



2026-27

**Policy & Procedures Manual
For The Conduct of Football**



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INTRODUCTION

This Football Policy and Procedures Manual is an annual publication of the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association 251 Clinton Street Concord, NH 03301. Neither the whole nor part of this publication may be copied or reproduced and/or translated without first obtaining written permission from the publisher.

All schools must be aware of the NHIAA By-Laws and policies relative to football which are published annually in the "NHIAA HANDBOOK" as well as the rules of the game published by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

POINTS OF SPECIAL EMPHASIS:

1. CHAMPIONSHIP PRE-GAME PROCEDURES:

- In order to minimize on-field distractions, and maximize time to repair defective or unapproved player equipment, the Referee, Umpire, and Head Coach meetings shall take place 70-80 minutes before game time, preferable in an off field location.
- A minimum of 90 minutes prior to game time it shall be the joint responsibility of the referee, the host Athletic Director and both Head Coaches to coordinate and determine the location for respective pre game conferences. Should one or both of these conferences not take place prior to warm-up, the Referee and Umpire shall meet with each head coach on the field prior to the game to complete these required activities.
- **80 Minutes Prior To Game Time-Home Team:** The home team's head coach shall meet with the Referee and Umpire at the previously designated location and the certification of player equipment and pre game conference shall be conducted.
- **70 Minutes Prior To Game Time-Visiting Team:** The visiting teams' head coach shall meet with the Referee and Umpire at the previously designated location and the certification of player equipment and pre game conference shall be conducted.

During these meetings, the following topics will be addressed:

- a. Verification of legality of player equipment
- b. Review and approval of any specific equipment, casts, etc.
 - Reminder: Any hard and unyielding item (such as casts) on the hand, wrist, forearm elbow, or upper arm must be padded with foam padding that is at least 1/2" thick. There is no longer a requirement to have a doctor's note authorizing participation. Approval or illegal equipment, i.e; tinted face shields, requires approval from the NHIAA Executive Director. Requests for a deviation of NFHS Rules need to be completed by the school's Athletic Director. A copy of the note shall be given to the Referee, attached to the game report and submitted to the NHFOA Commissioner.
 - It will be the coach's responsibility to bring any player who requires equipment inspection to the official's at this time.
- c. Lists of game officials names to head coach
- d. Official time and when captains are expected to be ready for coin-toss
- e. Review length of half-time and any special pre-game procedures by teams
- f. Approval of game balls (coaches are required to bring all footballs requesting to be used in the game)
- g. Verification of certified trainer and procedure (with home team coach or Athletic Director)
- h. NHIAA Sportsmanship Review
- i. Questions and special plays

2. Film Exchange/Scouting Policy

- a. All schools will allow:
 - Filming of the opponent beginning with the last scrimmage/jamboree through the end of the tournament.
 - Filming/Swapping of films of all regular season and tournament games.
- b. The exchange of game films by competing teams is by mutual consent.

- 3. A regularly scheduled game cannot be forfeited by the individual schools (principals, athletic directors, coaches and others). Current By-Law Article XXI: Football, Section 3C states: "The NHIAA and the Football Committee shall be notified at the first opportunity concerning postponement of a regularly scheduled football game, together with the intention to reschedule."
- 4. Games that are interrupted, suspended, called, and/or halted and not made up, wins or losses on those conflicts will be decided by the NHIAA Football Committee.
- 5. Schools that issue equipment to athletes for out-of-season use assume the liability for its use. Such equipment should be inspected prior to the season for reconditioning and safety.
- 6. Each coach should be familiar with the NHIAA By-Law Article II: Eligibility, Section 9: Out-Of-Season Competition.

7. All pre-season jamborees must be sanctioned by the NHIAA in accordance with By-Law Article I: Policy; Section 9.
8. Football safety guidelines should be reviewed by each school and procedures developed for the safety of the players.
9. Medical coverage as described herein must be provided for all practices, jamborees, scrimmages and games at all levels of play.
10. The procedures for the awards ceremony after the conclusion of the Championship Games must be communicated to the players, coaches, spectators and media.
11. Site Criteria:

Once the football playoff team selections have been made, a Football Committee member appointed by the Committee Chair shall make contact with the Athletic Director at the host school to determine if the criteria set forth below have been satisfied. This will be completed by 12:00 noon on the Tuesday of the week the game is to be played. In the event of inclement weather the field will be reevaluated by the football committee. In the event the home school fails to meet the criteria, the other school in the playoff game shall be contacted to determine if they can satisfy the criteria. In the event neither school can satisfy the Committee requirements, the Committee shall seek out a neutral site to hold the game. This will be chosen from a predetermined list of neutral sites. Schools are reminded that monitoring proper field conditions is the responsibility of the school throughout the season (Refer to site criteria on page 7). Failure to meet the stated criteria can impact your school's ability to host playoff games.
12. Public Address System: The game director will ensure that a satisfactorily working public address system is available. A wireless microphone system may be used by the referee to announce infractions, penalties, and the offending team only. An announcer must also be provided. The game director should remind the announcer that "play by play" descriptions of the game are prohibited. Announcers are also to refrain from editorializing or promoting one team/player over another.
13. Pre-Game Ceremony: Refer to page 25 for pre-game ceremony procedures.
14. Athletic Trainers: Schools requesting medical services are to provide the necessary supplies for the athletic trainer at all regular season and tournament events.
15. Per NFHS Rule 1-6-1...Communication devices including but not limited to an 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.
16. Game Ball: The official game ball for the 2025-26 season will be **Wilson WTF1003B GST**
17. Rosters shall be complete via the NHIAA website. If a team is going to make the tournament, a team photo in uniform (no warm-ups and no mascots allowed) must be submitted with photo lineup. If no photo is received a logo will be supplemented.
18. Each coach should be familiar with the NHIAA By-Law Article IX: Sportsmanship, Section 6 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 contest 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. (CM 5.2023)

NHIAA FOOTBALL COMMITTEE
REGULATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

I. MANAGEMENT:

The NHIAA and its Football Committee will manage and control the New Hampshire State High School Football Championship Series, under By-Law Article XXI, Football.

II. SPONSORSHIP:

The NHIAA will sponsor, conduct and underwrite the New Hampshire State High School Football Championship Series and will receive all proceeds realized.

III. SPORTSMANSHIP:

Good sportsmanship is the number one (1) priority of the National Federation and the NHIAA. Coaches, athletic directors and principals should stress good sportsmanship from players, coaches and spectators and stress further that unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated.

Rule 1-1-5 of the National Federation Football Rules states, “Prior to the game the referee shall meet with the head coach(es) and captain(s) and explain that everyone is expected to exhibit good sportsmanship throughout the game.”

The coaches will then be excused and the coin toss with the team captains will be held.

- Crowd control, safety and good sportsmanship are major concerns. It is the responsibility of school officials to ensure these concerns are addressed. Guidelines for sportsmanship and a Code of Ethics for spectators are provided by the Sportsmanship Committee. (NHIAA Handbook “Student Athlete Code of Ethics pg. 7)
- Disqualified Athletes: A disqualified athlete is not to be sent to the locker room or off the field unsupervised. If no supervision is available the disqualified athlete shall remain on the bench and become the coach’s responsibility to supervise. (NHIAA Brochure “Sportsmanship/ Disqualifications)

IV. DUTY TO WARN:

There is an obligation to provide a safe playing environment and to warn student athletes of potential dangerous conditions. For football, these include proper fitting of helmets and pads, and warning against the use of the head in tackling and blocking.

Integral to this aspect of warning is the establishment of procedures for safety rules and regulations. (See Hold Harmless Form, Appendix A)

V. FIELD PREPARATION EXPENSES:

Field preparation expenses will only be approved by the Football Committee when a game of the Championship Series is played at a neutral site.

