

IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
RULES ON WEARING SPECIAL EQUIPMENT, BRACES & CASTS FOR 2009-10

There are provisions in the National Federation rule books which pertain to the wearing of special equipment and braces. The purpose of this handout is to provide a summary of those provisions. This handout may be used as an easy reference by administrators, coaches, officials and medical and paramedical personnel. 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.

Section 5 - Player Equipment

Article 8 - All casts, splints and braces must be padded with at least ½" of closed-cell, slow recovery rubber or other material of the same minimum thickness and having similar physical properties. No protective equipment shall have exposed metal or any other hard material. 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.

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 leather, plaster, pliable (soft) plastic, metal or any other hard surface may 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.

c - Knee & ankle braces are permitted, but all exposed hinges must be covered. Most over-sleeves recommended by the manufacturer are acceptable. These braces may be padded or unpadded.

d - Must be worn for medical reasons.

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

Article 3 - Sweatbands, headwear & head decorations must meet the following guidelines:

a. Headbands and sweatbands must be white or a single solid color similar to the torso of the jersey and must be the same color for each item and all participants. Only one item is permitted on the head and one on each wrist. Items must be moisture absorbing, non abrasive and unadorned (except for logo).

b. If worn, the headband must be worn on the forehead and be a maximum of 2 inches (except for logo).

c. If worn, sweatbands must be worn on the arm, below the elbow, and be a maximum of 4 inches (except for logo).

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 6 - Undergarment or tights shall not extend below the knee. **Exception** - 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.

Article 7 - 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.

Case Book 3.5A (Player Equipment) There are three criteria which determine the legality of equipment: **First**, any equipment which, in the judgement of the referee, is dangerous to others (is illegal). **Second**, any equipment which is unnatural or designed to increase the player's height or reach, or to gain an advantage, shall not be used. **Third**, equipment used must be appropriate for basketball & not be confusing. The referee must rule on the legality of any piece of equipment which is worn to protect an injury. Protective equipment must be individually inspected & approved using the criteria outlined.

FOOTBALL

Rule 1 - The Game, Field, Players and Equipment

Section 5 - Player Equipment

Article 1 - Mandatory

a. A helmet and face mask which met the NOCSAE test standard at the time of manufacture. The face mask shall have a surface covered with resilient material designed to prevent chipping, burrs or abrasiveness and be properly secured to the helmet as designed by the manufacturer. The helmet shall be secured by a properly fastened chin strap with at least four attachment points.

b. Hip pads and tail bone protector, neither of which is altered from the manufacturer's original design/production.

d. Knee pads, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production which are worn over the knee & under the pants at least 1/2" inch thick or 3/8" thick, if made of an approved shock absorbing material.

e. Pants which cover the knees and knee pads.

g. Shoulder pads and hard surface auxiliary attachments, which shall be fully covered by a jersey.

h. Thigh guards, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production which shall have any hard surface covered with material such as closed-cell vinyl foam ...

i. A tooth and mouth protector (intra oral) which shall include an occlusal (protecting and separating the biting surfaces) and a labial (protecting the teeth and supporting structures) portion and covers the posterior teeth with adequate thickness. It is recommended the protector be properly fitted and:

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

2. Constructed and fitted to the individual by impressing his teeth into the tooth and mouth protector itself. The tooth and mouth protector shall be of any readily visible color, other than completely white or completely clear.

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

a. Gloves, which may be anchored with athletic tape, even though modified, must have a securely attached label or stamp (NFHS/NCAA specifications) indicating compliance with test specifications on file with the Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association as of January 1, 1994, unless made of plain unaltered cloth. **NOTE:** A glove is a covering for the hand having separate sections for each finger and thumb, absent of any web-like material between the fingers and/or thumb, and completely covering each finger and thumb.

b. Hand pads, which may be anchored with athletic tape. Hand pads must have a securely attached label or stamp (NF/NCAA specifications) indicating compliance with test specifications on file with the Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association as of January 1, 1994, unless made of plain unaltered cloth.

NOTE: A hand pad is a covering for the hand, which may have separate openings for each finger and thumb, is absent of any web-like material between the fingers and/or thumb, and not covering each finger and thumb.

c. Forearm pads, which may be anchored on each end with athletic tape. Beginning in 2008, forearm pads must have a securely attached label or stamp (NF/NCAA specifications) indicating compliance with test specifications on file with the Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association as of January 1, 1994.

d. 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.

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

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. Computers or any other electronic or mechanical devices for communication. **Note 1:** 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. **Note 2:** Each state association may authorize the use of a hearing instrument to enhance the efficiency of a required hearing aid prescribed by a licensed medical physician provided it is not dangerous to the wearer or any other player.

c. Hard substance in its final form such as leather, rubber, plastic, plaster, or fiberglass when worn on the hand, wrist, forearm, or elbow *unless covered on all exterior surfaces with no less than 1/2-inch thick, high-density, closed-cell polyurethane*, or an alternate material of the same minimum thickness and similar properties to protect an injury as *directed in writing* by a licensed medical physician. Such written direction shall be provided to the umpire prior to the start of the game.

d. Knee braces made of hard unyielding material, unless all parts of the brace made of hard material and extending below the pants are covered. Any other hard substance across the front of the leg must be covered with at least 1/2-inch of closed-cell slow-recovery rubber or other material of the same minimum thickness and having similar physical properties;

e. Metal which is projecting or other hard substance on clothes or person;

f. Plastic material covering protective pads whose edges are not rounded with a radius equal to 1/2 the thickness of the plastic;

g. Rib pads and back protectors unless fully covered by a jersey;

m. Jewelry shall not be worn. 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.

n. Eye shields unless made of molded, rigid material that is clear and permits 100% light transmission.

