

BOYS LACROSSE COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Zoom – Thurs. Jan 28, 2021 8 -10 am

Committee Members

Steve Ayre, Tecumseh
Jim Carl, Brighton, (Coaches Assoc.)
Rick DeBlasio, East Grand Rapids (Advisory)
Robert Dowd, Troy Athens
Brian Effinger, Official Grosse Pointe
Mike Jolly, Warren De-LaSalle (Advisory)
Rich Kimball, Lansing
Andrew Kransberger, Byron Center

Nicole Norris, East Lansing
Chris Riker, Portage Northern
Bert Smith, Official Grand Rapids
Ray Miller, Plymouth
Kevin Wolma, Hudsonville (Absent)

Staff Member

Cole Malatinsky
Tom Rashid (Recorder)

INTRODUCTION

The week prior to the meeting the committee was presented advance material related to updated NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rule modification considerations aimed at mitigating risk of COVID-19 exposure during competition, a modified faceoff suggestion from an MHSAA member school coach in response to rule change consideration eliminating the faceoff for the 2021 approved during the October 6th meeting, and a draft document for outlining safety protocols and allowable activity during preseason practice and conditioning in boys lacrosse. **It was emphasized that decisions made to today are subject to a final determination prior to the season.**

CURRENT STATUS OF SCHOOL SPORTS UNDER MDHHS ORDERS

MHSAA staff provided an update on the current status of school sports under MDHHS orders. Protocols for preseason conditioning and four player skill work that currently include masks coverings and physical distancing at all times were presented to the committee and will be placed on the MSHAA website. These may change as MDHHS orders change. Competition documents will be presented closer to the season.

NFHS PLAYING RULE MODIFICATIONS DUE TO COVID-19

The committee reviewed a list of possible modifications to playing rules and official mechanics updated from the document received prior to the October meeting. The committee did not change course on many of the rule modifications presented and adopted during the October meeting, including extending the players and coaches boxes to the end line to ensure proper distancing, limiting table personnel and official pre-game meetings and stick checks mechanics, which will be clarified closer to the season. There was consensus that length of quarters not be reduced and that face coverings will be required.

The committee again extensively discussed faceoffs. Although the committee approved a rule and mechanic alternative to conducting a faceoff under COVID-19 protocols for all MHSAA member school lacrosse teams in the 2021 season, consensus from the committee based on additional thought and input from coaches was that faceoff is an integral part of the game, and with activity presenting a similar risk of COVID-19 exposure allowed in other fall and winter sports, **the faceoff should be preserved.** Faceoffs will be conducted in accordance with NFHS rules book, with the following rule and official mechanic changes under COVID-19 protocols for all MHSAA member school lacrosse teams in 2021.

Rule - Face Masks on Faceoff

Although all players will be required to wear a face covering at all times, any player taking a faceoff will be required to wear two layers of face covering during the faceoff, and one layer must be a tightly woven cloth or other multi-layer absorbent material that closely and completely covers an individual's mouth and nose, and the portions that cover the nose and mouth must be sufficient to stop the spread of respiratory droplets (no mesh or other materials that cannot meet this standard) and unaltered as produced by the manufacture

in the nose and or mouth area. The second layer may be a second cloth mask, a non-rigid plastic face shield covering the mouth and nose designed to attached to the helmet, or a cloth face shield covering the mouth and nose designed to attached to the helmet. Officials will have the authority to remove any player from the faceoff that does not have the required two layers of face covering – the player removed can be replaced in the faceoff by a player wearing the proper two layers.

Mechanic

Faceoffs Procedure – Officials should conduct quick and efficient faceoffs. In an effort to limit contact with shared equipment and allow officials to maintain 6-foot physical distance from players as much as possible, players will be responsible for all ball handling and placing the ball on faceoffs.

1. A player puts the ball on the faceoff X and the official will give verbal instructions on any adjustments that need to be made regarding the placement of the ball – following a goal, the defensive team that was just scored on will be responsible for retrieving the ball from their own goal, and then placing the ball for the faceoff.
2. Official will instruct the players to go Down for the faceoff.
3. Official Give quick instructions to make sure players are correctly aligned.
4. Once both players are aligned, the official will give the Set command and then blow the whistle to start play.

Once the whistle is blown and the faceoff is initiated, the goal will be to make sure the ball is out quickly. If the ball is not out quickly the official shall stop play and award the ball following a technical foul for withholding (i.e., if a player's cross is clamped down on the ball resulting in a scrum) – or, if there is no technical foul, the ball will be awarded by alternate position.

PLAYER FACE-COVERINGS

All participants will be required to wear an appropriate mask/face-covering at all times during contests, including players, coaches, bench personnel, table personnel, and officials when 6-feet of physical distance cannot be maintained. The committee discussed at length what will be considered an allowable face covering, specifically as it relates to players. Traditional face masks, including surgical masks and cloth masks, are allowable as a face covering under this requirement. Clear, molded, and non-rigid face shields approved by the helmet manufacturer, such as the products by Cascade, Schutte, and Tektor, will currently meet the face covering requirement for players. Similarly, cloth face shield products that are designed to attach to the face mask, such as the product by Helmet Barrier, provided the cloth covers both the mouth and nose, are also allowable. It should be again noted that committee determined that two layers of mouth/nose covering must be worn by any player taking a faceoff, one of which must be a tightly woven cloth or other multi-layer absorbent material that closely and completely covers an individual's mouth and nose, and the portions that cover the nose and mouth must be sufficient to stop the spread of respiratory droplets (no mesh or other materials that cannot meet this standard) and unaltered as produced by the manufacture in the nose and or mouth area. The committee also discussed the importance for proper cleaning and sanitation of face coverings after each, and should be a continued point of emphasis for all involved.

FUTURE MEETINGS

MHSAA staff will continue to update documents outlining safety protocols and allowable activity during preseason practice and conditioning, as well as documents outlining safety protocols and any rules and official's mechanics modifications for competition based on any changes to MDHHS orders related to COVID-19. The committee will meet again in February or March to finalize this documentation for publishing on the MHSAA website prior to the start of activity.