

Interpreter's Corner #1

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With the private schools' lacrosse season underway and the public schools set to begin next week, I would like to remind everyone (umpires, assignors, and coaches) that **all rule questions, including questions regarding the MIAA Covid-19 Modifications for 2021 season, need to be referred to me.** This is the only way to ensure that the information being disseminated is coming from one consistent source. Please email me at: interpreter@emwlua.org.

It is my understanding that the private schools will be following the MIAA Covid-19 Rules Modifications with some adjustments. Assignors for the private school should inform their umpires of the complete list of adjustments made to the MIAA Covid-19 Modifications.

The following are some questions that have come my way. Please read this document in its entirety. All questions are answered according to the NFHS Rulebook and the MIAA Covid-19 Modifications.

Question #1: Could you please clarify how much space we should request from players on 8-meter free positions, during a draw and other situations where players may be close together?

Answer: The guidance for umpires is as follows: a) Players should not “cluster” during any stoppage of play. b) If “clustering” does occur, the umpires should request that the players “give some space.” The players should then respond by moving away from each other so that the umpire can see some separation. The MIAA did not define the amount of space in inches or feet. The umpire is simply looking for some separation and then should get the game started.

The MIAA was more specific during 8-meter free positions. The guidance is as follows: a) The defense is entitled to the adjacent hash marks from where the penalty will be administered (per rule). b) Only one player is allowed at the adjacent hash marks. Explanation: Another defensive player is not allowed to be behind her teammate with her stick on her teammate's back to thrust the player into the 8-meter arc on the whistle.

Question #2: Can quarter 1 and quarter 3 be extended for the administration of an 8-meter free position?

Answer: No. The MIAA modified the playing time from 25-minute halves to 12.5-minute quarters. The clock will run through the last 2 minutes of quarters 1 and 3

with stop clock for quarters 2 and 4 (unless there is a 10-goal difference). (See Art. 3 below.) Each quarter will begin with a draw.

Umpires **are not allowed** to alter the rules after conferring with a coach to allow for the completion of a free position by extending quarter 1 and quarter 3.

Refer to the NFHS Rulebook, page 29, Rule 4-1-2 thru 3, Duration of Play:

Art. 2 - "...In all games, the clock is to be stopped on the official's whistle and arm signal after each goal during the entire game, and on every whistle (to stop play) in the last two minutes of each half."

Art. 3 - "...If a team is leading by 10 or more goals, the clock will continue to run after goals and within the last two minutes of play in each half (no stop clock). If time runs out prior to the complete administration of a free position, then it shall not be administered. If the difference becomes less than 10 goals, the stop clock is reinstated."

Refer to NFHS Rulebook page 36, Rule 5-2-1, Starting Play-Draw: Art. 1 - "...Each half of the game and overtime period, and after each goal, the game is started by a draw except when a free position or alternate possession at the center line has been awarded."

Question #3: How will umpires know if a player is wearing a mouth guard? What will be the penalty if a player is not wearing a mouth guard?

Answer: It is going to be a difficult task for umpires to know if players are wearing mouth guards because their mouths will be covered by masks. Coaches will be asked during the pre-game meeting if their players are properly equipped and if the equipment meets specifications.

The foul will be penalized according to the NFHS Rules. Please refer to the NFHS Rulebook, Rule 9-1-1 Improper Equipment; Penalties for Violations #1, page 53: Change of possession and a free position is awarded to the opponent where the foul occurred at least 8 meters from the goal circle and 4 meters inside the boundary. The offending player will move 4 meters away in the direction from which she approached before committing the foul. All players shall be 4 meters from the free position. Also refer to page 54, Penalties for repeated or persistent minor fouls: 1. Must be penalized as major fouls.

Question #4: Can the coach give players a mask break at the team bench area?

Answer: The umpires will be monitoring players' masks while on the field. The team bench area is the coach's responsibility keeping social distancing guidelines as a high priority. Please refer the MIAA Covid Modifications for Girls Lacrosse on the MIAA website: MIAA.net.

Question #5: Are timeouts allowed with the MIAA Modifications or are the 2-minute breaks between quarters replace the timeouts?

Answer: Yes. Teams will still receive their 2 timeouts per NFHS Rules in addition to the 2-minute break between quarters. Reminder: Halftime will be a maximum of 5 minutes. To be determined at the pre-game coaches/captains meeting.

Question #6: On page 42 - 5.2 Pen Situation B: "Players must simply remain where they were when the whistle blew to indicate a foul". Can they move as a result of free movement?

Answer: This is an error in the rulebook. Occasionally, when there are major rule changes, it takes the rule's editors some time to find all its implications throughout the rulebook. Yes, the players can move as a result of the foul.

Question #7: On page 52 - Section 1 Minor Fouls: "The following are minor field fouls:
a. Body Ball: allow any part of her body to deliberately impede, accelerate or change the direction of the ball. Players may kick the ball on a non-shooting attempt. So, can or can't they kick the ball with their feet, say to get the ground ball to open space away from a defender?

Answer: Yes, "players may kick the ball on a non-shooting attempt". They may kick or redirect the ball into open space as long as they are not trying to kick the ball towards the goal or in an attempt to score a goal.

Question #8: Can players be positioned below the dots during an 8-meter free position?

Answer: Yes, players are to clear the Penalty Zone during an 8-meter free position. The Penalty Zone is within the Critical Scoring Area (CSA).

Please refer to the NFHS Rulebook page 72, Rule 13 Definition of Terms: "Critical Scoring Area indicates an area at the end of the field where the attacking team is shooting for goal. Its boundaries are 12 meters (13.1 yards) in front of the goal circle to the end line and 12 meters (13.1 yards) to each side of the goal circle. No extra lines will be marked on the field and this will be called in the judgement of the official." Picture provided.

Refer to NFHS Rulebook, page 74, "Penalty Zone is the area 8 meters from the goal circle above goal line extended (includes both "pie" areas) and the area created by the extension from the 8-meter marks (on the goal line extended) back to the dots and between the dots." Picture provided.