

GIRLS LACROSSE COMMITTEE MEETING
MHSAA Office - East Lansing
October 23, 2013

Members Present:

Mike Emery, Rockford
Lindsay Hoyt, Farmington Hills
Zach Maghes, Ann Arbor
Sal Malek, MIAAA
Teri Reyburn, DeWitt
Chris Riker, Portage
Rick Schmidt, Holt
Scott Weis, Caledonia

Members Absent:

Greg Michaels, White Lake
Mike Staruch, Brighton

Staff Member:

Kathy Vrugink Westdorp (Recorder)

GENERAL REVIEW AND PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The 2013-14 Girls Lacrosse Committee met at the Michigan High School Athletic Association to review its responsibilities as a standing sports committee; review prior Representative Council action; consider proposals from the Girls Lacrosse Coaches Association; recommend to the Representative Council changes regarding US Lacrosse or MHSAA regulations relative to girls lacrosse; suggest points of emphasis for rules meetings; and evaluate current practices and procedures with MHSAA staff. The Girls Lacrosse Committee will also assist in the assignment of umpires to all levels of the MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Tournament. This Committee now meets in October because of the necessity to review US Lacrosse changes which are frequently altered between the time of the National Federation of High Schools Girls Lacrosse Committee Meeting and the US Lacrosse Committee Meeting.

PRIOR REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL ACTION/OUT-OF-SEASON COACHING REGULATIONS

The minutes of the October, 2012 Girls Lacrosse Committee were reviewed for the purpose of providing background regarding prior discussion and actions of the committee. In addition, the limitations of competition were reviewed for grades 7 – 12. The Committee discussed at length the current MHSAA Out-of-Season Regulations as well as the need for girls lacrosse coaches and schools to be in compliance with the regulations. Concerns included both out-of-season and travel regulations with reminders that coaches are limited to providing coaching in their sport to three (or four) students in grades 7 – 12 of the school district in which they coach. The three (or four) player period runs from the Monday when August 15 occurs through the Sunday after Memorial Day. The Down Time Regulation (which commences March 1) includes language which states that no competition (intra-squad or inter-squad) between groups that resemble school teams (more than three [or four] students in grades 7-12 of the district) may occur in that sport at any school facility or any other location with any of that school district's personnel present. In addition, further discussion included the adherence to Interpretation 232 in which a coach may not arrange for a parent or other non-staff person to act as coach in an out-of-season coaching activity and that a coach may not arrange for a parent or non-staff person to do that which the coach is prohibited from doing under the regulation.

TOURNAMENT RECOMMENDATIONS/IMPORTANT DATES

Girls lacrosse tournament dates and Participating School Tournament Information were reviewed by the committee as well as the dates regarding online rules meetings. The online rules meeting for girls lacrosse will be available on February 10, 2014 and end on April 17, 2014. All head coaches and officials who wish to work the MHSAA tournament must take an online rules meeting during the available dates. Head coaches who do not take an online rules meeting will not be able to coach in the MHSAA Tournament. Practice begins Monday, March 10, 2014 and the first available contest date is Wednesday, March 19, 2014.

The 2013 Girls Lacrosse Tournament was reviewed for points of improvement. Each year the starting times are reversed in Girls Lacrosse and in 2014, the Division 2 Girls Lacrosse Final will start at 4:30 p.m. and the Division 1 Final will start at 2:00 p.m. The Girls Lacrosse Committee members were enthused in having the MHSAA Tournament at Rockford High School in 2014. The tournament format was evaluated and there will be four regionals in Division 1 and four regionals in Division 2. Currently there are several games that will be played as "pre-regional games" due to the increasing number of teams in girls lacrosse. Additionally, in the Division 1 semi-finals, Region 3 will play Region 1 and Region 2 will play Region 4. In Division 2, Region 7 plays Region 5 and Region 6 plays Region 8. There will be three field officials for each semi-final and each final. The committee indicated that a surface of either artificial turf or grass was acceptable for regional and semi-final sites. Several sites for the semi-finals will be considered, with the priority of selection of sites in mid-Michigan.

