

## Soccer Points of Emphasis - 2022-23

By nfhs on April 19, 2022

[soccer](#)

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### Sportsmanship

Good sporting behavior is one of the fundamental ingredients to the continued success and enjoyment of education-based high school sports and activities. In fact, in the 103-year history of organized high school sports in the United States, good sportsmanship has been one of the most important outcomes of high school activity programs.

NFHS playing rules are written to encourage sportsmanship. Participation in these programs should promote respect, integrity and sportsmanship. However, for these ideals to occur, everyone involved in these programs must be doing their part.

The NFHS is concerned that unsporting behavior in education-based athletics has increased across all sports. As a result, the NFHS has made sportsmanship the No. 1 Point of Emphasis for the 2022-23 school year.

Sportsmanship, or good sporting behavior, is about treating one another with respect and exhibiting appropriate behavior. It is about being fair, honest and caring. When these types of appropriate behavior occur, competitive play is more enjoyable for everyone.

Coaches set the tone at athletic contests with their display of sportsmanship. If these individuals act in a sportsmanlike manner, their behavior sets the tone for players, spectators and others. If coaches, however, are complaining constantly about the decision of contest officials, spectators are more likely to do the same.

There must be a collaborative, working relationship between contest officials and game administration to promote good sportsmanship and safely conduct the contest. Everyone has their roles to play in creating a positive, sportsmanlike atmosphere at contests.

Officials should focus on the actions of players, coaches and other bench/sideline personnel. A positive, open line of communication between officials and coaches ultimately results in a better contest for everyone involved.

Contest officials, however, should never engage with spectators who are exhibiting unsporting behavior. Once the contest begins, school administration is responsible for dealing with unruly spectators. A

proactive approach by school administration includes monitoring the behavior of spectators and intervening as needed.

If spectators are using demeaning or profane language at officials – or at others in the stands – those individuals should be removed from the contest by school administration.

In recent years, a heightened level of unsportsmanlike behavior has been occurring by spectators at high school sporting events, and it must be stopped. The use of demeaning language, or hate speech, by students, parents and other fans must cease.

High school sports and other activities exist to lift people up, not demean or tear people down. The goal is to treat everyone fairly and treat each other with respect. Any speech or harassment that is insulting, demeaning or hurtful will not be tolerated.

High schools must establish a culture that values the worth of every single person – both players on the school's team and players on the opposing team. There must be a no-tolerance policy regarding behavior that shows disrespect for another individual.

Good sports win with humility, lose with grace and do both with dignity. It takes the efforts of everyone every day to ensure that sportsmanship remains one of the top priorities in education-based activity programs.

### **Strategic Time-Wasting Techniques**

To ensure fair and equitable play, officials must be aware of potentially illegal time-wasting techniques which may be used to waste time or gain an unfair advantage. Some examples to consider:

- Goalkeepers holding the ball for longer than 6 seconds before releasing the ball into play
- Once the ball has been placed for a free kick moving the ball to a different location
- Delaying the restart on free kicks or throw ins. Players may take unnecessary time to set up a free kick or throw in by stopping to re-tie their shoe or adjust their shin guard or uniform.
  - o Changing kickers late in the game when taking free kicks or corner kicks
  - o Changing players late in the game to take the throw in
- Substituting at every opportunity late in the game (before the 5-minute rule applies). Officials should use their best judgement and know their available options, including issue a verbal warning, stop the clock, and/or issue a caution to deal with these techniques. Recognizing and immediately dealing with these tactics will ensure fair play.

### **Penalty Kick**

The player taking the penalty kick is permitted to use a stutter step or a hesitation move provided they do not stop their approach to the ball and there is a continuous movement toward the ball. To be in play, the ball must be kicked forward. If the ball is not kicked forward the penalty shall be an Indirect Free Kick awarded to the defending team from the penalty mark. Infractions by either team are covered by the chart on page 70 of the rule book.

## **Dissent**

RULE 12-8-1c states that objecting by word of mouth or action to any decision given by an official is dissent. However, simply disagreeing with an official's decision isn't always dissent and/or sanctioned by a yellow card. There are several factors to consider in each situation. Referees should evaluate potential dissent by asking if the display is public, personal, or provocative. Expressions of frustration or disappointment or private dissatisfaction not directed at anyone can usually be handled by a verbal warning or private discussion with the player. Continual public complaining, prolonged and repeated actions, or personally directed comments towards the referee of their decision must be dealt with and should be cautioned. Beyond dissent gestures or language that are inappropriate, foul and abuse directed at an opponent, teammate or official, threaten physical harm, and/or taunting must be dealt with immediately and result in a disqualification to that player. These same considerations should be considered when dealing with coaches or any other individuals in the team area.