



Fall II 2021

MIAA GAME OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER FALL II 2021

To begin our MIAA Game Officials newsletter with the statement, “this year we have seen an unprecedented time for student-athletes and officials” is truly an understatement. We are now beginning our third season of MIAA interscholastic sports and I can assure you, this has been a very unique time for all. Good luck to all of those officials beginning Fall II and thank you to those already done!

Our schools have worked to navigate the responsibility of athletics amid extreme challenges for schooling. Throughout this year, conditions have changed rapidly, sometimes daily, with each of us “learning as we go.” Many of us have not experienced anything like the current pandemic and have tried to predict the unforeseen circumstances as we moved from month-to-month of the school year.

While the schools worked to manage students, local health guidance, contact tracing and COVID designations, our game officials have found themselves in the same uncertain environment. Would they be able to officiate? Will I be assigned any games this year? How many games will I get assigned given different/shorter seasons? What about changes and cancellations? Certainly these are not all of the questions each of you thought about this year.

A “new condition” of officiating during COVID-19 has been the capacity to prepare and train for the season. Without an ability to meet as groups or boards, the normal mode of preparing yourselves has been quite different. On behalf of all of our member schools, thank you to everyone who picked up the responsibility to setup, plan for and institute annual training. I can only think many were frustrated with online training and the lack of in-person meetings. Getting out with friends and colleagues has always been one of the driving forces for the enjoyment of officiating. With that said, many boards found new and inventive ways to support training. This virtual/online approach introduced new benefits of detailed planning and also allowed officials to review information after a meeting and also self-paced. Although different, this may have been a positive opportunity which helped us discover new earning possibilities.

One of the biggest differences was the lack of fans at events. To many, this may have been seen as a welcome difference. I think most would agree that fan behavior has changed over the years and has caused anxiety for many. The quiet in the venues during the past two seasons has allowed us to appreciate again the purity of competition; just playing the game. Officials have not worried about the surroundings or boisterous, unreasonable yelling. It allowed officials to focus on the excitement of the play and the celebration of athleticism. As we move forward to future years and seasons, let us not forget why you officiate. Each of you may have different reasons for becoming an official. *Continued on the next page*



Rules Modifications & Guidelines

MIAA Fall II 2021 Rules Modification and Guidelines

- [MIAA Statement on Fall II Sport Modifications](#)
- [Cross Country](#)
- [Field Hockey](#)
- [Football](#)
- [Indoor Track & Field](#)
- [Soccer](#)
- [Swimming & Diving](#)
- [Unified Basketball](#)
- [Volleyball](#)

Important Dates

Spring 2021 MIAA sports will begin their modification approval process on March 8, 2021

MIAA Spring 2021 Sport Modification Approval Timeline

- **March 8-10, 2021**—Sports Medicine Committee
Spring 2021 Modification Approval
- **March 11, 2021**—MIAA COVID-19 Task Force
Spring 2021 Modification Approval
- **March 12, 2021**—MIAA Board of Directors
Spring 2021 Modification Approval

Contact Us

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What seems to have been consistent for most was enjoying the game, athletic competition and supporting life lessons through sports. These basic reasons will always be there whether we have fans or not.

The concept of communication also comes to mind as I reflect on the past two seasons. As mentioned above, communication vehicles for training were certainly new. Modifications were approved each season introducing nuances to each sport and communicating the changes with fidelity was a big undertaking. Everyone, players, coaches and officials needed to be attentive to unusual rule modifications in all sports. Managing these changes during a game, correcting misunderstandings and preparing for new patterns required officials to exhibit excellent communication skills. This attention to clear communication has always been a big part of officiating. Continuing to maintain clear communication has been appreciated and will always be important to officiating.

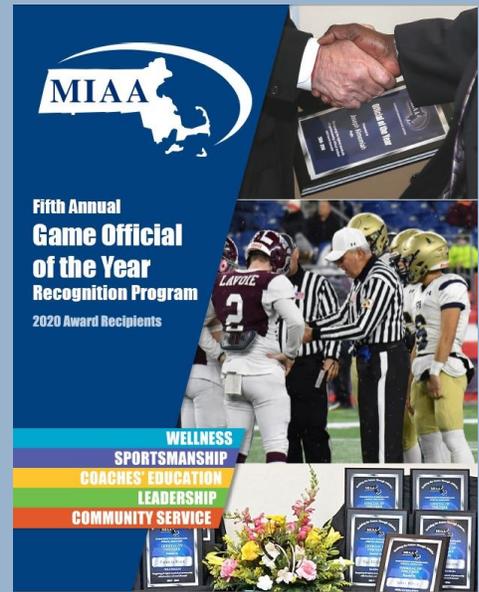
Finally, flexibility has been paramount in 2020 and into 2021. Assignors have had to be contortionists up to now. The magnitude of last minute changes have been truly unprecedented. Assignors felt like they had a new full-time job. Changes could occur the previous evening or even hours before a game. Officials had to be extremely flexible from day-to-day testing your patience and causing difficulty in your ability to plan ahead. Of greatest acclaim was the flexibility that officials brought to the students on game day. Coaches worked very hard to manage the expectations of players given trying conditions. We offer a huge thank you to officials as every one of you was flexible with all participants when it came to game play. Understanding that players were more spread out and might not be able to hear a coach when they were calling them into the game. A hockey player was standing outside of the bench area trying to get to the ice or a player was looking for their own water bottle. Although being pliable with rules is quite difficult for officials, your efforts to appreciate the unique circumstances was profound. Understanding you were officiating young players during a challenging pandemic was obvious and special. Flexibility served officials and all players very well!

Thank you for your efforts and participation during the past two seasons. In looking ahead, thank you to all for planning toward Fall II and the spring season. Officials are a huge part of interscholastic athletics and have been vital to offering sports to our MIAA schools!!

With thanks,

Richard L. Pearson

MIAA Associate Director &
Game Officials Liaison.



2020-21 MIAA Game Official of the Year

"Exemplify the highest standards of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and moral character"

This award seeks to recognize and honor officials who have displayed character, integrity and dignity, while displaying the highest standards of ethical conduct. Award candidates should have a record of exceptional performance, as well as a reputation, among their peers and the athletic community, for fair play, for good sportsmanship, and for the development of these attributes in our student-athletes.

If you feel that you have a nominee who meets these criteria, please complete and submit the MIAA Nomination Form, along with any supporting materials (nomination form must be completed for candidates to be considered). A selection committee made up of members of the MIAA Game Officials Committee (GOC), will review each nomination and choose an Official of the Year, in each sport. **Recipients will be recognized at the MIAA Awards Recognition Banquet planned for May 20, 2021**

[2020-21 MIAA Game Official of the Year Nomination Form](#)

(click link to access nomination form)

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