

OREGON SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

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One purpose of SRI bulletins is to discuss topics that have become issues for officials around the state. There is no topic or issue that has come to the forefront more than the problem of uniforms, and more specifically players' equipment and apparel. There are two problems in particular.

The first is that some officials don't know or understand what equipment is legal, and bad information is being given out to players and coaches. As has been pointed out in the past you can find the correct information in the rule book on pages 25-27, under section 5, Team Members Equipment and Apparel. The following highlights some of the most asked and misinterpreted questions concerning apparel and equipment.

- Undershirts color must be similar to the predominant color of the jersey. Sleeves on undershirts may be long or short as long as they are hemmed, not frayed and both sleeves are the same length. Teammates may have sleeves of differing lengths.
- Headbands, wristbands and arm and leg sleeves all must be the same color for all teammates. The color must be white, black, beige or the predominant color of the uniform. They may be a different color than undershirts.

The second, and arguably most disturbing problem, is that in many cases officials are choosing to ignore the rules on apparel. When officials ignore these rules it has many consequences.

- It is extremely unfair to players, coaches and other officials. When one set of officials tells players that their uniforms/equipment are legal or ignores the fact that illegal uniforms/equipment are being worn and the next set of officials tells players to remove illegal apparel it creates a great deal of confusion. When teams get to the post-season they will have to be properly equipped and if they have been allowed to wear something illegal all season there is no way to justify that to the student-athlete.
- When officials enforce the rules the last thing they need to, or want to, hear is, "This has never been a problem before."
- Even parents and fans are confused. I have received many emails questioning what is legal and what is not.

No, officials are not, nor do they want to be the fashion police. No, illegal uniforms will not influence the final outcome of the game. The point is that as officials we are charged with enforcing the rules of the game. We don't get to choose which rules to enforce and which rules to ignore. If you are a trainer or a commissioner please print this bulletin and read it at your next meeting or open up the rule book to pages 25-27 and have a good discussion.

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