

FOOTBALL

Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
December 6, 2011

MINUTES

This summary represents the recommendations of this Committee and is not to be construed as a change or revision of existing rules or regulations. The board of control will take final action on all items at their January meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 10:45 a.m. by Wade Labecki. Those present included Wade Labecki, Tom Swittel (Brookfield East), John Hoch (Lancaster), Frank Matrise (Kenosha Tremper), Tony Biolo (Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln), Doug Sarver (St. Francis), Dan Brunner (WFCB), Al Minnaert (Madison Edgewood). Charna Kelsey, WFCB Secretary recorded the minutes.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2010 meeting of the Football Advisory Committee meeting made by WFCB President, Tom Swittel was seconded by Frank Matrise. With no discussion the minutes were approved unanimously.

II. REVIEW OF SEASON REGULATIONS AND RELATED CORRESPONDENCE

Wade called attention to handouts of the Fall Season regulations. Wade reviewed some of the issues on the table at National Federation meeting. Wade is one of a 50-member committee requiring 34 votes for a super majority to institute change. Wade will forward the National Federation survey to the WFCB Board of Directors via email in hopes that they will participate in the process.

A. Football Rules Meetings/Exams - In August Wade was disappointed at the response to video and rules exams on-line although the football response was better than most sports. Wade encouraged the coaches to participate in the referee ranking. The athletic directors must log in to submit the email of the coach and the link will then forward to the coach.

- 1. Delivery** - The coaches feel the video and test for the rules meeting need to be uploaded earlier to allow testing prior to the beginning of football practice. In 2012 the video and test will be available in June. Wade told the committee that the testing will be hosted on a new server, allowing power point with less video so streaming will be more efficient. John Hoch points out that the program did not facilitate auto save which created some frustration when a coach was interrupted and then had to restart the testing process. Tom Swittel indicated that the test almost seemed to be designed to "catch" or "stump" the participant almost tricking coaches. Wade assured the committee that the test was created by a team that was focused and proficient at preventing cheating, and forcing coaches to read and understand the rules.
- 2. Attendance** - Many staffs have watched the video and taken the test together in the past and want to have that option. Video is more applicable to all coaches where the test seems to be more applicable to Varsity head coaches. Many of the questions did not pertain to the JV or lower level coaches.

There will be a constitutional amendment on the agenda at the annual meeting requiring head football coaches take the exam (written by the NFHS) in order to coach in the playoffs. This would allow a qualifying team to participate without their head coach if he had failed to complete the rules test. Instead Tony Biolo suggested that the WIAA require all staffs watch the video, allowing only the head coach to take the exam and submit one test per staff without consequences for one year. He suggested that this be monitored and reevaluated in year two to determine whether or not compliance increases with these changes. The WIAA upgrades should also make the video and on-line testing more user-friendly. Tony Biolo made a motion to recommend that the WIAA not forward a constitutional amendment at this time, preventing a coach from coaching in the playoffs if he has not taken the NFHS exam. Al Minnaert seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (7-0).

B. Ejection Report – Varsity assistant and JV coach ejections increased over the last year. Ejections of players were also up over prior years. It was suggested that perhaps there was an inconsistency within the refereeing crews with regard to what actions constitute justification for an ejection. Perhaps there should be a review of the ejection requirements (point of emphasis). The committee suggested a caucus prior to an ejection. Wade said that this is an issue to be discussed at the National Federation meeting to see if something should be changed. The rule now states basically that, "If you hear or if you see it, call it." This of course is paraphrased. No action was taken.

C. Season dates – Currently early start does not allow schools to play the first scrimmage on Thursday. The rule requires that 9 days of practice elapse prior to a scrimmage opportunity. The number of days prior to the 1st game will remain at 14, first game to be on or after August 23rd. No coaching contact will be allowed in 2012 from July 28-August 3, with Equipment and Fitness day August 7. Varsity teams not involved in the playoffs in 2012 are allowed to schedule up to 2 games for a total of 10 games for varsity and junior varsity or 8 for freshman teams. 2012 will be an 8-game season and the first scrimmage can be scheduled on Thursday. First equipment handout and fitness day in 2013 would be on Wednesday, August 7, with a minimum of 14 separate days of practice before the first allowed competition on August 23rd. The committee reviewed proposed season schedules for the next eight years.

1. **9th graders end date same as JV** – Currently the regulations governing 9th grade-only teams states that regular season play end on Saturday of week 15 for schools participating in the playoffs. This past year 9th grade-only teams were forced to file a waiver allowing them to complete their season on Monday of week 16, as JV teams are allowed to play until that date. The committee agreed that 9th grade only teams should end in the same week as other non-varsity teams allowing them to play on the Monday of week 16, after the last Varsity game of the regular season. A motion was brought before the committee by Frank Matrise to support a change in the Length of Season rule to allow all 9th grade teams to play their final game of the regular season in week 16, the same as nonvarsity. The motion was seconded by Doug Sarver and passed by a unanimous vote of 7-0.
2. **Days before Scrimmage** – Should the number of days before the first scrimmage be reduced to 8? This year there were issues scheduling officials. This could be eased if the rule was changed allowing the first scrimmage to be scheduled on Thursday, Friday or Saturday of week two (August 6, 2012). Tom Swittel made a motion to request a change allowing a scrimmage opportunity on Friday/Saturday of week two. John Hoch seconded the motion. With no more discussion the vote was unanimous (7-0).
3. **Days before the first game** – Currently the rule states that there must be practices on a minimum of 14 different days before the first game may be played (Friday or Saturday). Wade stated that the WIAA would not be flexible on this rule and the committee took no further action.
4. **Equipment handout and Fitness Tuesday** – Doug Sarver made a motion to allow equipment handout and fitness test on the day prior to the first practice. Tony Biolo seconded the motion; with no further discussion it passed unanimously (7-0).
5. **8 games in 2012 / 9 games in 2013 and 2014** - The Ad Hoc committee feels that first consideration needs to be given to the kids who play football and that it is not in their best interest to be denied a 9-game season, and that personal issues for the coaches should receive second consideration. Next year, coaches will need to make their request in week 5 to opt in to schedule a 9th game if they are not advancing in the playoffs. Online forms will be available to apply. Their requests can be withdrawn if circumstances change. The optional games will be scheduled on Thursdays to allow attendance at the playoff games. In 2013 the coaches would like equipment handout and fitness testing to be on Tuesday, August 6 with the first day of practice on Wednesday, August 7th. 2017-18 would be the first year when teams would need to address the early season in order to avoid 3 games prior to 1st day of the school year. John Hoch made the motion to maintain a 9-game season in 2012, with practice to begin Tuesday, August 7th and equipment handout and fitness testing on Monday, August 6. The motion was seconded by Al Minnaert and the vote was unanimous (7-0).

Additionally, a motion was made to maintain a 9-game season in 2013 and beyond by Tony Biolo, seconded by John Hoch. This vote was also unanimous (7-0).

D. Concussion Law – A law passed by the Assembly requiring that every coach at every level coaching 19-yrs. old or below must have education seasonally. Coaches and officials must remove a player who is showing signs of concussion for evaluation. Consider education at the coaches' clinic. Some states require submission of temperature and humidity reports 5 hours prior to a summer practice. The WIAA asked the committee to consider if rules were needed to enforce weather restrictions for summer and two-a-day practices. After a brief discussion the advisory committee agreed that no official rule is required at this time as in-state coaches do a good job of dealing with this issue by exercising good common sense. Education about heat exhaustion and hydration has also been very thorough.

E. 8-Player Football Season Regulations – Review of Ad Hoc recommendations.

1. Enrollment average – A 3-year enrollment average of 200 or below will be required for a school to qualify.
2. Decide by February 1 – May 1st is the deadline in 2012 to establish the league. In 2013, teams will have until February 1 to declare their program's intention to participate in 8-man football.
3. A 2-year commitment will be required.
4. Jamboree/Bracket during 11th week (Level 3). There was no further discussion with regard to this issue. Session at the clinic could be included on 8-man football and help to educate interested coaches, then coordinate a follow-up letter informing them further about the process.

A motion to accept the 8-man proposal was made by Frank Matrise and was seconded by Al Minnaert. The vote by the committee was unanimous (7/0).

- F. Summer Contact Dates** – There was no discussion about summer contact except to state that the committee is happy with the way this is running.
- G. Constitutional Items** – Team assembly during the school year rules will come before membership again. If eliminated this would allow school teams unlimited assembly during the school year. This would allow winter volleyball leagues to continue during the girl's basketball season, for example. The Executive Board of The Wisconsin Football Coaches Association and Al Minnaert, making up this Advisory Committee, are going on record as being strongly opposed to school year assembly for any sport out of season and therefore oppose eliminating the current rule regarding assembly.
- H. Other Items from Committee** – There were no further items discussed.

