

Uniformity and Consistency = Play-Calling Proficiency



Rule 3-5 Enforcement

There are some important reasons why we require conformity to the player uniform requirements. Every year, it seems that uniforms are becoming more of a fashion statement than a functional piece. Officials' response to this has seemingly been in two camps: "I'm not the fashion police, so I don't address it." or "Let's give the coach technical because his player is trying to be cool." In all practicality, we want you to be somewhere in the middle—address it without penalizing it, if possible.

Proper wear of uniforms is important from an official's perspective because it offers fairness, clarity and safety. There must be some guidelines in a player's or team's uniform or it wouldn't be called a "uniform." In fairness to both teams, we require that each comply with certain requirements so that one isn't allowed to wear apparel that another cannot.

Uniform and accessories (colors and the like) are important to regulate because it provides the officials the ability to distinguish one team from another. Additionally, accessories and adornments can become a distraction. To prevent this, we have restrictions we must enforce.

The most important reason for uniform regulations is in consideration of the safety of the players involved. It's not that we restrict the tails on headbands because we're traditionalist or stodgy—it's because we don't want players from either team injuring themselves because they get in the way.

So, the big question is, "How do we address apparel issues?" The answer to that is, "As best we can." For most violations, we should just have it corrected before the player can begin/continue participation. For instance, if you see a player about to enter as a substitute and he has an illegally rolled waistband, tell him/her to flip correct it. If he/she complies, they're okay to enter the game. Do not, repeat DO NOT, allow the player to enter the game and then "T" up the coach.

Speaking Of...

Rolled waistbands not intended to be worn in that manner by the manufacturer are not allowed. The primary reason for this is that it often exposes drawstrings that could be caught up on something or someone. Because of this recent fad, some manufacturers are designing the elastic inside of the short to have the logo printed upside-down so it is displayed properly when flipped inside-out. As long as this is intended by the manufacturer, complies with the limit on displayed logos and doesn't expose drawstrings, this would be permitted. If it violates any of these areas, the officials should have it corrected immediately. The game should not be held up to allow for a correction. This, along with other authoritative opinions and MHSAA interpretations can be found on the Officials area of the MHSAA website.

Rule Review: A1 is holding the ball but losing her balance. Which of the following results in a violation?

- A. A1 touches the floor with one hand with the ball in the other
- B. A1 touches the floor with her knee
- C. A1 reaches and touches a teammate's arm who is out of bounds
- D. A1 touches the floor with the ball which she is holding

Mechanics: Don't get buried in the "coffin corner" as a Trail official. Officials will give many reasons for hanging near the division line (e.g., "I'm not as fast as I used to be," "I can see it from midcourt," "The team transitions fast" or "That's the way I was taught."), but none justifiable for not working to get into a position near the top of the arc.

