

New high school football rules on the horizon

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With football around the corner, here is a look at some of the new rules high school football fans can expect to see this year with the move from NCAA rules to Federation. Information was sent to schools by the MIAA.

1) NFHS football **hash marks** are placed on the field differently than NCAA hash marks. NFHS hash marks are 53'4" from each sideline. These hash marks split the width of the field (160') in three even sections. All MIAA games are to be played with NFHS hash marks.

In the case of fields currently lined with NCAA hash marks: officials and visiting teams will be looking for temporary hash marks or other indicators of NFHS hash mark locations. An example of an indicator could be large orange traffic cone(s) outside the end of the end zone indicating the 53'4" hash mark location. Officials will use these indicators to approximate the NFHS hash mark line. Another indicator could be temporary NFHS marks every 5 or 10 yards.

2) **Timing of quarters** – A request from the MIAA to the NFHS for one final year of non-12-minute periods was submitted but not approved this past June. NFHS rules state each period is 12 minutes with 1 minute intermission between periods. Halftime can be from 10-20 minutes. There is a mandatory 3 minute Warm-Up Period following

halftime intermission. The game officials will work to have this posted on the game clock and indicate when the 3-minute period is to begin.

3) **Point differential/running clock** – The NFHS permits state associations to establish a point differential/running clock policy. MIAA schools will be using the following policy for the 2019-20 school year:

“A running clock will be used: when a point differential reaches 42 points at the beginning of or any time during the 3rd quarter or a 30 point differential at the beginning of or any time during the 4th quarter. It will continue for the remainder of the game.”

4) **Electronic devices** – NFHS Rule 1 – 6 address coaches field equipment:

Art. 1 Electronic communication devices including but not limited to audio recorder, Local Area network (LAN) ... shall not be used to communicate with a player except during an outside 9-yard mark conference.

Art. 2 Electronic communication devices including but not limited to audio recorder, Local Area network (LAN), still photograph(s), film, analog or digital video(s) and/or internet depiction may be used by coaches and non-players.

5) The MIAA are working on a **“New NFHS Rules for 2019”** information sheet to be disseminated to parents, booster groups and others to better understand the differences when attending the game. This will be sent out in the next few weeks.

6) **40/25 Second Clock** – Officials will be working with new timing parameters of 40/25 second clock intervals. This will be managed by the officials on the field as many schools do not have a visible 40/25 second clock. During the past years, officials have worked diligently to efficiently manage getting the ball ready for play but with the new NFHS rules, the effort to adhere to 40/25 second intervals has created a new emphasis. Thoughts to consider as we help to manage the 40/25 second clock efforts: