

DATE: OCTOBER 14, 2011

TO: TOM LOPES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF APPROVED BASKETBALL OFFICIALS, INC.

FROM: AL GOLDBERGER, COUNSEL

SUBJECT: SPECIAL ADVISORY TO IAABO OFFICIALS  
– OFFICIATING THE NFHS CONCUSSION RULES 2011

The NFHS rules governing removal/return-to-play of a player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with concussion continue in effect for the upcoming season. These rules and Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion appended to the Rules Book have been implemented across all NFHS sports. For IAABO officials working under NFHS rules, the following are the recommended mechanics for Rules 2-8-5 and 3-3-8 of the 2011-2012.

I. THE RULE - NFHS

2-8-5. The officials shall . . . immediately remove a player from the game who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion as in 3-3-8. (See NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Appendix D on page 77.)

3-3-8. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. (See NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Appendix D on page 77.)

II. BEFORE THE GAME

- A. Review Mechanics and Rule thoroughly
- B. Secure from each Coach name and title of "Appropriate Health Care Professional," if any, as defined by state association regulations.

III. INJURY MECHANICS - ALL INJURY SITUATIONS

- A. Continue to supervise both teams and benches
- B. Do not render first aid
- C. Keep opponents separated
- D. Do not discuss cause of injury
- E. Do not permit player to be moved, except under direction of medical personnel

IV. INJURY MECHANICS – RULES 2-8-5/3-3-8

- A. Beckon Coach/Medical personnel

- B. Observe player. If no symptoms apparent, ask question(s) per NFHS guidelines
- C. Behaviors on list-careful observation- official - coach - ATC - physician
- D. When directing removal of the student athlete use the language of the Rule.
- E. Do NOT discuss cause of injury.
- F. Do NOT converse with spectators or parents
- G. Partner should observe process while continuing to supervise court and players.
- H. Words to never use:
  - "He may have had a concussion."
  - "It looks like a concussion to me."
  - "I am removing her because I suspect a concussion."
  - "I don't think she should return to the game today."
- I. Record Removal of Player, Time of Substitution, and if at request of Coach or Official.
- J. Also note if athlete injured or ill but not removed under Rules 2-8-5/3-3-8.

V. RETURN-TO-PLAY (RTP)

- A. CLEAR RTP WITH APPROPRIATE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL BEFORE PERMITTING SUBSTITUTION. NOTE: IF THERE IS NO APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL ATTENDING THE TEAM, THE PLAYER MAY NOT RETURN-TO-PLAY.
- B. Note name and title of Health-Care Professional and time of re-entry
- C. Partner should observe process while continuing to supervise court and players

NOTE 1: In some states, the Rule has been modified to eliminate same day return-to-play for a player removed under Rules 2-8-5 and 3-3-8. Under the modified rule, the player may not be permitted to return-to-play the same day or evening. As these modifications are frequently revised, please contact your state association or board interpreter for modified-rule information.

NOTE 2: In some states, the Rule has been modified to require written authorization from a designated Healthcare Professional for same day return-to-play. Written authorizations may sometimes be on a prescribed form. All written authorizations must be collected by Referee and retained as per local or state association policy. As these modifications are frequently revised, please contact your state association or board interpreter for modified-rule information.

