

GIRLS LACROSSE COMMITTEE MEETING
MHSAA Office - East Lansing
October 18, 2017

Members Present:

Steve Baker, Grand Ledge
Brian Gordon, Novi
Marvin Hardy, DeWitt
Lindsey Hoyt, Farmington Hills
Tim Johnston, East Grand Rapids
Katie Kozlowski, Brighton
Zachary Maghes, Ann Arbor

Sal Malek, Bloomfield Hills (MIAAA)
Chris Riker, Portage

Members Absent:

Michael Emery, Rockford

Staff Member:

Kathy Vruggink Westdorp (Recorder)

GENERAL REVIEW AND PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The 2017-18 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; 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 officials to all levels of the MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Tournament. This Committee continues to meet in October because of the necessity to review US Lacrosse changes during the transition that occurs between the rules meeting and the NFHS publication of the Girls Lacrosse Rules Book. Beginning with last year's rules book, the publication has changed for the Girls Lacrosse Rules Book, with the NFHS being the actual publisher. In the future, the NFHS/US Lacrosse Rules Committee will be a combined meeting representative of both high school state associations and US Lacrosse. This combined group will be meeting in June 2018.

MEETING MINUTES/COACHING REQUIREMENTS

The minutes of the October 2016 Girls Lacrosse Committee were reviewed for the purpose of providing background regarding prior discussion and actions of the committee. Committee members also reviewed information regarding coaching requirements for 2017-18, which include the need for high school athletic administrators to attest that all varsity head coaches have a valid current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certificate, and that sub-varsity coaches have had a rules meeting. In addition, each head coach of a varsity team, in an MHSAA tournament sport hired for the first time as a high school varsity head coach at any MHSAA member high school after July 31, 2016 shall have completed either Level 1 or Level 2 of the MHSAA Coaches Advancement Program (CAP).

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Additional health and safety issues were discussed including MHSAA protocol for implementation of National Federation sports playing rules for concussion. In addition, epidemiology summary reports were provided from the Michigan High School Athletic Association Head Injury Reporting System for the 2016-17 school year as well as from the High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study in terms of sport specific injuries in girls lacrosse for 2016-17.

Committee members also received additional discussion points regarding the use of headgear in girls lacrosse. The use of headgear is optional in girls lacrosse and any headgear must meet the ASTM performance standard F3137. Any headgear manufactured on or after 01/01/18, must be permanently labeled with the SEI certification mark.

Rule 2, Section 7 of the Girls Lacrosse Rules Book outlines the certification changes to eyewear protection in which all field players must properly wear eye protection that must meet the most current ASTM Specification Standard F3077 for girls lacrosse and must be listed on the US Lacrosse web site. As of 01/01/17, only the F3077 standard will be legal for play. Additional conversation regarding eyewear included that as of 01/01/18, eye protection must be SEI certified and be permanently labeled with the SEI certification mark to the most current ASTM Specification Standard F3077 for girls lacrosse eye protection. The coach will certify that the eyewear meets the qualifying standards.

The Girls Lacrosse Committee believes that the focus should be on the rules of the game and the responsibility of coaches to teach the game appropriately. Additional attention should be provided by officials to adhere to strict enforcement of the rules that prohibit rough and reckless checking and place a premium on participant safety. Over the past few years, there has been additional emphasis on major rules changes in the girls game at all levels, which has included increasing penalties associated with fouls caused as a result of dangerous play.

2018 MHSAA GIRLS LACROSSE TOURNAMENT

The teams and schools participating in the 2018 MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Tournament were shared with the committee. There may be additional schools that still may offer girls lacrosse in the 2017-18 season. Many committee members expressed the great growth and popularity of girls lacrosse in their school.

There was some concern expressed regarding cooperative programs that have existed since the start of MHSAA Girls Lacrosse and that the numbers of participants on these teams should continue to be reviewed for possible new teams in the future. This was expressed to assist in the growth of girls lacrosse. Cooperative teams will continued to be examined for growth and size of roster.

2017-18 NFHS RULES BOOK POINTS OF EMPHASIS

The girls lacrosse rules change proposals from the NFHS/US Lacrosse meeting were also reviewed. Specifically, attention was directed to Rule 1-1-2, which provides optimal field dimensions for a playing field but also that a 120-yard boys and girls unified field can be used beginning in 2018. Markings and measurements are included in Rule 2-1 (pg. 14) of the 2018 NFHS Girls Lacrosse Rules book. Additional new rules include that players' sticks may touch the ground over the center circle and restraining line on the draw. The points of emphasis include illegal defensive positioning, contact in the midfield (incidental v. dangerous) and crosse in the sphere and/or check to the head. The committee also encourages all coaches, players, officials and administrators to conduct themselves in a professional manner before, during and immediately following all contests. The committee reminds coaches and players to avoid the use of excessive dissent or abusive language and encourages calm, patient and productive dialogue between coaches and officials.