VI. PRE-SEASON AND PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS:

By-Law Article XXI: Football; Sect. 3: General Regulations

- A. Football will not be permitted in the NHIAA member schools from the Sunday following Thanksgiving until the opening date of practice in the fall. A player must participate in six (6) practice days before participating in a football game, scrimmage, or jamboree. (Waiver Division I 2026-27) (CM 1.2024)
- B. All fall schedules shall be submitted to the Executive Director by July 27th.
- C. The NHIAA and the Football Committee shall be notified at the first opportunity concerning postponement of a regularly scheduled football game, together with the intention to reschedule.
- D. The home team in all football games will accept responsibility for the organization and administration of the half-time program. This program shall be conducted within the time limits established by the rules of the game.
- E. Playing Rules:
 - 1. All high school football games played in New Hampshire will be played in accordance with the National Federation playing rules.
 - 2. Uniforms: The higher seeded team will wear dark colored uniforms and the lower seeded team will wear light colored uniforms.
 - 3. Scrimmages: It is recommended that all interschool football scrimmages (sub-varsity included) be officiated by at least one (1) certified football official.

F. Practice Requirements:

Day	Practice Type	Rest Requirements	Contact Restrictions	Equipment Allowed
Day 1	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	No contact	Helmet only
Day 2	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	No contact	Helmet Only
Day 3	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Contact with sleds and dummies, & shields	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Day 4	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Contact with sleds and dummies. Limited player to player contact, & shields	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Day 5	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Contact with sleds and dummies. Limited player to player contact, & shields	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Day 6	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact No Scrimmages	Full Pads
Day 7	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 8	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 9	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 10	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 11	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 12	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 13	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 14	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads

***Scrimmages are limited to no more than two (CM 1.2019)**

Definitions

“Practice” is defined as the time a participant engages in physical activity. Warm-up, stretching, cool down activities and weight lifting are to be included as part of practice time. Meetings and film study do not count towards practice activities.

“Walkthrough” is defined as a teaching opportunity with no intense physical activity and no contact. Helmets are permitted to be worn and the use of footballs is permitted. A walkthrough cannot be longer than 1 hour in duration.

“Rest Period” is defined as the time between the end of a walkthrough/practice and the beginning of the next walkthrough/practice. During this time, no physical activity is permitted.

“Scrimmage” is defined as any action which simulates any game play conditions (1v1 through 11v11) where members of one school would be organized against members of one or more schools.

“Limited player to player contact” is defined as contact within drills and individual periods at half speed i.e., fit and shed drill, form tackle drill

“Day Off” The 14-day acclimatization period is 14 practice/scrimmage days, not Calendar days.

VII. SUB-VARSITY GAMES:

No sub-varsity (freshmen, sophomore and junior varsity) games may be played on or after the first scheduled playoff game in that division.

VIII. SAFETY GUIDELINES:

The following guidelines on football safety are recommended to ensure the protection of student athletes:

- A. Identify during the physical exam those athletes with a history of previous head or neck injuries and history of previous heat illness.
- B. Types of training activities should be planned before organized practice begins.
- C. Emphasis should be placed on proper conditioning exercises, which will strengthen the players' necks, in order to be able to hold their heads firmly erect while making contact during a tackle or block.
- D. Athletes should be drilled in the proper execution of the fundamentals of football, including blocking and tackling. Emphasis should be placed on the shoulder block and tackle and "keeping the head out of the football".
- E. Emphasis should be used to discourage the use of the head when blocking and tackling. The rules prohibiting spearing should be emphasized both in practices and in games. The players should be taught to respect the helmet as a protective device and not as a weapon.
- F. Emphasis should be placed on the proper fit of all equipment including the helmet.
- G. Coaches must be prepared for possible catastrophic injuries. Knowing what not to do is as important as knowing what to do.
- H. When a player shows signs of head trauma (loss of consciousness, visual disturbances, headache, inability to walk correctly, obvious disorientation, memory loss) the player should receive immediate medical attention and must not be allowed to return to practice, scrimmage or game without the written permission of a physician. Refer to concussion statement pg. 13
- I. Temperature and humidity cause heat stroke and heat exhaustion, which can occur in the shade. Each school should develop hot and humid weather and pre-season guidelines which should include:
 - Having practice sessions during cooler temperature times of the day (morning and evening).
 - Acclimating players through carefully graduated practice sessions.
 - Providing access to water intake (one cup for every 20 minutes).
 - Providing for rest periods of 15 to 20 minutes per hour of practice.
- J. Each school should develop guidelines which should include:
 - Furnishing water with disposable drinking containers or individual water containers for each player.
 - Identifying signs of fatigue, lethargy, inattention, stupor and awkwardness.
 - Providing individual towels.
- K. Athletes should weigh each day before and after practice and WEIGHT CHARTS CHECKED. Generally, a 3-percent (3%) weight loss through sweating is safe and over a 3-percent weight loss is in the danger zone. Over a 3-percent weight loss, the athlete should not be allowed to practice in hot and humid conditions. Observe them closely under all conditions.

IX. DIVISIONAL ALIGNMENT:

Football shall be aligned in four (4) divisions based upon enrollments and petitions subject to the approval of the Classification Committee.

Division I (850 +) 21 Schools					
<u>West</u>		<u>Central</u>		<u>East</u>	
Nashua South	1697	Pinkerton	2979	Portsmouth-Oyster River	1779
Nashua North	1545	Concord	1329	Dover	1423
Bedford	1367	Londonderry	1219	Spaulding	1346
Keene	1263	Man. Central	1106	Man. Memorial	1345
Goffstown	1032	Salem	1069	Exeter	1329
Merrimack	1013	Alvirne	955	Winnacunnet	988
*Bishop Guertin	767	Windham	884	Timberlane	934

Division II (550-849) 16 Schools			
<u>East</u>		<u>West</u>	
Kingswood	727	Man. West	756
Pembroke	718	Hollis Brookline	713
Merrimack Valley	715	Souhegan	709
Plymouth	643	Hanover	693
Bow	639	John Stark	657
Kennett	612	Milford	613
*Trinity	345	Con-Val	603
*St. Thomas Aquinas	341	*Pelham	466

Division III (406-549) 13 Schools			
*Franklin-Winnisquam	651	Gilford	442
*Lebanon	642	Inter-Lakes-Moultonborough	434
Laconia	543	Sanborn	433
Bishop Brady-Hopkinton	536	Somersworth	411
Epping-Newmarket	491	*Campbell	337
Kearsarge	485	Stevens	432
Monadnock	475		

Division IV (1-405) 8 Schools	
*Fall Mountain	430
*Prospect Mountain	408
Farmington-Nute	382
Newfound	368
Hillsboro-Deering	340
Raymond	326
Mascoma	317
Newport-Mount Royal	311

X. CRITERIA OF PLAY: (By-Law Article XXI: Football; Sect. 5)

No school may play another school more than once during the regular season except when the number of schools in a division is eight (8) or less after petitions, then a school may play one other school twice during the regular season. Thanksgiving Eve/Thanksgiving Day games are to be submitted on your original schedule. However, Thanksgiving Eve/Thanksgiving Day games will not count toward your maximum/minimum number of games nor will they be counted in the standings. Except for Division I teams not qualifying for the postseason, wishing to play an additional game may do so the first weekend of the football postseason. However, these games will not count toward our maximum/minimum number of games nor will they be counted in the standings. (Waiver CM 1.2024)

XI. MERCY RULE:

Once the point spread reaches 35 and it is after the 2nd half, the clock will not be stopped except for time-out, injury, penalties and scores. If the point spread goes below 35 after the 2nd half this rule will remain in effect. Whenever the point differential is equal to or greater than 35 at any time during the second half of play, the referee shall notify both head coaches of the implementation of the running clock rule. The game shall thereafter be played with a running clock with the following exceptions: **“T – I – P – S”**

- “T” – The clock shall be stopped if a team requests a time-out and during an Official’s time-out. An Official’s time-out *includes measurement for a possible first down.*
- “I” – The clock shall be stopped if a player is injured.
- “P” – The clock shall be stopped for a penalty administration.

