guards, casts, braces, and compression sleeves must meet the following guidelines:

a. A guard, cast or brace made of hard and unyielding substance such as, but not limited to, leather, plaster, plastic, or metal shall **not** be worn on the elbow, hand, finger, wrist or forearm, even though covered with soft padding.

b. Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) on the upper arm or shoulder must be padded with a closed-cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than ½" thick.

c. Knee & ankle braces which are unaltered from the manufacturer’s original design/production are permitted and do not require any additional padding/covering.

d. A protective face mask may be worn and made of hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions.

e. Must be worn for medical reasons. (*IHSAA Adaptation: The student-athlete/coach must have written clearance from an appropriate health-care provider in order to wear a compression sleeve on the arm.*)

Article 3 – Arm compression sleeves shall:

- a. Be white, black, or beige or a single solid school color
- b. Be the same color for each team member
- c. Meet logo requirements in 3-6
- d. Be worn for medical reasons

Article 4 – Wristbands and headwear shall meet the following guidelines:

a. Headbands and sweatbands shall be white, black, beige, or a single solid **school** color provided all team members are wearing the same color for each item for each participant.

b. A headband is any item that goes around the entire head. If worn, only one headband is permitted, it must be worn on the forehead/crown, it must be nonabrasive and unadorned, and it must be a maximum of 2 inches.

c. If worn, only one wristband is permitted on each wrist, each must be worn on the arm below the elbow, each must be moisture absorbing, nonabrasive and unadorned, and each must be a maximum of 4 inches.

d. Rubber, cloth or elastic bands, may be used to control hair. Hard items, including, but not limited to, beads, barrettes and bobby pins, are prohibited.

e. Head decorations and headwear, except those specified above, are prohibited.

Exception: State associations may on an individual basis allow a player to participate while wearing a head covering, if it meets the following criteria:"

a. For medical or cosmetic reasons - In the event a participant is required by a licensed medical physician to cover his/her head with a covering or wrap, the physician's statement is required before the state association can approve a covering or wrap which is not abrasive, hard or dangerous to any other player and which is attached in such a way it is highly unlikely it will come off during play.

b. For religious reasons - In the event there is documented evidence provided to the state association that a participant may not expose his/her uncovered head, the state association may approve a covering or wrap which is not abrasive, hard or dangerous to any other player and which is attached in such a way it is highly unlikely it will come off during play.

Article 7 - Compression shorts may be worn if the length is above the knee and they are of a single color similar to the predominant color of the pants/skirt. Undergarment or tights shall not extend below the knee.

Article 8 - Jewelry is prohibited. Religious or **medical alert medals** are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. ***A medical alert bracelet** must be taped and may be visible.

FOOTBALL

Rule 1 - The Game, Field, Players, and Equipment

Section 5 – Player Equipment

Article 2 - The following auxiliary equipment may be worn if sanctioned by the umpire as being safe, nonabrasive, nonhardening material.

a. Forearm pads, which may be anchored on each end with athletic tape.

b. Gloves, which may be anchored with athletic tape, and even though modified, must meet the NOCSAE test standard at the time of manufacture, unless made of plain unaltered cloth. Gloves, unless made of unaltered plain cloth, must have a permanent, exact replica of the NOCSAE glove seal (Meets NOCSAE Standard), that must be visible and appear legibly on the exterior wrist opening of the glove.

Notes

1: A glove is a covering for the hand having separate sections for each finger. Pads worn on the hand, but not having separate sections encircling at least part of any finger are not gloves. The thumb is not considered a finger.

2: Non-athletic gloves, worn solely for warmth and made of unaltered plain cloth, and which do not enhance contact with the ball, do not require a label or stamp indicating compliance.

c. Tape, bandage, or support wrap on the hand or forearm to protect an existing injury.

Exception: *Tape, bandage, or support wrap not to exceed three thicknesses are legal without inspection or approval.*

Article 3 - Illegal equipment. No player shall participate while wearing illegal equipment. This applies to any equipment, which in the opinion of the umpire is dangerous, confusing, or inappropriate. Illegal equipment shall always include but not be limited to:

b. The following items related to Pads and Padding:

1. Hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) worn on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or upper arm unless padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½" thick.

2. Knee braces and ankle braces which are altered from the manufacturer's original design/production. (*Note: Knee and ankle braces that are unaltered do not require additional padding.*)

3. Knee braces worn over the pants.

4. Rib pads and back protectors unless fully covered by a jersey,

5. Plastic material covering protective pads whose edges are not rounded with a radius equal to ½ the thickness of the plastic,

6. Shin guards that do not meet NOCSAE specifications.

c. The following items related to Other Illegal Equipment:

4. An eye shield attached to the helmet that is not:

(a) Constructed of a molded, rigid material; or

(b) Is not clear, without the presence of any tint.

6. Jewelry. Religious and *medical alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert medal must be taped and may be visible.