Additional discussion included desired Regional sites for tournament play. Host managers who are contacted may host all levels of the Regional Tournament if necessary. The alternate site travel accommodation rule for

lacrosse was reviewed which indicates that MHSAA staff may change the date, time and location of a previously scheduled tournament game if the originally scheduled game involves extensive travel for both teams and an acceptable site can be secured. The determination includes consultation with both teams and the Tournament Manager and may require that the competing teams secure an acceptable field.

Division 1 and Division 2 enrollment numbers were also reviewed and 34 teams are presently in Division 1 (enrollment 1824 and above) and 37 teams are in Division 2 (enrollment 1823 and below). This is already an increase from 2013. There are 13 cooperative programs in girls lacrosse with 71 teams involving 87 schools. It was also noted that three teams have opted up to play in Division 1 during the 2013-14 season. Schools participating in the MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Tournament have continued to increase in numbers throughout the years with the initial tournament in 2004-05 consisting of 39 teams (50 schools) to the current status indicated. Committee members also provided the status of several other schools that were planning to offer girls lacrosse in the 2014. Overall each year, school participation numbers have continued to increase.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

The Girls Lacrosse Participating School Tournament Information for 2014 was examined which includes the tournament format, opt-out due date, regional draw dates, and tournament date parameters. In addition, tournament procedures, time schedule, playing rules, media information, sportsmanship, youth protection and spectator policies were provided.

JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Girls Lacrosse Committee discussed Junior High/Middle School contest and season limitations, declining junior high/middle school membership as well as sixth grade participation. MHSAA regulations the earliest start for middle school fall sports practice is the 14th Monday before Thanksgiving and all other subsequent season start dates are determined by local schools and/or conferences. The MHSAA regulates the length of season (a maximum of 13 consecutive weeks for all sports from the start of practice) and maximum number of games/contests. The Committee felt that the declining middle school membership had more to do with budget, not programs and the limitations of oversight as well as participation in the middle schools. The current number of junior high/middle school contests was also discussed and the Girls Lacrosse Committee felt that the current amount of competitions (12 dates over 13 weeks) was acceptable.

LIMITATIONS OF COMPETITION

Currently in girls lacrosse, a student or team may participate in a multi-team tournament in which the total allowable playing time for any team is no more than 120 (girls)/150 (boys) running time minutes and the event counts as one of the 18 regular season contests. This rule further provides a limitation of 20 minute running time halves for girls. Due to the already quick pace of the girls lacrosse game as well as a constant running clock when a ball goes out of play or during the set-up of a penalty shot, the shortened halves in the girls game during a multi-team tournament results in approximately 10 minutes of actual playing time. The recommendation is to allow for 150 running time minutes with no half to exceed 25 minutes of running time and allow for overtimes during the two regular games. A regulation girls lacrosse game is 50 minutes in length and play is continuous and time is only stopped at the discretion of the umpire for unusual circumstances (broken crosse, animal on the field, lost ball, a ball that has gone too far out-of-bounds, spectator interference, etc.). The clock is only stopped after each goal (except when the 10 goal rule is in effect and within the last 2 minutes of play in each half).

OFFICIALS AND ASSIGNORS

The Girls Lacrosse Committee also provided input regarding officials and assignors in girls lacrosse where further emphasis must be placed on the level of competition, skill level of team and experience of the umpires who are assigned to a contest. Additionally, girls lacrosse umpires need to be especially observant when there is a conflict of interest and to make certain that they are indicating the conflict during the season and MHSAA Tournament. In the post-season MHSAA tournament, umpires will be assigned by MHSAA Committee.