- “S” – The clock shall be stopped after a score and shall start in accordance with normal procedures on the ensuing kickoff.

Whenever the clock is stopped under rule XI, it shall be started with the ready-for-play, except for a kickoff as specified above. On a kickoff the clock will start when legally touched after kick.

XII. SITE CRITERIA

- A. Once the football playoff team selections have been made, a Football Committee member appointed by the Committee Chair shall make contact with the Athletic Director at the host school to determine if the criteria set forth below have been satisfied. This will be completed by 12:00 noon on the Tuesday of the week the game is to be played. In the event of inclement weather, the field will be reevaluated by the football committee.
In the event the home school fails to meet the criteria, the other school in the playoff game shall be contacted to determine if they can satisfy the criteria.
In the event neither school can satisfy the Committee requirements, the Committee shall seek out a neutral site to hold the game. This will be chosen from a predetermined list of neutral sites.
- B. Suggested evaluation scoring of criteria: Inadequate, Adequate, Exceptional, N/A.
- C. The NHIAA Football Committee shall set the highest concern for the following:
 1. Health and safety of participants
 2. Comfort and safety of spectators
 3. Receptivity and cooperativeness of personnel working at site
- D. The NHIAA Football Committee in conducting evaluations regarding the acceptability of a site for championship play shall consider the following criteria. The criteria are not listed in order of priority.

1. Playing surface type 2. Playing surface condition 3. Playing surface lighting quality 4. Field dimensions as described by rule 5. Field marking and yard markers as described by rule 6. Field Safety a. Minimum 5 yard out of play belt b. Benches must NOT be permanently anchored to ground c. Irrigation system condition d. Goal post padding proper e. Ambulance service availability and access 7. Site Security a. Physical plant crowd control b. Playing surface restraining barrier c. Police protection and assigned duties d. Area lighting: spectator and parking areas 8. Dressing facilities for both teams pre-game and intermission 9. Official's changing/meeting room a. Size b. Location c. Security d. Private Showers 10. Seating condition and quantity a. Host side of field b. Guest side of field	c. Handicapped accessibility 11. Parking a. Need b. Adequacy c. Alternatives d. Reserved handicapped e. Reserved game officials f. Reserved guest busses g. Security lighting 12. Ticket sales and collection a. Controlled facility/site access b. Security 1. Location 2. Structure 3. Lighting c. Staffing d. Advance sales procedure 13. Restrooms a. Number b. Location c. Handicapped accessibility 14. Electronics (Required) a. Public address system b. Time clock/scoreboard 15. Auxiliary Structures a. Press box b. Home team scout box c. Guest team scout box d. Game tap
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- E. The NHIAA Football Committee shall also give consideration to financial liability when selecting sites for championship play.
 - 1. Costs of facility and personnel associated with facility
 - 2. Cost of public safety personnel (fire and police)
 - 3. Relative travel requirement of participating schools
- F. If it is necessary, the Executive Director and/or the Football Committee Chairperson will visit the school site to evaluate the site criteria, when necessary, on the Monday prior to a Saturday's playoff game. If it is decided that the school does not meet or cannot meet the criteria to host the game, then the school has the right to appeal the decision to a sub-committee made up of five members of the Football Committee. The Chairman of the Football Committee will appoint these five members on the Tuesday prior to the playoff game.
- G. Site Directors/Managers are encouraged to review "Appendix A" of this manual for more specific game administration key items.

XIII. CHEERLEADERS AND MASCOTS:

Spectators, cheerleaders, mascots, etc., are not permitted in team boxes or in the coach's areas. Cheerleaders and mascots are to be in the area restricted for them behind or behind and to the side of the team boxes, behind the restraining line, during the game.

XIV. BANDS

- A. Bands will be allowed free admission to the games in which their team is competing only when accompanied by an Advisor.
- B. Bands will be assigned a seating location by the Game Director. An advisor must be with the band at all times they are playing.
- C. These instructions apply to ALL tournament games played under the direction of the NHIAA Football Committee.
- D. At games played at the site of the higher seeded team, the Game Director shall direct bands to the proper seating arrangements.
- E. Game officials shall be notified is it appears that a band is attempting to deliberately interrupt the momentum of the game.

XV. DECALS AND LOGOS ON UNIFORMS:

The wearing of decals and logos is limited to:

- A. Helmets:
 - 1. School name, nickname, mascot or logo (no size limit).
 - 2. Warning label regarding the risk of injury (mandatory).
- B. Jerseys:
 - 1. NFHS Rule 1-5-1 **NOTE:** An American flag, not to exceed 2 by 3 inches, and either a commemorative or memorial patch, not to exceed 4 square inches and with written state association approval, may be worn on the jersey provided neither the flag nor the patch interferes with the visibility of the number.
 - 2. Representation of a remembrance; good sportsmanship; special events or achievements (must not exceed a 1 ½ inch by 1 ½ inch square).

NOTE: Decals or logos that are of a commercial nature or support the use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco products; are sexually explicit or implicit; are derogatory or obscene ARE NOT permitted.

XVI. JEWELRY AND BODY PIERCING RULE:

No jewelry, which includes body-piercing objects, shall be worn. Religious or medical alert medals must be properly secured under the uniform.

Per the NFHS, Dermal Piercings are considered jewelry and are not allowed. These piercings are inserted into the skin and require a medical procedure to remove them. The decorative part screws onto the pin or screw that protrudes from the skin. Even with a bandage over it would seem to pose a potential hazard to the athlete. Coaches will be asked if their athletes are properly equipped, which includes no jewelry. If discovered, the athlete will be removed from the competition until rectified.

XVII. BENCH PERSONNEL:

For liability reasons Below Grade Nine students/children are not allowed to be on the team benches or on the sidelines at any regular season and tournament contest.

XVIII. COMMUNICATION/TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT:

NFHS Rule 1-6-2 Article 2: Communication devices including but not limited to audio recorder, Local Area Network (LAN) phone and/or headsets, mobile phone, still photograph(s), film, analog or digital video(s) and/or Internet depictions may be used by coaches and non-players.

DRONES:

Use of drones or other aerial devices for filming a game is prohibited.

XIX. TEMPORARY LIGHTING

The use of temporary lighting is permitted by mutual agreement of each school's athletic administrator

**XX. INTERRUPTED/SUSPENDED/CALLED GAMES:
REGULAR SEASON**

- A. Games that are interrupted or suspended by weather or other conditions beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority EXCEPT FOR UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT, shall be continued from the point of interruption or suspension at a mutually agreed upon date, time and place unless the principals of the schools agree to terminate the game with the existing score, including ties.
- B. Games that are called by the game referee due to unsportsmanlike conduct before the start of the second half will be terminated and the game will not count nor be rescheduled and referred to the NHIAA Football and Sportsmanship Committees.
- C. Games that are called by the game referee due to unsportsmanlike conduct after the start of the second half will be terminated with the existing score, including ties and referred to the NHIAA Football and Sportsmanship Committees.
- D. Games that are interrupted, suspended, called, and/or halted and not made up, wins or losses on those conflicts will be decided by the NHIAA Football Committee.

XXI. TIE GAME PROCEDURES REGULAR SEASON AND CHAMPIONSHIP:

In case of a tie at the end of regulation time in any of the games of the regular season or Championship Series, a "tie breaker" system will be used to determine the game winner. (See Overtime Procedure, Appendix E)

XXII. SEEDING AND TIE BREAKER PROCEDURE:

In the event of a tie for a tournament position, the tie shall be resolved by using the steps in By-Law Article XXI, Football; Sect. 6, 7 and 8.

XXIII. BLOOD SPILLAGE AND BODY FLUIDS:

The NHIAA Sports Medicine Committee suggests that each school develop a local policy in cooperation with their local medical personnel, on how to handle blood spillage.