OFFICIALS AND ASSIGNORS

The Girls Lacrosse Committee also provided input regarding officials and assignors of girls lacrosse where further emphasis must be placed on the level of competition, skill level of team and experience of the officials who are assigned to a regular-season contest. Additionally, girls lacrosse officials 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.

Further discussion included the need for more officials in all sports and providing additional creative ways to invite officials into the profession. Girls lacrosse officials training continues and sessions are scheduled on Saturday, November 11, 2017 and Saturday, February 3, 2018 (in conjunction with WISL) 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.

REVIEW OF GIRLS LACROSSE RULES CHANGES PROPOSED FOR 2016-17

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. Two years ago, the rule of "sudden victory" overtime was not adopted by the MHSAA Committee. The 2017-18 MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Committee affirmed that the previous overtime rule will be retained. This includes that when the score is tied at the end of regular playing time and overtime is to be played, both teams will have a 5-minute rest and toss a coin (visiting captain calls) for choice of ends. Two 3-minute halves of stop clock overtime (clock stops on every whistle) will be played. The clock will be stopped after 3 minutes of play in order for teams to change ends with no delay for coaching. The game will be restarted by a center draw. The team which is ahead at the end of six minutes wins the game. If the teams are still tied after six minutes have elapsed, the teams will have a 3-minute rest and change ends. The winner will then be decided on a "sudden victory" stop-clock overtime of no more than six minutes in length with the teams changing ends after 3 minutes. The game will be restarted by a center draw. The team scoring the first goal wins the game. Play will continue with "sudden victory" stop-clock overtime periods of six minutes in length (two 3-minute halves) with 3 minutes in between and change of ends until a winning goal is scored.

Last year, changes to *MHSAA Handbook* Regulation II and Regulation IV were proposed and passed by the MHSAA Representative Council. This included the allowance of multi-team tournaments to be held on days not followed by school and non-school days for both the high school and middle school levels. In addition, the number of multi-team tournaments allowed by girls lacrosse middle school teams was increased from three to four in its regular season schedule with each tournament counting as one of the 12 games of allowed competition.

Additional discussion included MHSAA surveys that were being prepared regarding a number of seeding variations. An assortment of variations was discussed with the committee. Committee members thoroughly discussed the options, and there were several concerns, including that there could be many teams that never advance beyond entry level in the tournament if seeding occurred. The Girls Lacrosse Committee felt confident that the current tournament draw was philosophically solid.

Girls Lacrosse held another participation record during 2016-17 with 2814 athletes participating in the Spring of 2016-17. The girls lacrosse tournament drew 5691 fans, a 29 percent increase from last year and a record at the Regional level.

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 5, 2018 and ends on April 12, 2018. Practice for MHSAA Girls Lacrosse begins Monday, March 12, 2018 and the first available contest date is Wednesday, March 21, 2018. The 2017 Girls Lacrosse Tournament was also reviewed for any points of improvement. Each year the starting times are reversed in Girls Lacrosse and in 2018, the Division 1 Girls Lacrosse Final will start at 2:00 p.m. and the Division 2 Final will start at 4:30 p.m. Grand Ledge High School is the intended host for the MHSAA Girls Lacrosse tournament on Saturday, June 9, 2018.

The tournament format and expected regional/semi-final sites were 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 2 and Region 1 will play Region 4. In Division 2, Region 7 plays Region 6 and Region 5 plays Region 8. There will be three field officials for each semi-final and final game. The committee also reviewed the intended regional sites and several sites for the semi-final games. Host managers may host all levels of the Regional Tournament if desired.

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 40 teams are presently in Division 1 (enrollment 1753 and above) and 44 teams are in Division 2 (enrollment 1752 and below). There are 20 cooperative programs in girls lacrosse with 84 teams involving 107 schools. It was also noted that two teams have opted up to play in Division 1 during the 2017-18 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 now more than double the status. Committee members also provided the status of several other schools that were possibly planning to offer girls lacrosse in the 2018. Overall, each year, schools participating in the MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Tournament have continued to increase in number.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MHSAA REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

There were no recommendations to the MHSAA Representative Council.