

**GIRLS LACROSSE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Virtual Meeting - Zoom**  
**October 14, 2020**

**Members Present:**

Jennifer Dunbar, Birmingham  
Brian Gordon, Novi  
Sal Malek, Bloomfield Hills (MIAAA)  
Eric Pierce, West Bloomfield  
Chris Riker, Portage

**Member Absent:**

Cole Andrews, Rockford  
Tom McCartney, Saginaw  
Renee Sadler, Holt  
Vicki Young, Grand Rapids  
Chloe Zdybel, Okemos

**Staff Member:**

Kathy Vruggink Westdorp (Recorder)

**GENERAL REVIEW AND PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE**

The 2020-21 Girls Lacrosse Committee met virtually to review its responsibilities as a standing sports committee; review prior Representative Council action; recommend to the Representative Council changes regarding NFHS or MHSAA rules or regulations relative to girls lacrosse; suggest points of emphasis for rules meetings; and evaluate current practices and procedures with MHSAA staff. Several of the Girls Lacrosse Committee will also assist in the assignment of officials to all levels of the MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Tournament.

In addition, updated information was received regarding the progress and process of the NFHS/USL Girls Lacrosse Rules Committee, which is now a fourteen-member committee with seven voting members from the NFHS and seven voting members from USL. Following the annual meeting of the NFHS/USL Girls Lacrosse Rules Committee, the NFHS publishes and distributes the rules book. The NFHS/USL Girls Lacrosse Rules Committee will meet again in June, 2021.

The minutes of the October 2019 Girls Lacrosse Committee were reviewed for the purpose of providing background of prior discussion and actions of the committee. Committee members also reviewed information regarding coaching requirements for 2020-21.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

There was a review of the 16 voluntary coach-player contact days that were allowed for girls lacrosse during the fall. Girls lacrosse teams and individuals were allowed a maximum of sixteen coach-player voluntary contact days with more than four students onsite at school facilities if the school permitted. No competition was allowed and the sessions only permitted students from the school. Gradual workout sessions with a responsible progression were a part of the plan. Additionally, all students who were participating had to have a pre-participation physical examination or health questionnaire prior to participation. The guidance also included the need for face coverings by all participants, coaches and other personnel, and that participants should be spaced to the extent compatible to the sport. Schools varied regarding the use of these voluntary coach-player contact days from the utilization of most of the days to some using very few or none of the days.

Additional health and safety issues were discussed including MHSAA protocol for implementation of National Federation sports playing rules for concussion. In addition, with COVID-19 pandemic conditions cancelling the 2019-20 season, epidemiology summary reports were provided from the Michigan High School Athletic Association Head Injury Reporting System for the 2018-19 school year relative to sport specific injuries in girls lacrosse for 2018-19. MHSAA information showed girls participation in lacrosse at 3180 athletes and a head injury prevalence rate of 2.04%

Girls lacrosse equipment compliance was also reviewed. Beginning January 1, 2021, goalkeepers are required to wear chest protectors designed for lacrosse that meet the NOCSAE standard at the time of manufacture. There were also discussion points provided regarding the use of headgear in girls lacrosse. The use of headgear is presently optional and any headgear must meet the ASTM performance standard F3137. Any headgear manufactured after 01/01/18, must be permanently labeled with the SEI certification mark and any field player choosing to wear headgear shall wear it as the manufacturer intended and securely affixed with the chinstrap in place as intended for use.

Starting January 1, 2020, Girls lacrosse eyewear must be SEI certified and listed on the SEI website. All eyewear must bear the SEI mark for certification by January 1, 2025. In addition, a new clarification includes the responsibility for users to maintain the integrity of protective equipment for risk minimization purposes by establishing that equipment shall not be modified from its original manufactured state and shall be worn in the manner the manufacturer intended it to be worn. Also included in this year's rules book, for the purposes of risk minimization, is added language to expand any check to the head to include the neck as a major foul.

Additional conversation included what girls lacrosse would look like in this age of COVID-19 which included that there may need to be more involvement by officials with the masking rule. Also, there was additional dialogue regarding numbers of teams that may be allowed on a multi-team tournaments as well as the conditions/limitations of spectators.

### **2020-21 NFHS RULES BOOK POINTS OF EMPHASIS**

The girls lacrosse rules changes from the NFHS/US Lacrosse meeting were reviewed. The 2019-20 Rules Book will carry over into the 2020-21 year. Attention was directed to the introduction of free movement, which will decrease official involvement in restarting play as well as continue to allow the high school game to keep up with the trends and growth of the game. Additional new rules include clarification of the requirements for crosse inspection on the back face of the pocket; establishing that electronic devices, video replay or television monitoring equipment shall not be used for any review of an official's decision; allowing for any number up to 12 players of each team to be on the field before the start of the draw; providing consistency in boundary starts and establishing that self-starting, when self-start is not an option, as a false start.

It was explained that with the carry-over of the 2019-20 NFHS/USL Rules Book, there would not be any additional rules changes allowed. 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. One of the main points of emphasis includes diminishing rough and dangerous play as well as additional penalty for repeated fouls. Coaches and athletic administrators opined that the physicality of play has to be reviewed and enforced by both coaches and officials and 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.

### **REVIEW OF GIRLS LACROSSE RULES CHANGES PROPOSED**

Five years ago, the rule of "sudden victory" overtime was not adopted by the MHSAA Committee. The 2020-21 MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Committee affirmed that the previous overtime rule will continue to 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.

### **2021 MHSAA GIRLS LACROSSE TOURNAMENT**

The teams and schools participating in the 2021 MHSAA Girls Lacrosse Tournament were shared with the committee. There may be additional schools that still offer girls lacrosse in the 2020-21 season. Michigan girls lacrosse has continued its run of setting a participation record every season since becoming a sponsored tournament sport in 2005.

Girls lacrosse tournament dates and Participating School Tournament Information were reviewed, as well as the dates regarding online rules meetings. The online rules meeting for girls lacrosse will be available on February 1, 2021 and ends on April 15, 2021. Practice for girls lacrosse begins Monday, March 15, 2021

and the first available contest date is Wednesday, March 24, 2021. The 2019 Girls Lacrosse Tournament was also reviewed for additional points of information.

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. The Division 1 structure is currently at 11-11-12-12 and the Division 2 structure is currently at 11-12-12-12. Additionally, in the Division 1 semi-finals, Region 4 will play Region 1 and Region 3 will play Region 2. In Division 2, Region 8 plays Region 5 and Region 7 plays Region 6. 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 Committee also indicated that it would be appropriate to host games on either a regulation girls lined field or on a Unified field.

Additional talking points provided for the committee contained a review of the tournament structure including the Michigan Power Ranking (MPR), as well as the size and structure of divisions. Some of the conversation included starting the tournament later to allow more regular season options. Discussion regarding configurations of the regional or divisional structure will be ongoing and may occur when there is additional growth in the number of teams who participate in MHSAA Girls Lacrosse.

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 studied and 46 teams are presently in Division 1 (enrollment 1745 and above) and 47 teams are in Division 2 (enrollment 1744 and below). There are 23 cooperative programs in girls lacrosse with 93 teams involving 116 schools. It was also noted that two teams have opted up to play in Division 1 during the 2020-21 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. 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.