Housekeeping Procedures for Blood and Body Fluids

Disposable latex gloves should be worn to avoid contamination of the hands of the person cleaning spillages involving blood or other body fluids and secretions. Persons involved in cleaning contaminated surfaces should avoid exposure of open skin lesions or mucous membranes to blood or body fluids. A freshly prepared solution of diluted household bleach (one quarter cup of bleach diluted in one gallon of water) or other disinfectant labeled as *virucidal*, *tuberculocidal*, *staphylocidal* is useful. Allow the disinfectant to stand wet for a minimum of one minute to start killing pathogens and disinfecting the area (10 minutes of disinfection time guarantees surface sterility). Whenever possible, disposable towels, tissues, and gloves should be used and properly discarded and mops should be rinsed in disinfectant.

INTERPRETATION OF EXCESSIVE BLEEDING

National Federation Rules call for a player, who is bleeding, has an open wound or excessive blood on the uniform, to leave the court/field.

The NHIAA interprets "excessive blood on the uniform" to mean that part of the uniform is saturated with blood. Saturated does not mean a wet spot. Saturated means a major portion of the garment is covered and soaked with blood. For this to occur, significant bleeding would have had to take place.

For any blood on uniform less than "saturated", the uniform does not have to be changed. School personnel have the responsibility of treating the blood area with the appropriate disinfecting solution before the athlete may participate. If the uniform is "saturated" with blood, the uniform must be changed before the athlete may participate. This interpretation is to be followed in the conduct of all NHIAA athletic events.

XXIV. OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY - LIGHTNING:

Lightning is the most consistent and significant weather hazard that may affect outdoor athletics. Within the United States, the National Severe Storm Laboratory (NSSL) estimates that 100 fatalities and 400-500 injuries requiring medical treatment occur from lightning strikes every year. The existence of blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can, and does, strike as far as 10 miles away from the rain shaft. It does not have to be raining for lightning to strike. Additionally, thunder always accompanies lightning, even though its audible range can be diminished due to background noise in the immediate environment, and its distance from the observer.

The following guidelines are recommended:

- A. All athletic staff and game personnel are to monitor threatening weather. Establish a chain of command as to who makes the decision to remove a team or individual from athletic sites or events (athletic/site/event director, game officials/umpires, sports medicine staff?). An emergency plan should include planned instructions for participants as well as spectators.
- B. Be aware of potential thunderstorms that may form during scheduled athletic events or practices. Included here should include National Weather Service – issued (NWS) thunderstorm “watches” and “warnings” as well as signs of thunderstorms developing nearby. A “watch” means conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a “warning” means that severe weather has been reported in an area and for everyone to take proper precautions.
- C. Know where the closest “safe structure or location” is to the field or playing area, and know how long it takes to get to that safe structure or location.

Safe structure or location is defined as:

- Any building normally occupied or frequently used by people, i.e., a building with plumbing and /or electrical wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure. Avoid using shower facilities for safe shelter and **do not use** the showers or plumbing facilities during a thunderstorm.
 - In the absence of a sturdy, frequently inhabited building, any vehicle with a hard metal roof (not a convertible or golf cart) and rolled up windows can provide a measure of safety. A vehicle is certainly better than remaining outdoors. It is not the rubber tires that make a vehicle safe shelter, but the hard metal roof which dissipates the lightning strike around the vehicle. **DO NOT TOUCH THE SIDES OF THE VEHICLE!**
- D. WHEN YOU FIRST HEAR THUNDER OR SEE LIGHTING, SUSPEND ACTIVITIES AND GO TO A SAFE SHELTER OR LOCATION. **“IF YOU CAN SEE IT (LIGHTNING), FLEE IT (TAKE SHELTER). IF YOU CAN HEAR IT (THUNDER) CLEAR IT (SUSPEND ACTIVITIES).”** WAIT UNTIL 30 MINUTES AFTER THE LAST OBSERVED LIGHTNING OR THUNDER BEFORE RESUMING ACTIVITIES.
 - E. If no safe structure or location is within a reasonable distance, find a thick grove of small trees surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch. Assume a crouched position on the ground with only the balls of the feet touching the ground, wrap your arms around your knees and lower your head. Minimize contact with the ground, because lightning current often enters a victim through the ground rather than by a direct overhead strike. **MINIMIZE YOUR BODY’S SURFACE AREA, AND MINIMIZE CONTACT WITH THE GROUND! DO NOT LIE FLAT!** Stay away from the tallest trees or objects (such as light poles or flag poles), metal objects (such as bleachers or fences), individual trees, standing pools of water, and open fields. Avoid being the highest object in a field. Do not take shelter under a single, tall tree.

XXV. NHIAA GUIDELINES ON OZONE POLLUTION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

School Administrators and coaches as well as other appropriate staff are to use this document in making decisions regarding indoor and outdoor activities during periods of high ozone pollution.

CHARTING AIR QUALITY

Local officials use a simple scale to forecast and report on smog levels and other air pollution. Depending on where you live, it might be called Air Quality Index (AQI) or Pollutant Standards Index (PSI).

Current air quality is reported as a percentage of the federal health standard for a pollutant. If the current index is above 100, air pollution exceeds the level considered safe.

At Ozone smog levels above 100, children, asthmatics and other sensitive groups should limit strenuous exercise. Even otherwise healthy people should consider limiting vigorous exercise when ozone levels are at or above the health standard.

If the index is above 200, corresponding to an ozone pollution level of .20 parts per million (ppm), the pollution level is judged unhealthy for everyone. At this level, air pollution is a serious health concern. Everyone should avoid strenuous outdoor activity, as respiratory tract irritation can occur.

U.S. EPA Air Quality Index			
Index Value	Descriptor	Color	1 hr. Ozone ppb
0 – 50	Good	Green	---
51 – 100	Moderate	Yellow	---
101 – 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange	125 – 164
151 – 200	Unhealthy	Red	165 – 204
201 – 300	Very Unhealthy	Purple	205 – 404
301 – 500	Hazardous	Maroon	405 – 604

OBSERVING AIR QUALITY

1. Watch the Calendar

Ozone smog tends to be worst during the May – to – September “smog season.” Be especially conscious of smog levels during warm weather. In warm areas, smog can be a problem at any time of the year. Carbon monoxide pollution levels also are related to the weather, as well as to altitude. In the western U.S., the highest carbon monoxide levels are found in the winter months.

2. Watch the Clock

Since sunlight and time are necessary for ozone smog formation, the highest levels of ozone typically occur during the afternoon. Since carbon monoxide is produced primarily by motor vehicles, the highest carbon monoxide levels usually occur during rush hour or during other traffic congestion situations.

3. Watch the News

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

1. Observe appropriate physical activity restrictions represented above.

2. If an ozone exceedance is expected, but has not yet occurred at the time an interscholastic practice or contest is scheduled to begin, that event may begin as scheduled.

3. If an interscholastic practice or contest is scheduled to begin and an E.P.A. warning is in effect (PSI 201 or higher), the event shall be cancelled, delayed or rescheduled.

When ozone levels reach a national PSI level of 201 (.201 parts per million), exercising indoors or outdoors may cause significant respiratory tract irritation and a decline in lung function. Therefore, strenuous exercise indoors and outdoors is to cease.

RECOMMENDED RESTRICTION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The following limits on activity for each type of episode are as follows:

A. Level Orange, PSI 101-150 (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups)

1. Active children and adults and people with heart or respiratory disease, such as asthma or allergies, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
2. Healthy individuals with noticeable health effects associated with existing conditions should minimize outdoor activity.

B. Level Red, PSI 151-200 (Unhealthy)

1. All athletes should discontinue prolonged, vigorous exercise indoors and outdoors.
2. Sensitive individuals, primarily children who are active outdoors and people with heart or respiratory disease such as asthma or allergies, should avoid indoor and outdoor activity.
3. Indoor and outdoor activities that should be avoided include, but are not limited to, calisthenics, basketball, baseball, running, field hockey, soccer, football, tennis, and swimming and diving.

