

Interpreting Inversions

The new NFHS inversion rules present a challenge to rule interpreters, coaches and choreographers. While the rules seem black and white on paper, in real-time performance they can be confusing. If you are not absolutely sure of an inversion's legality, the following sample analysis may be helpful.

DESCRIPTION OF STUNT

A top person in a face-up horizontal position is in a tight pike. Two bases support under her back and rear, holding her slightly below prep level. A spotter stands behind the top's head with one hand under her upper back and the other hand on one calf.

The bases pop her, she executes a back flip at eye level and lands in a loading position in the bases' hands. The spotter holds one lower leg throughout the stunt and also supports her rear as she lands in the bases' hands.

ANALYSIS OF STUNT

Ask: Which criteria does the above stunt meet? (*If a stunt doesn't meet all requirements of one of the allowed types of inversions, it is illegal.*)

- 2-5-1** Start with the premise that the inversion described above is illegal.
- 2-5-2** It's not a forward suspended roll. Still illegal.
- 2-5-3** It's not a backward suspended roll. Still illegal.
- 2-5-4** It's not an inverted mount. Still illegal.
- 2-5-5** This one might fit, so let's see if it follows the rule... Nope – the base of support doesn't remain below shoulder level. Still illegal.
- 2-5-6** The top is not being moved downward while inverted, so this one doesn't apply either. Still illegal.
- 2-5-7** It's not a braced flip. Still illegal.

INTERPRETATION

As performed, the described stunt is illegal. Applicable rule is 2-5-1 pg. 17.

COMMENT

Inversion rules are intended to keep partner stunt inversions at a low level. In this stunt, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for the bases to keep their hands below shoulder level at the moment they release the top person to the flip. If this team is determined to perform a flip they'll most likely have to do either a braced flip or a suspended roll.