REVIEW OF US LACROSSE RULES CHANGES

Presently, girls lacrosse has rules that are proposed with member state involvement to the National Federation of High Schools in which they review and vote on rules that are sent in by member schools. The NFHS endorses the US Lacrosse Women's Rules Book but US Lacrosse continues to write the rules. The rules that were discussed in the NFHS Girls Lacrosse Committee meeting and showed unanimous approval included a few changes. The first was the allowance to use electronic equipment by coaches on the sideline or within the coaches' area during play. The second allowance was for a maximum of three players from each team to be between the restraining lines during the draw until the whistle blows with all others below the restraining lines. This information from the NFHS was received in July 3, 2013 with the expectation that these would be the rules proposals by the

NFHS Committee and would be in the US Women's Lacrosse Rules Book. Currently both of these rules are reflected as rules changes on the US Lacrosse site. Included is the re-emphasis of the obstruction of free space to goal rule in which one of the conditions has been "looking to shoot" which is listed in the note following the rule. Because this has been taken literally which has caused enforcement issues, a teaching emphasis shall be added to consider whether or not an opportunity to shoot exists.

Two important reminders for 2013-14 girls lacrosse include the uniform and the NOCSAE stamped standard on the ball. Regarding uniforms, beginning in 2013-14, all shirts shall be of a single, solid color with the following trim specifications permitted:

- Trim around the collar and waistband and at the cuff of the sleeve, or around the arm opening if sleeveless, may be of contrasting color(s), but shall not exceed 1 inch in width.
- Side inserts (armpit to waistband) may be of contrasting color(s), but shall not exceed 3 inches in width. The inserts must be centered vertically below the armpit.
- Piping of contrasting color is allowed, but only in areas where trim or side inserts are permitted. The combined piping and trim must meet the 1 inch or 3 inch allowable width.
- Numbers shall be centered vertically and horizontally and must be a minimum of 8 inches tall on the back and a minimum of 6 inches tall on the front of the shirt.
- Numbers must be of a solid color contrasting with the color of the shirt. The numbers may be trimmed in a contrasting color that shall not exceed 1 inch in width.

The other reminder is regarding the ball. Beginning January 1, 2014, all lacrosse balls must include labeling which states it meets the NOCSAE standard. The text on the ball must state "Meets NOCSAE standard NFHS" (preferable) or "Meets NOCSAE standard" and the text must be in a typeface that is readable at 18 inches by a person with 20/20 vision. The use of this ball is a risk minimization issue.

Additional health and safety issues were discussed including MHSAA protocol for implementation of National Federation sports playing rules for concussion and the newly adopted (March 22, 2013) MHSAA Model Policy for Managing Heat and Humidity. Concussion protocol includes the following language: "Any athlete 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 contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional." In addition, the MHSAA Model Policy for Managing Heat and Humidity requires that MHSAA tournament managers at all levels take temperature and humidity readings at the site of the activity 30 minutes prior to the start of an activity and again 60 or 30 minutes after the start of the activity and to follow the protocol based on the heat index reading.

RULES MEETING SCHEDULE & POINTS OF EMPHASIS

The 2013-14 online rules meeting schedule was discussed and the Girls Lacrosse Committee requested a point of emphasis be given to coaches and officials regarding the out-of-season limitations that exist in girls lacrosse for all levels of play (7th through 12th grade). Further emphasis includes that middle school girls lacrosse teams are allowed to play in a maximum of three multi-team tournaments and if a student or team participates in a multi-team tournament, that student or team shall compete in no more than two regulation games or scrimmages that week, Monday through Sunday, in addition to the multi-team tournament.

OFFICIALS

Officials training continues and sessions are scheduled on Saturday, February 1, 2014 at the MHSAA. It was further noted that the fees for regular season competition and assignment of officials are set by schools and that using an MHSAA registered assignor is voluntary. Official's selection for tournament assignments will be made for all levels of the Girls Lacrosse Tournament by the Girls Lacrosse Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Allow a student or team to participate in a multi-team tournament in which the total allowable playing time for any team is no more than 150 running time minutes and the event counts as one of the 18 regular season contests. No more than 25 minute running time halves could be played. (8-0)

Due to the already quick pace of the girls lacrosse game as well as a constant running clock when a ball goes out of play or during the set-up of a penalty shot (which usually takes time), the shortened halves in the girls game during a multi-team tournament resulted in approximately 10 minutes of actual playing time. The recommendation is to allow for 150 running time minutes with no half to exceed 25 minutes of running time which still results in approximately only 60 actual minutes of play.