C. Level Purple, PSI 201-300 (Very Unhealthy)

1. All athletes shall discontinue vigorous indoor and outdoor activities, regardless of duration.
2. All indoor and outdoor physical education classes, sports practices and athletic competitions shall be rescheduled.

Note: Indoor practices may be held if an air-conditioned facility is available

XXVI. NFHS Guidelines for Management of Concussions:

The NHIAA mandates the following of the NFHS guidelines for management of Concussions. Concussions: Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. For additional information and potential symptoms, please be sure to visit By-Law Article III; Sports Medicine: Sect. 13: Concussions and the New Hampshire SB402 and its language as written.

2026-27

FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

Tournament dates, sites and times

Football

		Date	Site	Time
DIVISION I				
Prelims	Fri,	11/6/2026	Higher Seeded Team	7:00 p.m.
Quarterfinal	Fri.	11/13/2026	Higher Seeded Team	7:00 p.m.
Semis	Fri.	11/20/2026	Higher Seeded Team	7:00 p.m.
Finals	Sat.	11/28/2026	Stellos Stadium	1:00 p.m.
DIVISION II				
*Quarterfinal	Sat.	11/7/2026	Higher Seeded Team	1:00 p.m.
*Semis	Sat.	11/14/2026	Higher Seeded Team	1:00 p.m.
Finals	Sat.	11/21/2026	Pinkerton Academy	1:00 p.m.
DIVISION III				
*Quarterfinal	Sat.	11/7/2026	Higher Seeded Team	1:00 p.m.
*Semis	Sat.	11/14/2026	Higher Seeded Team	1:00 p.m.
Finals	Sat.	11/21/2026	Bank of NH Stadium at Laconia HS	1:00 p.m.
DIVISION IV				
*Semis	Sat.	11/7/2026	Higher Seeded Team	1:00 p.m.
Finals	Sat.	11/14/2026	Bank of NH Stadium at Laconia HS	1:00 p.m.

*Upon Mutual Agreement May be Changed to Friday Night (Waiver BLA I; Sect. 13D)

NOTE: HIGHER SEEDED TEAM GAMES MAY START AT A LATER TIME OR BE CHANGED TO FRIDAY NIGHT WITH THE MUTUAL CONSENT OF BOTH SCHOOLS. **The NHIAA must be notified of any change.**

A. GAME DATES: The dates for these games are to be adhered to unless there is a postponement, except in the case of a state televised championship game, which will be played as, scheduled. It is the responsibility of the Game Director to notify the Chairman of the Football Committee and the Executive Director of any change no later than the Tuesday prior to the scheduled game. The postponement day for these games will be the Sunday following the scheduled date.

By mutual consent of both schools and with the approval of the Chairman of the Football Committee and the Executive Director, non-televised playoff games, except for SAT Saturday may be played on Friday night.

B. SEEDING BRACKET:

Once the official NHIAA Tournament Pairings have been released, there will be no switching of bracket placements. Game times (not date) may be adjusted at tournament contests held at the home of the higher seed, if both teams are agreeable.

At neutral sites there shall be **NO** date or time changes with two (2) exceptions:

1. Graduation Exercises
2. Weather and/or facility issues

C. GAME SITES: All playoff games, with the exception of the championship game, in each division will be played at the site of the higher seeded school. In the case of a tie or other conditions, playoff games will be played as determined by the Football Committee. (CM11.2024)

In the event the home team is unable to host the game, the visiting team shall be given first refusal to host. If the visiting team is unable to host, the Committee will select a neutral site to hold the game.

NOTE: Site Criteria MUST be met. (SEE regular season item XII)

D. TEAM UNIFORMS: The higher seeded school shall wear DARK uniforms and the lower seeded school shall wear WHITE uniforms for each game of the Championship Series.

- Waivers requests to use tinted face shields must be submitted to the NHIAA for approval with proper medical documentation

E. GAME FOOTBALLS: The NHIAA will furnish three (3) "official" footballs and the higher seeded school shall provide two (2) ball persons for each game of the Championship Series. The official game ball of the NHIAA is **Wilson, WTF1003B GST**

I. GAME DIRECTOR: The Athletic Director, Faculty Manager, or other administrator appointed by the principal of the higher seeded school will serve as Game Director for the games of the Championship Series.

The Game Director will:

- a. Directly be in charge of the game and is responsible for hiring and supervising all personnel necessary for the administration of the game.
- b. Clear all matters of policy or regulation interpretations with the Football Committee and will be paid by the NHIAA at the current rate for services rendered.
- c. **Assign teams dressing rooms.** Each team shall be responsible for its own valuables.
- d. **Provide a dressing/waiting room for officials.** These areas will be "off limits" to others.
- e. **Police Protection:** At least two (2) police persons are required.
- f. Assign a police escort to Game Officials from the field of play to the Officials Room at half-time and upon completion of each Championship Series Game.
- g. **Shall call the Head Official to confirm the time of the game.** The Head Official is responsible to inform the crew. The Athletic Director will be notified on the Wednesday before the event of the crew from the NHIAA. Five (5) officials are to be engaged by the Football Committee and paid by the NHIAA at the current rate.
- h. **Public Address System:** The game director will ensure that a satisfactorily working public address system is available. A wireless microphone system may be used by the referee to announce infractions, penalties, and the offending team only. An announcer must also be provided. The game director should remind the announcer that "play by play" descriptions of the game are prohibited. Announcers are also to refrain from editorializing or promoting one team/player over another.

19. ADMISSIONS: Admission to the Championship Series will be by complimentary tickets, paid admissions, players, band members and NHIAA passes only.

- **Complimentary Tickets:**

School Administrators from each participating school will be issued complimentary passes in accordance with NHIAA policy.

- **Players, Coaches, and Bench Passes:**

No competitor passes will be issued. All players must be in uniform and only varsity and sub varsity players will be admitted to the bench.

Only certified football coaches of the participating schools will be permitted on the field and will be eligible to take part in the contest. Coaches of non-participating schools may not take part directly or indirectly in the Championship Series games.

- **Cheerleaders:** A maximum of twenty cheerleaders in uniforms will be allowed for each participating school.

- **Bands:** the school bands will provide musical entertainment. The size of the band will be determined by the number of persons who perform in the majority of the games by the schools. No admission will be charged to band and color guard members dressed in uniform and the advisors or directors. Reserved seating shall be provided for both home and visiting bands.

- **Paid Admissions:** Tickets purchased but not used WILL NOT be refunded.

20. MEDICAL COVERAGE

- a. A **licensed** physician, trainer, or emergency medical technician must be provided by the host school and in attendance and on duty for all interscholastic football jamborees, scrimmages, and games for all levels, varsity and sub-varsity, during the regular season and all tournament round games.

- b. Medical coverage, as stated under By-Law Article III, Sect. 1, must be provided for all levels of practice (varsity and sub-varsity) involving player contact.
- c. The medical person shall be responsible for both teams unless the visiting school has its own physician, trainer, or emergency medical technician.
- d. The judgment of the medical person will be final with regard to the medical condition of a player. No player may continue to play against the medical person's advice.
- e. The penalty for violation of this provision is forfeiture of the game and possible disciplinary action by the Football Committee.

Note: Student trainers, high school or college, cannot be used to meet the provisions of this By-Law.

21. AMBULANCE SERVICE: Provisions must be made by the home school to call for ambulance service to the game site if a need arises. An ambulance may be stationed at the site throughout the game provided there are no charges submitted to the NHIAA.

22. FIFTY-FIFTY (50/50) DRAWING: Fifty-Fifty (50/50) drawings are permitted at the "home" site of an NHIAA member school hosting a play-off game. (Students **may not** sell tickets.)

