

Rule 4

SPORTSMANSHIP

4.1 Conference Statement on Sportsmanship. All aspects of intercollegiate athletics contests shall be conducted in a sporting manner. It is the responsibility of each member institution in the Mountain West Conference to ensure that all individuals associated with its athletics program conduct themselves in an appropriate fashion. All members of the Conference shall exhibit ethical behavior at all NCAA and Conference competition. Conference members shall conduct themselves in accordance with the rules of the NCAA and Conference and the playing rules of the respective sports. Each member institution shall create a healthy environment for competition. Administrators, coaches, student-athletes and spectators, as well as others involved in intercollegiate athletics in the Conference, share this responsibility.

4.1.1 Annual Institutional Meeting. Annually, each institution shall conduct a meeting at the beginning of the academic year to discuss ethics and sportsmanship. The meeting shall include all athletic administrators and staff, all coaches, all spirit group advisors, the band director and other appropriate individuals. The institution's president shall deliver a message outlining the Conference and institutional philosophy on ethics and sportsmanship.

4.2 Acts in Violation of Sportsmanship Policy. Conduct by athletes, coaches and other institutional athletics personnel who act in an unsporting manner is subject to sanction. Violations of the Conference sportsmanship policy shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Striking, attempting to strike or otherwise physically abusing an official, coach, spectator or student-athlete;
- b. Intentionally inciting participants or spectators to inappropriate action;
- c. Using obscene gestures or unduly provocative language or action toward a game official, Conference personnel, another institution, a student-athlete or personnel of another institution, coach or spectator.
- d. Ejection from a contest.
- e. Publicly criticizing or disparaging a game official, the Conference or its personnel, another institution, a student-athlete or personnel of another institution.

4.3 Processing Alleged Violations. Allegations of misconduct generally shall be reported to the Commissioner within 24 hours of the incident. Within 72 hours of learning of an alleged violation of this section, the Commissioner, in consultation with the institution, shall establish a timetable and investigate the alleged violation. Within the same 72-hour period, unless extenuating circumstances exist and/or the involved parties agree to an adjusted timeframe, the Commissioner shall determine an appropriate penalty, which may be the acceptance of the institution's action.

The institution may appeal the Commissioner's findings and decision to the Joint Council Executive Committee. The decision to appeal shall be made immediately and in no case shall the time to make such decision exceed 24 hours. The Joint Council Executive Committee then shall hear the appeal as expeditiously as possible. Telephone conference calls are an acceptable means for the parties involved to process the alleged violations. The decision of the JCEC may be appealed to the full Joint Council. The decision of the full Joint Council may be appealed to Board of Directors, which shall be the final authority on all such matters. All such appeals shall be processed as expeditiously as possible, and the enforcement of any penalties shall be held in abeyance until a final resolution to the case is achieved.

4.4 Penalties. Below are the penalties for acts in violation of the Mountain West Conference sportsmanship policy. The Commissioner, at his discretion, may impose alternatives to the sanctions listed below if he deems it warranted.

4.4.1 Physical Abuse. An individual who strikes, attempts to strike or otherwise physically abuses an official, coach, spectator or student-athlete shall be subject to the following penalties:

4.4.1.1 First Offense. Suspension for at least one contest and public announcement through standard Conference channels. The penalty shall not exceed one season of competition.

4.4.1.2 Subsequent Offenses. Suspension for at least two contests and public announcement through standard Conference channels. The penalty shall not exceed one season of competition.

4.4.1.3 Statute of Limitations. An individual penalized for physical abuse shall have that offense retained on the permanent record for the duration of his/her time in the Mountain West Conference, thus subjecting that individual to cumulative penalties for future offenses.

4.4.2 Incitement to Inappropriate Action. An individual who intentionally incites participants or spectators to inappropriate action shall be subject to the following penalties:

4.4.2.1 First Offense. Suspension for at least one contest and public announcement through standard Conference channels. The penalty shall not exceed one season of competition.

4.4.2.2 Subsequent Offenses. Suspension for one season of competition and public announcement through standard Conference channels.

4.4.2.3 Statute of Limitations. An individual penalized for incitement to inappropriate action shall have that offense retained on the permanent record for the duration of his/her time in the Mountain West Conference, thus subjecting that individual to cumulative penalties for future offenses.

4.4.3 Obscene Gestures and Language. An individual who uses obscene gestures or unduly provocative language or action toward a game official, Conference personnel, another institution, a student-athlete or personnel of another institution, coach or spectator shall be subject to the following penalties:

4.4.3.1 First Offense. Public reprimand.

4.4.3.2 Subsequent Offenses. Suspension for at least two contests and public announcement through standard Conference channels. The penalty shall not exceed one season of competition.

4.4.3.3 Statute of Limitations. An individual penalized for obscene gestures or language shall have his/her record expunged one calendar year from the date of the latest offense, provided that individual has no further offenses during that time period.

4.4.4 Ejection from a Contest. An individual who is ejected from a contest shall be subject to the following penalties:

4.4.4.1 First Offense. Private reprimand, unless aggravating circumstances require a more stringent penalty.

4.4.4.2 Second Offense. Suspension for at least one contest and public announcement through standard Conference channels. The penalty shall not exceed one season of competition.

4.4.4.3 Subsequent Offenses. Suspension for at least two contests and public announcement through standard Conference channels. The penalty shall not exceed one season of competition.

4.4.4.4 Statute of Limitations. An individual penalized for ejections from a contest shall have his/her record expunged one calendar year from the date of the latest offense, provided that individual has no further offenses during that time period.

4.4.5 Public Criticism. An individual affiliated with (e.g., over whom the institution and/or Conference has jurisdiction) a member institution or the Mountain West Conference who publicly criticizes or disparages a game official, the Conference or its personnel, another institution, student-athlete or personnel of another institution shall be subject to the following penalties:

4.4.5.1 First Offense. Public reprimand.

4.4.5.2 Second Offense. Suspension for at least one contest and public announcement through standard Conference channels. The penalty shall not exceed one season of competition.

4.4.5.3 Subsequent Offenses. Suspension for at least two contests and public announcement through standard Conference channels. The penalty shall not exceed one season of competition.

4.4.5.4 Statute of Limitations. An individual penalized for public criticism shall have his/her record expunged one calendar year from the date of the latest offense, provided that individual has no further offenses during that time period.

4.4.6 Suspension From a Contest. Suspension from a contest(s) shall be imposed beginning with the next regular or postseason contest(s), shall be served in consecutive contests, and may be carried over from one season to the next. The individual suspended may be banned from attending a contest(s) during the period of the suspension. In the case of a student-athlete or coach, if the individual is permitted to attend a contest, he or she shall not be permitted to travel with the team to the contest and must make (and pay for) their own transportation and admission arrangements. A suspended coach or player may not be in the team bench area, may not participate in pre-game warm-ups or other game-related on-court/on-field activities and must stay at least 100 feet away from the team locker room. A suspended coach may participate in practice activities at home or on a road trip while suspended. A suspended student-athlete may participate in practice activities with the team for a home game, and while the team is at home prior to its departure for a road game, but may not participate in practice activities on a road trip. In cases involving a multiple-game road trip that exceeds the length of the suspension, parameters for the suspended individual's travel and activities shall be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the unique circumstances involved and prior precedent (if applicable).

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