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, even if they are covered with soft padding;
- c. casts, splints, or body braces made of a hard substance in its final form such as leather, rubber, plastic, plaster or fiberglass, unless covered on all exterior surfaces with no less than ½ inch thick, high-density, closed-cell polyurethane, or an alternate material of the same minimum thickness and similar physical properties to protect an injury. A medical release for the injured player signed by a licensed medical physician shall be available at the game site.
- d. shin guards which have exposed sharp edges or have been altered;
- e. spectacle guards;
- f. 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.

g. Knee braces made of hard unyielding material, unless hinges are covered on all sides, and all of its edges are overlapped. Any covering/sleeve made by the manufacturer may be worn.

h. Ankle braces, unless covered by a stocking or other suitable material.

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 religious medal shall be taped & worn under the uniform. A ***medical alert*** must be taped & may be visible.

Article 5 - Artificial limbs, which in the judgment of the State High School Association are no more dangerous to players than the corresponding human limb and do not place an opponent at a disadvantage, may be permitted. Upper limb prostheses are discouraged. Hinges shall be lateral and covered by leather. All permissible artificial limbs shall be covered by at least ½ inch foam rubber padding.

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 a licensed medical physician shall be available at the game site.

SPIRIT/CHEERLEADING

Rule 2 - General Risk Management

Section 2 - Participant Apparel/Accessories

Article 1 - Jewelry must not be worn except for religious or *medical medals which shall be taped to the body (without a chain) under the uniform.

Article 2 - Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept at an appropriate length (short, near the end of the fingers) to minimize the risk for participants. **ICCA/IHSAA ADDITION:** All nails, including artificial nails, must be cut to a length so the nail is not visible when the cheerleader holds up her/his hands from the palm side. This is what is considered safe and appropriate.

Article 3 - The hair must be worn in a manner to minimize the risk for the participant. Hair devices, if worn, must be secure and appropriate for the activity. **ICCA/IHSAA ADDITION:** All cheerleaders' hair MUST be pulled away from the face and shoulders -, i.e., ponytail. (No banana combs, butterfly clips, or long ribbons. Only barrettes and bobby pins that are flat to the head.) All hair (including short hair) MUST be away from the face and off the shoulders: i.e ponytail. This is for both stunting and non-stunting squads.

Article 7 - Glitter that does not readily adhere on the hair, face, uniform, costume or body is illegal. Glitter may be used on signs, props, or back drops if laminated and sealed. **ICCA/IHSAA ADDITION:** No roll on or spray on glitter. Glitter in eye shadow should be minimal.

Article 8 - Supports, braces, etc., which are hard and unyielding or have rough edges/surfaces must be appropriately covered. A participant wearing a cast (excluding a properly covered air cast) shall not be involved in a stunt.

Article 11 - 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.

NOTE 1: Insulin packs should be placed strategically, covered with a pad, and secured so they won't become dislodged during activity. A medical release signed by a physician should be on file before allowing a cheerleader to cheer with an insulin pump.

NOTE 2: 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 3 - **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.

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 1c

2 - Loose-fitting, boxer-type bottoms, compression-style bottoms are permitted for boys and girls. Closed-leg briefs are acceptable for girls.

Article 1d - Any visible garment(s) worn underneath the uniform top or bottom shall be a single, solid color and unadorned except for:

1 - A single school name or insignia no more than 2 1/4 square inches with no dimension more than 2 1/4 inches;

2 - A single manufacturers logo as per NFHS rules.

NOTE: If more than one garment is worn under the top or bottom, all must be the same color under the uniform piece.

Article 3 - Jewelry shall not be worn by contestants. **Medical-alert medals** are not considered jewelry, must be taped to the body and alert may be visible. Religious medals are not considered jewelry, must be worn under the uniform and taped to the body. A watch may be worn around the wrist.

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 shall not be permitted. Any equipment which is hard and/or abrasive must be covered and padded. Electronic communication equipment that permits communication between coach and contestant during competition is not permitted. Special equipment includes, but is not limited to, hair coverings, face masks, braces, supports, eye protection and socks.

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.**

CLARIFICATION OF CAST/SPLINT/BRACE RULE FOOTBALL AND SOCCER

Football Rule 1-5-3 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 which is inappropriate. **Illegal equipment shall always include**, but is not limited to:

c. Hard substance in its final form such as leather, rubber, plastic, plaster or fiberglass, when worn on the hand, wrist, forearm, or elbow **unless covered on all exterior surfaces** with no less than ½-inch thick, high-density, closed-cell polyurethane or an alternate substance of the same minimum thickness and similar physical properties to protect and injury **as directed in writing by a licensed medical professional** (licensed physician and surgeon (MD), osteopathic physician and surgeon (DO), advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP), physician's assistant (PA) or qualified doctor of chiropractic (DC)).

Soccer Rule 4-2-1 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 illegal include the following:**

c. casts, splints, or body braces made of a hard substance in their final form such as leather, rubber, plastic, plaster or fiberglass **unless covered on all exterior surfaces** with no less than ½- inch thick, high density, closed cell polyurethane, or an alternate material of the same minimum thickness and similar physical properties to protect and injury. **A medical release for the injured player signed by a licensed medical professional** (licensed physician and surgeon (MD), osteopathic physician and surgeon (DO), advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP), physician's assistant (PA) or qualified doctor of chiropractic (DC)). shall be available at the game site.

The written release from a licensed medical professional authorizing the use of a cast, splint or brace for an existing injury must include the following:

- 1) First and last name of the athlete for whom the cast has been prescribed.
- 2) The location of the cast.
- 3) The date the cast was prescribed.
- 4) The licensed medical professional's signature.