23. PRESS BOX: All press passes will be issued from the NHIAA office and will include the Football Committee, announcer, spotters, and media personnel. The Game Director may issue additional press passes based upon the press box facilities. Space will be provided for both the home team and, if desired, the visiting team for spotters.

24. MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES: Media representatives approved for the sidelines are restricted to the areas between the 25 yard lines and the end zones and the end zone areas, providing they are at least two (2) yards from the out-of-bounds lines, behind a broken line equidistant from the field as the rear line of the coaches' box.

25. SCOREBOARD/OFFICIAL PLAYING TIME: For each game of the Championship Series, a scoreboard with a clock will be provided on the site. The clock will be the "official" time unless it is mutually agreed upon by the opposing schools and the referee to be the "unofficial" time.

26. PRE-GAME PROCEDURES:

- a. In order to minimize on-field distractions, and maximize time to repair defective or unapproved player equipment, the Referee, Umpire, and Head Coach meetings shall take place 70-80 minutes before game time, preferable in an off field location.
- b. A minimum of 90 minutes prior to game time it shall be the joint responsibility of the referee, the host Athletic Director and both Head Coaches to coordinate and determine the location for respective pre game conferences. Should one or both of these conferences not take place prior to warm-up, the Referee and Umpire shall meet with each head coach on the field prior to the game to complete these required activities.
- c. **80 Minutes Prior To Game Time-Home Team:** The home team's head coach shall meet with the Referee and Umpire at the previously designated location and the certification of player equipment and pre game conference shall be conducted.
- d. **70 Minutes Prior To Game Time-Visiting Team:** The visiting teams' head coach shall meet with the Referee and Umpire at the previously designated location and the certification of player equipment and pregame conference shall be conducted.

During these meetings, the following topics will be addressed:

- a. Verification of legality of player equipment
- b. Review and approval of any specific equipment, casts, etc.
 - Reminder: Any hard and unyielding item (such as casts) on the hand, wrist, forearm elbow, or upper arm must be padded with foam padding that is at least 1/2" thick. There is no longer a requirement to have a doctor's note authorizing participation. Approval or illegal equipment, i.e; tinted face shields, requires approval from the NHIAA Executive Director. Requests for a deviation of NFHS Rules need to be completed by the school's Athletic Director. A copy of the

note shall be given to the Referee, attached to the game report and submitted to the NHFOA Commissioner.

➤ It will be the coach's responsibility to bring any player who requires equipment inspection to the officials at this time.

- c. Lists of game officials' names to head coach
- d. Official time and when captains are expected to be ready for coin-toss
- e. Review length of half-time and any special pre-game procedures by teams
- f. Approval of game balls (coaches are required to bring all footballs requesting to be used in the game)
- g. Verification of certified trainer and procedure (with home team coach or Athletic Director)
- h. NHIAA Sportsmanship Review
- i. Questions and special plays

21. **TELEVISED GAMES:** Special electrical needs may be required at the host site for the commercial televising of Championship Games which the host school is responsible to provide.

- a. There is no NHIAA jurisdiction over regular season broadcasting of high school athletic competition. Sponsors of broadcasts must not be persons or businesses involved with tobacco or alcoholic beverages and related products.
- b. For tournament events held at the site of the higher seeded team, the Athletic Director or Game Director is to be contacted directly to make the necessary broadcasting arrangements. Radio Broadcasting Fees are set at \$50.00 per event. The fee is applicable for stations that pick-up fees from another station.
- c. Television stations are instructed to contact the NHIAA directly regarding permission to televise, in any manner - live; delayed; cable; etc..., any NHIAA tournament event. Tournament events under contract with a television station will have exclusive rights to the "live" telecast. No other "live" events may be broadcast simultaneously.
- d. Cablevision may purchase the broadcast directly from the station for a fee of \$150.00. The NHIAA has the current listing of the tournament events to be televised LIVE under contract for the current year. Cablevision broadcast fees are set at \$100 for all events other than the stipulation above.
- e. There is no fee for a non-commercial broadcast by a member school owned and operated non-profit television station.
- f. **TELEVISION TIMEOUTS:** A television time-out during the one-minute intermission between periods and the one-minute time-out following a score or try, and prior to the succeeding free kick may be taken as follows:
 - i. A television time-out is not charged to either team. Regular charged time-out privileges are allowed.
 - ii. A one-minute time-out is allowed during the intermission between the 1st and 2nd period and the 3rd and 4th period and following a score or try, and prior to the succeeding free kick. Such time-out is not charged to either team. Regular charged time-out and authorized conference privileges are allowed but must be completed during the one minute so the start of the next period or the free kick is not delayed.

NOTE: No television time-outs are permitted during the last three minutes of the game.

22. **BANDS AND MARCHING UNITS (HALFTIME ENTERTAINMENT):** For each game of the Championship Series, unless the competing schools agree otherwise, the National Anthem will be played by the band of the Home School and the half-time show will be shared equally by both bands.

- There will be a 20-minute intermission and each band will be allowed no more than ten (10) minutes to prepare, perform, and exit from the field.

23. **PROTEST PROCEDURE AT STATE TOURNAMENTS:** During State Tournament play, there shall be no appeals or protests to the Executive Director. All protests shall be resolved at the game site at the time of the protest, by the game officials, director and the committee representative.

24. **AWARDS:** NHIAA awards will be presented at the end of the Final Championship Series game.
- a. Official NHIAA championship and runner-up plaques, in addition to forty-five (45) individual medals, will be awarded to the respective champion and runner-up teams in each division. Medals over forty-five (45) in number are the responsibility of the respective schools and they may be purchased through the NHIAA Office.

25. **PROCEDURES FOR POSTPONED GAMES:**

The procedure to be used in the event your game scheduled to be played has been rescheduled:

- As the host school your responsibility is to determine whether the game is to be played. You may wish to speak with the visiting school on Friday if inclement weather is predicted for Saturday.
- If a decision is made to postpone, every effort must be made to play on Sunday.
- Once the decision is made it will be your responsibility to contact the visiting school, any game personnel involved, including medical personnel, and the Referee. The Referee will call the crew.

26. **WEATHER/INTERRUPTED/SUSPENDED/CALLED GAMES:**

- a. The Game Manager shall consult with the officials from schools: athletic directors and/or principals, and the referee before making a decision.
- b. Games that are interrupted or suspended due to weather or other emergency beyond the control of the Game Director shall be continued from the point of interruption or suspension on the same date or the scheduled postponement date as determined by the Game Director and representative from both schools.
- c. The principals of the schools may agree to terminate the game with the existing score. If the score is tied, the Football Committee shall make a determination of further play.
- d. Games that are called by the game referee for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be terminated or continued as determined by the Football Committee after conferring with the Supervisor of Football Officials, Executive Director of the NHIAA and the principals of both schools.
- e. All matters relative to unsportsmanlike conduct shall be referred to the Sportsmanship Committee and Sports Officiating Committee for review and any further action as described under current By-Laws.

