

**Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc.**  
**BOYS LACROSSE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
East Lansing, January 16, 2014

**Members Present**

Tony DeMarco, (Official) Dearborn Hts.Crestwood  
Rick DeBlasio, East Grand Rapids (Advisory  
for Division 1 seeding only by phone)  
Mike Dungan, Rochester Hills-Stoney Creek  
Mike Jolly, Warren De-LaSalle (Advisory)  
Nick Kocsis, Detroit-U of D Jesuit,  
Joe Koengeter, Chelsea  
Scott La Rente, Howell  
Steve Maiorana, Flint Powers  
Jim Murray, Portage Central  
Tony Quinn, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central  
(Coaches Assoc.)

Pete Sims, Rockford  
John Thompson, Brighton  
Mike Van Antwerp, Holt  
Mike Watson, Oxford

**Members Absent**

Sue Calvo, Swartz Creek (MIAAA)

**Staff Members**

Cole Malatinsky  
Tom Rashid (Recorder)

**INTRODUCTION**

The following materials were emailed to the committee several weeks prior: Minutes of the two previous committee meetings, information on upcoming officials training, 2014 classification of teams, cooperative programs, tournament brackets and dates, 2014 NFHS rule changes. The committee received a 2013 study of NFHS Boys Lacrosse Injury Epidemiology. The multiple functions (sport, seeding, regional alignment and official's selection) were reviewed as was a history of recent recommendations to the Representative Council.

**BOYS LACROSSE COACHES ASSOCIATION**

The Association has a Coaching Clinic planned for Feb. 16, 2014 in the MHSAA Office in East Lansing and includes an MHSAA in person rules meeting for those in attendance. Considerable interest was expressed by the Association for possible co-sponsorship with the MHSAA of a Lacrosse Reaching Higher summer event the week following the MHSAA finals in 2015. The basketball Reaching Higher has progressed well and involves a low cost showcase and clinic for top underclassmen and their parents as selected by the Coaches Association so as to provide exposure to college coaches.

**OFFICIALS**

There are three local approved officials associations operating in boys lacrosse in the Metro-Detroit areas, Lansing and Grand Rapids. Others are in formative stages in Battle Creek and Bay City. By previous Representative Council action, the 2014 season will have three officials on all rounds of the MHSAA tournament. Three training sessions for new officials are planned for this winter at East Lansing, Byron Center and Bay City-Central High Schools. Registration is presently very low so these sessions may be cancelled and replaced by interaction with local officials. Other training is ongoing by officials' leadership and resulting in new officials.

**PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS**

In 2013-14 there are 110 teams involving, 129 schools (16 cooperative programs). There are 56 Division 1 teams with enrollment of 1,601 students and above and 54 teams in Division 2 with enrollment below 1,600 students. Three teams have opted up to play in Division 1. Seven schools have added boys lacrosse for this season. A report of teams changing divisions due to enrollment or cooperative program adjustments was presented.

**TOURNAMENT REVIEW**

The Committee affirmed the alternative site policy for all games except the Final and the preference for artificial turf fields whenever possible. If grass is used, it is to be trimmed short. It was also affirmed that a team could host its own Semifinal. It was consensus that the 2014 final again be held at East Grand Rapids High School. The girls lacrosse finals will be at Rockford High School.

**OVER**

## ONLINE RULES MEETING – POINTS OF EMPHASIS

There are several new significant rules changes for 2014 some of which were emailed to all coaches and athletic director in December 2013. The MHSAA online rules meetings will run from Mon., Feb. 3 to midnight Thur., April 10, 2014. Two in person rules meetings are planned for Feb. 13, 2014 at Birmingham Seaholm (6 pm) in conjunction with the local officials association and also at the Coaches Clinic on Feb. 16, 2014. The committee suggested that the MHSAA supplement the NFHS points of emphasis on proper equipment with an alert on the use of mouth protectors that fully cover all teeth and attached to the face mask if at all possible. The committee suggested a clarification that a player is disqualified for five minutes of **personal fouls**, not five minutes of penalties (similar to a basketball 5<sup>th</sup> foul).

## 2013-14 REGIONAL ASSIGNMENTS & TOURNAMENT

The Committee affirmed the preseason and late season seeding criteria making adjustments to the preliminary seeding of eight teams per division prepared in advance by committee members. The committee ranked the teams 1-8 based on the criteria and placed two seeded teams in each region (1 vs. 8, 2 vs.7, 3 vs.6, 4 vs. 5). The regions were balanced geographically and potential sites to be determined by MHSAA Staff were discussed. The regions were finalized pending staff securing host sites. On May 8, 2014 the committee will reconvene and place each team on the bracket based upon the written criteria and current season competition played on or before Mon. May 5, 2014. The coaches who provide the preliminary seeding met at the meeting's end to create a common spread sheet for data used for the pre-season seeding.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

Tournament Structure: When divisions reach more than 16 teams it may be necessary to add a district round or make another adjustment. To increase more equitable competition, consider a "play-in round" for teams 9-16, who would then match up with teams 5-8.

Middle School: While there is growth in middle school lacrosse, the coaching shortage and school financial situation causes many to avoid school sponsorship. Most middle school age teams play far more games than the MHSAA limit of 12 and play multiple games at weekend events. In some regions, middle school age lacrosse is a big business. The US Lacrosse youth program is age based and not grade based and complicates the situation. Many students go to non-school business ventures for more opportunities to play lacrosse and more competition than other sports offer. It was noted that the MHSAA shorter season (12 games over 13 weeks) is appropriate as it allows more practice time and participation in both other school teams and non-school lacrosse. The message of **school** sponsored lacrosse programs as educational and safe with qualified coaches needs to get to parents who would then urge local schools to sponsor the sport. There were no calls for adding 6<sup>th</sup> grade in lacrosse or for changes to the current limitations on competition feeling that schools would start modestly.

Out-of-Season Coaching: With fewer lacrosse coaches available, the limits on high school coaches with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders tends to drive middle school level lacrosse away from school coaches into for profit organizations. The same is true for high school students and coaches in fall, spring and summer. Some members favored a set number of contact days during the school year to curb the non-school lacrosse industry and closer connect schools to lacrosse.

Health & Safety: The 2012-13 study on lacrosse injuries from the NFHS was reviewed. New rules were reviewed, including increasing the penalty time for a hit to the head or neck from one minute to two or three minutes non-releasable. A new rule assessing the same penalty is in place for hits to a player in a defenseless position. Other than points of emphasis on mouth protection, cross checking, teaching proper technique and enforcement by officials, no new rule changes were suggested.

Scrimmage Rule: The committee inquired as to the purpose of the restriction of no more than two scrimmages before the 1<sup>st</sup> game and saw no continuing reason for maintaining that restriction. There was consensus that any number of the four allowed scrimmages would be permitted at any time.

Other: Lacrosse schools are not taking advantage of the MHSAA.com "Games Wanted" section. It was noted that three of the coaches on the 2014 committee were school teachers, and it was requested that a survey be conducted to see how many boys lacrosse coaches are school teachers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

There were no recommendations to the Representative Council.