7. Metal which is projecting or other hard substance on clothes or person,

Section 6 – Coaches Field Equipment

Article 1. Communication devices including, but not limited to audio recorder, Local Area Network (LAN) phones and/or headsets, mobile phones, still photograph(s), film, analog or digital video(s) and or internet depictions, shall not be used to communicate with a player except during an outside 9-yard mark conference (7-yard marks in nine-, eight- and six-player competition).

Note: Each state association may authorize the use of a drum by a team composed of deaf or partially deaf players, in order to establish a rhythmic cadence following the ready-for-play signal.

Article 2. Communication devices including, but not limited to, audio recorder, Local Area Network (LAN) phones and/or headsets, mobile phones, still photograph(s), film, analog or digital video(s) and or internet depictions may be used by coaches and nonplayers.

Section 7 - State Association Adoptions

Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, allow an otherwise illegal piece of equipment, create risk to the athlete /others, or place opponents at a disadvantage.

SOCCER

Rule 4 - Player Equipment

Section 2 - Other Equipment

Article 1 - Illegal equipment shall not be worn by any player. This applies to any equipment which, in the opinion of the referee, is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment which are always illegal include the following:

a. projecting metal or other hard plates, or projections on clothing or person;

b. head, arm, thigh or hip pads containing sole leather, fiber, metal or any unyielding materials;

c. hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm or shoulder unless covered, and must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½ inch thick;

d. shin guards which have exposed sharp edges or have been altered,

e. spectacle guards;

f. knee braces which are altered from the manufacturer's original design/production. Knee braces that are unaltered do not require any additional padding.

g. ankle braces which are altered from the manufacturer's original design/production. Non-metal ankle braces that are unaltered are legal and may be worn outside the sock. Ankle braces of metal or unyielding material that are unaltered are legal if covered by a sock.

h. helmets, hats, caps, or visors.

Exception 1: The goalkeeper may wear a head protector made of closed-cell, slow-recovery rubber or other similar material that stays soft in its final form. This head protector shall not have a bill, or other protruding design. It shall not cover the face, other than the forehead, and shall be secured by a chin strap.

Exception 2: The goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed baseball type hat or soft billed visor. If worn in conjunction with a head protector, it is to be worn outside and may not be attached to the head protector.

Exception 3: By state association adoption, players may wear soft and yielding caps during inclement weather. Caps must be alike in color.

Note: The wearing of illegal uniforms or equipment is prohibited even though the coaches of both teams approve it.

Article 2 - Hair control devices may be worn if made of soft material and not for adornment.

Article 3 - Sweatbands may be worn on the head or wrist if made of a soft material.

Article 4 - Jewelry shall not be worn except for religious or medical medals.

a. A religious medal shall be taped & worn under the uniform.

b. A **medical alert** must be taped & may be visible.

Article 5 - All permissible artificial limbs must be padded with a closed-cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than a ½ -inch thick.

Note: Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, allow an otherwise illegal piece of equipment, create risk to the athlete /others, or place opponents at a disadvantage.

Article 6 - Hearing aids worn in or behind the ears are legal, provided that the device does not create the threat of injury.

Article 7 - A tooth and mouth protector (intraoral), which shall include an occlusal and labial portion and covering the posterior teeth with adequate thickness, is legal. It is recommended that the protector be properly fitted and:

a. Constructed from a model made from an impression of the individual's teeth.

b. Constructed and fitted to the individual by impressing his teeth into the tooth and mouth protector itself.

c. The tooth and mouth protector shall be of any readily visible color, other than white or clear.

Article 8 - A protective face mask may be worn by a player with a facial injury. The mask may be made of hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions. A medical release for the injured player signed by an appropriate health-care professional shall be available at the game site.

SPIRIT/CHEERLEADING

Rule 2 - General Risk Management

Section 1 - General

Note: Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, allow an otherwise illegal piece of equipment,

create risk to the athlete /others, or place opponents at a disadvantage.

Section 3 - Participant Apparel/Accessories

ICCA/IHSAA ADDITION: All briefs should be devoid of any markings including but not limited to sequins, prints, wording, symbols, etc. In addition, no visible apparel may be worn under the uniform except bodysuits/spandex/briefs. Teams shall wear official school issued uniforms that are of similar color and/or marking. All uniforms, including footwear must be in compliance with the NFHS Spirit Rules Book.

Article 1- Jewelry of any kind is prohibited except for the following: A religious medal without a chain is allowed and must be taped to the body and worn under the uniform. A ***medical alert** medal must be taped and may be visible.

Article 2 - Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept short, near the end of the fingers.

ICCA/IHSAA ADDITION: When extending the fingers and looking at the palm of the hand, the fingernails should not be visible.

Article 3 - The hair must be worn in a manner that is appropriate for the activity involved. Hair devices must be secure. **ICCA/IHSAA ADDITION: HAIR MUST BE SECURED** away from the face & eyes and off the shoulders, such as in a ponytail. **Hair CANNOT touch the shoulders. Ribbons may NOT have large or hard objects (including sequins of any size) glued onto ribbons.** Bump its are **NOT** legal! Artificial flowers have been ruled illegal. This is for both stunting and non-stunting squads.