APPENDIX A

“Guidelines for Hosting a Football Program”

- Good sportsmanship is the number one priority. Coaches, Athletic Directors, and Principals should stress good sportsmanship from players, coaches, and spectators, and further stress that un-sportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated. A meeting is required with coaches, captains, and the referee prior to the game to address sportsmanship. **Sportsmanship Committee: Punching and slugging are defined as fighting.**
- Restraining Lines: A four (4) inch wide broken restraining line shall be placed around the playing field, two (2) or more yards from the playing field.
- Restraining Barriers: There shall be a restraining barrier surrounding the playing field at all regular season games and Games of the Championship Series. This barrier shall be run for the entire length of the playing field and end zones, and shall be at least five yards (preferably more) from the boundaries.
- Yard markers shall be located on BOTH sides of the field and should be placed on the two-yard restraining lines.
- Cheerleaders/Mascots: Spectators, cheerleaders, mascots, etc., are not permitted in team boxes or the coaches' areas. Cheerleaders and mascots are to be in the area restricted for them behind or behind and to the side of the team boxes behind the restraining line, during the game.
- Line to Gain (chain) Crews should arrive on the field no later than twenty minutes prior to kick-off to meet with the heads linesman. The crew should be adult, physically capable of running, work the entire game and be impartial, as the chain crew is an extension of the officiating crew.
- Line to Gain equipment is to be in good working condition and highly visible. Chain Crew should have distinctive vests.
- Clock operators have to be responsible and attentive, and follow the referee's signals and commands. Should the clock operator err or be unresponsive, the officials time shall be kept on the field.
- Escorting of Officials: Officials shall be "escorted" off and away from the field immediately following the conclusion of the game. Officials dressing/changing room shall be a private, "out of bounds" room that will be immediately accessible (unlocked) at the conclusion of the game.
- Drinking water with disposable drinking containers shall be provided and accessible during and at half time of the games.
- Game disqualification of a player shall result in the next game disqualification at the same level of play. Game disqualification of a coach shall result in disqualification of the next two games at the same level of play.
- There shall be a non-coach administrator at the game field representing the home team at all levels.

Prepared New Hampshire Football Officials Association

APPENDIX B

WARNING, AGREEMENT TO OBEY INSTRUCTIONS RELEASE, ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND AGREEMENT TO HOLD HARMLESS

(Both the applicant student and parent/guardian must read carefully and sign.)

I am aware that tackle football is a violent contact sport and that playing or practicing to play tackle football will be a dangerous activity involving MANY RISKS OF INJURY. I understand that the dangers and risks of playing or practicing to play tackle football include, but are not limited to, death, serious neck and spinal injuries which may result in complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, serious injury to virtually all internal organs, serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons, and other aspects of the muscular skeletal system, and serious injury or impairment to other aspects of my body, general health and well-being. I understand that the dangers and risks of playing or practicing to play tackle football may result "not only" in serious injury, but in a serious impairment of my future abilities to earn a living, to engage in other business, social and recreational activities, and generally to enjoy life.

Because of the dangers of tackle football, I recognize the importance of following coaches' instructions regarding playing techniques, training and other team rules, etc., and to agree to obey such instructions.

In consideration of the _____ School District permitting me to try out for the _____ High School football team and to engage in all activities related to the team, including but not limited to trying out, practicing, or playing tackle football, I hereby assume all the risks associated with tackle football and agree to hold the _____ School District, its employees, agents, representatives, coaches, and volunteers harmless from any and all liability, actions, causes of action, debts, claims, or demands of any kind and nature whatsoever which may arise by or in connection with my participation in any activities related to the _____ High School football team. The terms hereof shall serve as a release and assumption of risk for my heirs, estate, executor, administrator, assignees, and for all members of my family.

Date

Signature of student

I, _____, am the parent/legal guardian of _____, (student). I have read the above warning and release and understand its terms. I understand that tackle football is a VIOLENT CONTACT SPORT involving many RISKS OF INJURY, including but not limited to those risks outlined above.

In consideration of the _____ School District permitting my child/ward to try out for the _____ High School football team and to engage in all activities related to the team, including, but not limited to, trying out, practicing, or playing tackle football, I hereby agree to hold the _____ School District, its employees, agents, representatives, coaches, and volunteers, harmless from any and all liability, actions, causes of action, debts, claims, or demands of every kind and nature whatsoever which may arise by or in connection with participation of my child/ward in any activities related to the _____ High School football team. The terms hereof shall serve as a release for my heirs, estate, executor, administrator, assignees, and for all members of my family.

Date

Signature of parent/legal guardian

APPENDIX C

HEAT STRESS AND ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Early fall football, cross country, soccer and field hockey practices are conducted in very hot and humid weather in many parts of the United States. Due to the equipment and uniform needed in football, most of the heat problems have been associated with football. During the 1998 season, there were four heat stroke deaths in football. There are no excises for deaths if the proper precautions are taken. During hot weather, the athlete is subject to the following:

HEAT CRAMPS - Painful cramps involving abdominal muscles and extremities caused by intense, prolonged exercise in the heat and depletion of salt and water due to profuse sweating.

HEAT SYNCOPE - Weakness, fatigue, and fainting due to loss of salt and water in sweat and exercise in the heat. Predisposes to heat stroke.

HEAT EXHAUSTION (WATER DEPLETION) - Excessive weight loss, reduced sweating, elevated skin and core body temperature, excessive thirst, weakness, headaches and sometimes unconsciousness.

HEAT STROKE - An acute medical emergency related to thermoregulatory failure. Associated with nausea, seizures, disorientation, and possible unconsciousness or coma. It may occur suddenly without being preceded by any other clinical signs. The individual is usually unconscious with a high body temperature and a hot dry skin (heat stroke victims, contrary to popular belief, may sweat profusely).

HEAT ACCLIMITIZATION

- A minimum of three, six days before interscholastic scrimmaging
- A minimum length of time between practices (3 hours)

It is believed that the above-mentioned heat stress problems can be controlled provided certain precautions are taken. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Sports Medicine, heat related illnesses are all preventable. (Sports Medicine: Health Care for Young Athletes, American Academy of Pediatrics, 1991). The following practices and precautions are recommended:

1. Each athlete should have a physical exam with a medical history when first entering a program and an annual health history update. History of previous heat illness and type of training activities before organized practice begins should be included. State high school association's recommendations should be followed.
2. It is clear that top physical performance can only be achieved by an athlete who is in top physical condition. Lack of physical fitness impairs the performance of an athlete who participates in high temperatures. Coaches should know the PHYSICAL CONDITION of their athletes and set practice schedules accordingly
3. Along with physical conditioning, the factor of acclimatizing to heat is important. Acclimatization is the process of becoming adjusted to the heat and it is essential to provide for GRADUAL ACCLIMITIZATION TO HOT WEATHER. It is necessary for an athlete to exercise in the heat if he/she is to become acclimatized to it. It is suggested that a graduated physical conditioning program be used and that 80 percent acclimatization can be expected to occur after the first seven to 10 days. Final states of acclimatization can be expected to occur after the first seven to 10 days. Final stages of acclimatization to heat are marked by increased sweating and reduced salt concentration in the sweat.
4. The old idea that water should be withheld from athletes during workouts has NO SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION. The most important safeguard to the health of an athlete is the replacement of water. Water must be on the field and readily available to athletes at all times. It is recommended that a minimum of 10 minutes be scheduled for a water break every half hour of heavy exercise in the heat. WATER SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN UNLIMITED QUANTITIES. Check and be sure athletes are drinking the water. Cold water is preferable. Drinking ample water before practices and games has also been found to aid performance in the heat.
5. Salt should be replaced daily. Modest salting of foods after practice or games will accomplish this purpose. Salt sables are not recommended. ATTENTION MUST BE DIRECTED TO REPLACING WATER—FLUID REPLACEMENT IS ESSENTIAL.
6. Know both the TEMPERATURE and the HUMIDITY. The greater the humidity, the more difficult it is for the body to cool itself. Test the air prior to practice or game using a wet bulb, globe, relative humidity index (WBGT Index) which is based on the combined effects of air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat and air movement. The following precautions are recommended when using the WBGT Index (ACSM's Guidelines for the Team Physician, 1991):

Below 64...unlimited activity
 65-72.... moderate risk
 74-82.... high risk
 82+...very high risk

There is also a weather guide for activities that last for 30 minutes or more (Fox Matthews, 1981) which involves knowing the relative humidity and air temperature. RH = Relative Humidity

AIR TEMP	DANGER ZONE	CRITICAL ZONE
70 F	80% RH	100% RH
75 F	70% RH	100% RH
80 F	50% RH	80% RH
85 F	40% RH	68% RH
90 F	30% RH	55% RH
95 F	20% RH	40% RH
100 F	10% RH	30% RH