III. REVIEW OF TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES AND CORRESPONDENCE

A. Review of 2011 Playoff Procedures

1. **Seeding** – Saturday by 3 p.m. – Discussion was generally in support of seeding the playoffs, concluding that “the time for seeding has come.” The biggest hindrance has been teams playing opponents within their own conference particularly during the first round. Many ideas were discussed regarding true seeding of 1-4, 1-8, and 1-16. The problem in seeding 1-16 is primarily travel. WIAA would not support seeding 1-16 for this reason. The current structure eliminates legitimate, competitive teams early in the playoffs. Wade suggested that we continue to draw circles as it has been done based primarily on geographic locations, then hold seeding meetings. Rules for seeding would follow guidelines of other sports and then be adjusted slightly to support the specific needs of football. The committee discussed language regarding conferences within the groupings of 8 for seeding. Language should be added stating that no more than 4 conference opponents shall be placed in any group of 8. A motion was made by Doug Sarver to seed the playoffs, using current criteria for groupings of 8 avoiding conference match-ups when possible in round one. Seeding meetings shall be on Saturday at 11:00 a.m., at the school most centrally located. Game film of each team's last 2 games shall be brought to the seeding meetings for game tape exchange. Tony Biolo seconded the motion. With no further discussion the vote was unanimous (7-0) in support of the motion.
2. **Higher Seed Hosting** – Higher seed should host levels 1-3, which the committee feels will eliminate the issue of seed manipulation. Tony Biolo made the motion to add language stating the higher seed will host in levels 1-3, and the host school may use an alternate field providing it is on the list of approved sites. Doug Sarver seconded the motion and the vote supporting the motion was unanimous (7-0).
3. **Friday or Saturday default** – Currently the default is Saturday unless agreed upon by the competing teams. Tony Biolo made a motion to change the language to a Friday default unless agreed upon by the opponents for round 1-3. Tom Swittel seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous (7-0) in support.
4. **Neutral Sites** – No changes were recommended in regard to neutral sites after round 3.
5. **Independent Language** – Wade handed out a document that outlined language regarding schools that withdraw from a conference and their eligibility for the playoffs in subsequent years. The current language was not clear and allowed for confusion and ultimately a ruling against the WIAA in this past year's playoffs. A motion was made by Tom Swittel to accept the change of language as proposed by the WIAA, which was printed on the handout from Wade. Frank Matrise seconded the motion, which passed 6-0 with Doug Sarver, abstaining from the vote.

B. State Finals

1. **2011 Tournament** - The feeling of the committee was that this year's tournament was a great success and that there was no need to make changes in this final contest.
2. **2012 Tournament** – No discussion was entertained for changes in the state tournament for next year.

IV. FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION ISSUES/MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- A. **Items from Committee** - Discussion about the Ad Hoc plan vs. conference realignment. Members of the Ad Hoc committee supported the plan by a majority vote with the opposition coming from the staff members of the WIAA. Wade told the advisory committee that the main reason for this opposition was because the plan does nothing to solve the issues of conference realignment. The current Football Advisory Committee (WFCA Executive Board) agreed and is determined to continue the discussion about current problems within conferences that leave many schools competing against schools of inequitable size, leaving them unable to advance to the playoffs. John Hoch made a motion to move the Ad Hoc proposal forward with further discussions about realignment, seconded by Al Minnaert. The motion was defeated by a vote of 2-5.

Tom Switel made a subsequent motion to further investigate options for conference realignment that will allow for more equitable competition. Frank Matrise seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 7-0 in favor of the measure.

Frank Matrise made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:43 p.m., seconded by Tom Swittel. There were no objections.

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Season Regulation Revision Proposal

1. THE WIAA FOOTBALL PLAYOFF FIELD SHALL CONSIST OF 224 TEAMS. TEAMS WHO MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA RECEIVE PLAYOFF CONSIDERATION:

- a. Champions of approved WIAA conferences, including divisional champions within a conference approved by the WIAA, with a winning record in conference games, minimum five conference games.
- b. Teams with a winning record (above .500) in conference games only.
- c. Teams without WIAA conference affiliation, playing an independent schedule against approved competition that win a minimum of six varsity games.

Note: 1. Teams that voluntarily withdraw from a conference shall be ineligible for football playoff consideration the next four school years.

2. Teams which have voluntarily withdrawn from a conference will not be seeded in the playoff series.

- d. Teams with a winning conference record, or champions of a non-WIAA conference, playing a minimum of five conference games.

Note: The WIAA Board of Control has given final authority to the WIAA Executive Staff to make necessary determinations in football playoff qualifying procedures in unique situations in order to preserve conference affiliation and to resolve all issues of concern in a manner which serves the greater interest of the membership and the football playoff series.

Rewrite Note 1-c1 to stand alone as 1e; rewrite note 1; and rewrite note after d to stand alone as f

- c. Teams without WIAA conference affiliation, playing an independent schedule against approved competition that win a minimum of six varsity games.

Note: 1. A team that withdraws from a conference without conference and WIAA approval during a football season shall be ineligible for playoff consideration during that school year and shall also be subject to a four-year ineligibility period as set forth in 1-e.

2. Teams which have voluntarily withdrawn from a conference will not be seeded in the playoff series.

- e. Teams that voluntarily withdraw from a conference without conference and WIAA approval shall be ineligible for football playoff consideration the next four school years. The fact that the team which has withdrawn from a conference has thereafter rejoined the same conference, joined another conference, or changed the team status in any other manner during its four-year ineligibility period will not affect its ineligibility for playoff consideration during the four school years that follow its initial withdrawal.
- f. The WIAA Board of Control has given final authority to the WIAA Executive Staff to make necessary determinations in football playoff qualifying procedures in unique situations in order to preserve conference affiliation and to resolve all issues of concern in a manner which serves the greater interest of the membership and the football playoff series.