Article 7 - Glitter that does not readily adhere on the hair, face, uniform, costume, body, uniform, or costume is illegal. Glitter may be used on signs, props, or backdrops if laminated and sealed. **ICCA/IHSAA ADDITION: NO GLITTER** is allowed on the face, hair, or uniform.

Article 8 - Supports, braces, etc., which are hard or unyielding or have rough edges or surfaces must be padded with closed-cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than one-half thick. Padded knee and ankle braces which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require any additional padding. A participant wearing a cast (excluding a properly covered air cast) shall not be involved in a stunt.

ICCA/IHSAA NOTE: These rules are in effect for **ALL** Iowa schools' events (*grades 7-12*) including practices, games, meets, tournaments, competitions, and all other events in which school cheerleaders participate.

SWIMMING

Rule 3 - Team Personnel

Section 3 - Uniforms

Article 4 - **A competitor with a disability** may use equipment, provided, in the judgment of the state association, no advantage is gained. The written approval from the state association must be made available to the referee.

Note: Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, allow an otherwise illegal piece of equipment, create risk to the athlete /others, or place opponents at a disadvantage.

Article 5a - **Medical-alert medals** are not considered jewelry, must be taped to the body and alert may be visible.

Article 5b - Religious medals are not considered jewelry, must be worn under the uniform and taped to the body.

Article 5c - Hair restraining devices are considered legal, provided they are functioning and are being worn in the hair during the event.

TRACK & FIELD AND CROSS COUNTRY

Rule 4 - Competitors and Competition

Section 3 - Competitor's Uniform

Article 3 - Jewelry shall not be worn by competitors.

- a. Medical alert medals are not considered jewelry. The alert should be visible.
- b. When the medal is attached:
- c. 1. to a bracelet made of metal or an unyielding material, it shall be taped to the body.
- 2. to a bracelet made of a pliable material, it is not required to be taped to the body.
- 3. to a necklace, it shall be taped to the body.
- b. Religious medals are not considered jewelry and must be worn under the uniform and taped to the body.
- c. A watch may be worn around the wrist.
- d. Unadorned devices, such as bobby pins, barrettes, and hair clips, no longer than 2 inches, may be worn to control a competitor's hair.

WRESTLING

Rule 4 - Wrestlers' Classification and Weigh-in

Section 1 - Wrestlers' Uniform

Article 1c - Full-length tights with stirrups are acceptable under a one-piece uniform. Any other undergarment that extends beyond the inseam of the one-piece uniform shall be tight fitting, a single, solid color, unadorned and shall not extend below the knee.

Section 2 - Wrestlers' Appearance and Health

Article 1 - If an individual has hair longer than allowed by rule, it may be braided or rolled if it is contained in a cover so the hair rule is satisfied. The cover shall either be a part of the ear guards or worn under the ear guards. A bandanna is not considered a legal hair cover. The cover must be of a solid material and nonabrasive. The wrestler opting to wear a legal hair cover must wear it to the weigh-in procedure and be checked for grooming with it on.

If an individual has facial hair it must be covered with a face mask. All hair coverings and face masks are considered special equipment.

Article 5 - Each contestant who has braces, or has a special orthodontic device on their teeth, shall be required to wear a tooth and mouth protector. The protector must cover the teeth and all areas of the braces or special orthodontic device, including upper and lower teeth if braces are present on both.

Section 3 - Special Equipment

Article 1 - Special equipment is defined as any equipment worn that is not required by rule. Any equipment which does not permit normal movement of the joints and which prevents one's opponent from applying normal holds/maneuvers shall not be permitted. Special equipment includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Hair coverings, face masks, braces, casts, supports, eye protection and socks;
- b. Any protective equipment which is hard and/or abrasive must be covered and properly padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½-inch thick;

Article 2 - Each state association may authorize the use of artificial limbs, which in its opinion are no more dangerous to competitors than the corresponding human limb and do not place an opponent at a disadvantage.

Article 3 - All parts of a pad must fit snug against the wrestler's body. Loose pads are prohibited.

Article 4 - Taping or strapping which substantially restricts the normal movement of a joint shall be prohibited. The taping of fingers and thumb is not a violation.

Section 4 - Weight Classifications

Article 4 - At anytime, the use of sweat boxes; hot showers; whirlpools, rubber, vinyl, and plastic-type suits; or similar artificial heating devices; diuretics; or other methods for quick weight reduction purposes is prohibited and shall disqualify an individual from competition.

***Coaches should be aware of student-athletes wearing medical bracelets/necklaces and be prepared to inform medical personnel. Medical personnel should be aware that tape on a wrist or on the chest area may indicate the presence of a medical bracelet/necklace.**