One other method of measuring the relative humidity is the use of a sling psychrometer which measures the bulb temperature. The wet bulb temperature should be measured prior to practice and the intensity and duration of practice adjusted accordingly. Recommendations are as follows:

Under 60 F...safe but always observe athletes
 61-65 F.....observe players carefully
 66-70 F.....caution
 71-71 F.....shorter practice sessions and more frequent water and rest breaks
 75 + F.....danger level and extreme caution

7. Cooling by evaporation is proportional to the area of the skin exposed. In extremely hot and humid weather, reduce the amount of clothing covering the body as much as possible. **Never use rubberized clothing.**
8. Athletes should weight in each day before and after practice and **WEIGHT CHARTS CHECKED**. Generally, a 3% weight loss through sweating is safe and over a 3% weight loss is in the danger zone. Over a 3% weight loss that athlete should not be allowed to practice in hot and humid conditions. Observe the athletes closely under all conditions. Do not allow athletes to practice until they have adequately replaced their weight.
9. Observe athletes carefully for signs of trouble; particularly athletes who lose significant weight and the eager athlete who constantly competes are his/her capacity. Some trouble signs are nausea, incoherence, fatigue, vomiting, cramps, weak rapid pulse, visual disturbance and unsteadiness.
10. Teams that encounter hot weather during the season through travel or following and unseasonably cool period should be physically fit but will not be environmentally fit. Coaches in this situation should follow the above recommendations and substitute more frequently during games.
11. Know what to do in case of an emergency and have your emergency plans written with copies to all of your staff. Be familiar with immediate first aid practice and prearranged procedures for obtaining medical care, including ambulance service.

HEAT STROKE – *This is a medical emergency- DELAY COULD BE FATAL.*

Immediately cool the body while waiting for transfer to the hospital. Remove clothing and place ice bags on the next in the axilla (armpit) and on the groin area. An increasing number of medical personnel are now using a treatment for heat illness that involves applying either alcohol or cool water to the victim's skin and vigorously fanning the body. The fanning causes evaporation and cooling. (Source, The First Aider – September 1987).

HEAT EXHAUSTION – *OBTAIN MEDICAL CARE AT ONCE.* Cool the body as you would for heat stroke while waiting for transfer to the hospital. Give fluids if athlete is able to swallow and is conscious.

SUMMARY – The main problem associated with exercising in the hot weather is water loss through sweating. Water loss is best replaced by allowing the athlete unrestricted access to water. Water breaks two or three times per hour is better than one break an hour. Probably the best method is to have water available at all times and allow athletes to drink water whenever he/she needs it. Never restrict the amount of water an athlete drinks, and be sure the athletes are drinking the water. The small amount of salt lost in sweat is adequately replaced by salting foods at meals. Talk to your medical personnel concerning emergency treatment plans. (Reprinted with permission from NFHS)

APPENDIX E

OVERTIME PROCEDURES

If, at the end of the fourth quarter, the teams have identical scores, the tie will be resolved by following the "10 YARD OVERTIME PROCEDURE" of the National Federation of State High School Associations as follows:

The referee will instruct both teams to return to their respective team boxes. There will be a three-minute intermission during which both teams may confer with their coaches. Each team will be given one time out for each overtime period.

At the coin toss, the visiting team will be given the privilege of calling the coin while it is in the air. The winner of the coin toss will be given the choice of defense or offense, or of designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put into play.

At the start of the overtime, the offensive team shall put the ball in play, first and goal on the defense's ten yard line anywhere between the inbound lines. The offense shall have a series of four downs. The series of downs will be terminated by any score by the offense or if the defense gains possession of the ball.

The offense will be given a new series of downs when:

- a. the offensive team recovers a scrimmage kick (field goal attempt) between the goal lines after it has been first touched by the defense beyond the neutral zone.
- b. the defense is guilty of roughing the kicker, place kick holder, snapper, or passer.

When a team scores a touchdown, it is entitled to the opportunity to attempt the extra point(s), except when it is unnecessary to break the tie.

A field goal attempt is permitted during any down. If the defensive team gains possession of the ball, the ball becomes dead immediately and the offense's series of downs is ended.

After the offense has completed its series of downs, the defensive team becomes the offense and shall have the ball in its possession at the same ten yard line anywhere between the inbound lines.

If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs, the procedure shall be repeated with additional overtime periods until a winner is determined. There will be a two minute intermission between overtime periods during which the loser of the coin toss will be given the choice of options. The choice will be alternated for additional overtime periods.

The team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime shall be declared the winner and the final score shall be the total of all points scored by each team during the regulation game and the overtime period(s).

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APPENDIX F
PRE-GAME CEREMONY

The NHIAA Football Committee recommends the following procedures be used as part of the pre-game ceremonies for all games of the Championship Series.

1. Five minutes prior to the designated game time, teams will assemble at the bench area as designated by the Game Director.
2. If possible, the band of the highest seeded team will play the National Anthem while both teams are assembled in front of their benches.
3. The officials will call the captains of the participating teams to the center of the field for the flip of the coin during pre-game warm-ups.
4. The Announcer will then announce: " _____ **School has won the toss and has elected to _____ and will defend the _____ goal.**"
5. The Announcer will introduce the five (5) game officials who are to be located on the press box side of the field at the 50-yard line by saying:

"The officials for today's game are:

Referee: _____

Umpire: _____

Field Judge: _____

Back Judge: _____

Head Linesman: _____

The _____ Clock will be the official game clock.

6. The following Sportsmanship Message is to be given over the public address system:

"Good (afternoon/evening) everyone and welcome to the NHIAA Division (I, II, III, IV) (semifinal or championship) football game.

The NHIAA Football Committee and the playoff staff here at _____ (site) realize what a special moment this is for the players, coaches and fans to have your school playing in a state championship event. We ask your cooperation in making this event as meaningful as possible for the students involved.

Let us be positive in every aspect of this game: Good sportsmanship from the players and the fans, positive cheering only, and respect by everyone for the officials working the game. We also ask that you please stay off the field at the end of the game."

APPENDIX G

CHAMPIONSHIP POST-GAME AWARDS CEREMONY

An announcement should be made a few times during the fourth period: "The post game NHIAA Awards Ceremony will be conducted on the field immediately following the end of this game or after a five (5) minute intermission. All spectators must remain off the field."

* Procedure F-1 or F-2 and the use of a 5-minute intermission to be determined by the Game Manager and Game Director.

After the handshake, teams will line up at the 40 yard line and face each other. Your attention is drawn to the center of the field where the head coaches and captains of both teams are requested to meet for the presentation of awards.

AWARDS CEREMONY G-1

1. AWARDS FOR THE RUNNER-UP SCHOOL ARE BEING PRESENTED ON THE FIELD AT THIS TIME.
2. AWARDS FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM ARE BEING PRESENTED ON THE FIELD AT THIS TIME.

AWARDS CEREMONY G-2

TEAMS ARE REQUESTED TO REMAIN AT THEIR RESPECTIVE TEAM BOXES. YOUR ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO THE CENTER OF THE FIELD WHERE THE HEAD COACHES AND CAPTAINS OF BOTH TEAMS ARE REQUESTED TO MEET FOR THE PRESENTATION OF AWARDS.

1. WOULD THE HEAD COACH AND CAPTAINS OF THE _____
Runner-up team
COME FORWARD TO RECEIVE THE RUNNER-UP PLAQUE AND MEDALS
FROM _____.
Presenter
2. WOULD THE HEAD COACH AND CAPTAINS OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM,
_____ COME FORWARD TO RECEIVE THE
Championship team
CHAMPIONSHIP PLAQUE AND MEDALS FROM _____.
Presenter
3. THIS CONCLUDES THE AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY. WE THANK
YOU FOR SUPPORTING YOUR LOCAL TEAMS. HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME.