

Southern Indiana Lacrosse Stakeholders,

At the Hoosier Southern Lacrosse Conference summer meeting, members completed a strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis to better qualify areas of improvement. The following ideas/actions are a result of the lively but constructive session:

1. **Improve professionalism on the field/sidelines by all parties** – As a young sport in Southern Indiana, the pool of referees and coaches is quite small, leading to deep relationships and familiarity. While we relish this closeness, all agree that a more professional demeanor is required during the season.
2. **Better educate stakeholders** – In days pasts, referees would attend kick off meetings with local teams to discuss rules and answer questions. Due to the explosive growth of lacrosse the practice was abandoned but is now being reviewed and revived. In addition, referees have agreed to re-establish answering questions during half time for *YOUTH GAMES*. This will allow spectators to ask questions about specific calls or plays to further their understanding of the game.
3. **More aggressively discourage negative behaviors** - A need to go beyond the required guidelines by NFHS and USL to better control sportsmanship during games was identified. This included actions by players, coaches, fans and referees. A sub-committee was formed and made proposals for a pilot program for varsity teams for 2019. Coaches approved the guidelines during the January 2019 meeting. If successful, the program will be rolled out more broadly as deemed appropriate.
4. **Strategic scheduling required** – It is easy to lose sight of the time and effort committed by area referees when you are wholly focused on your individual team(s). With nine (9) conference members comprising eight (8) varsity and eight (8) junior varsity teams and variable feeder's programs, the spring is often a chaotic and stressful period for area officials. As such, the conference re-affirmed it's commit to strategic scheduling as follows:
  - a. Highschool teams are strongly encouraged to schedule games on Tues, Thurs and Sat under most conditions.
  - b. Priority if ref shortage will be as such: 1) Hosted out of town teams, 2) Highschool and 3) Youth
5. **Recruiting Officials is vital to continued growth** – As teams have expanded in the area to include Gibson County and even Owensboro, along with the creation of youth feeder programs, the total number of referees needed has increased. In an effort to encourage new referees, the HSLC created the Officials Development Program (OPD), which provides startup reimbursement for new referees if they complete a minimum number of required games. You can find additional details for the [OPD](#) on our website.
6. **Promotion of Lacrosse warranted** – Lacrosse is just one of those sports that hooks you very quickly. Fast paced. Physical. Highly competitive. How can you not love it? Unfortunately, we recognize that many in the tri-state have never seen a lacrosse game and thus don't understand what all the commotion is about. We are taking steps to more actively pursue media opportunities and create new events that will showcase Southern Indiana Lacrosse.
  - a. 2019 – STIX Against Cancer (3/2)
  - b. 2019 – HSLC College Commitment Reception (5/10)
  - c. 2019 – HSLC Championship (5/11 at Central High School)
  - d. 2019 – ThunderBolt Lacrosse Festival (6/8 and 9 at Goebel)
  - e. 2020 – Lacrosse Border Wars – Indiana/Kentucky lacrosse shootout

The Hoosier Southern Lacrosse Conference and its members are committed to not only growing the game in Southern Indiana but ensuring it is done in a sustainable and engaging manner. Rivalry is good. Playing aggressive but in control is encouraged. Unsportsmanlike behavior is not to be tolerated. The HSLC Sportsmanship Guidelines adopted at the January 2019 coaches meeting are focused on ensuring lacrosse maintains a positive reputation and is supported within the community. The 2019 guidelines are included below for your convenience.

# 2019 HSLC Sportsmanship Guidelines

The Hoosier Southern Lacrosse Conference (HSLC) and its member programs utilize the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), US Lacrosse (USL), Indiana Highschool Lacrosse Association (IHSLA) and where applicable the Indiana Highschool Athletic Association (IHSA) rules and guidelines in conducting business relative to boys' high school lacrosse both in-season for practice and games and for out of season activities. Additionally, the HSLC adopted an ancillary Sportsmanship Guideline on 12-January-2019 for introduction with the 2019 spring season, which is shown below:

## I. Programs/Teams

### A. Players

1. **Goal:** Reduce personal fouls and incentive repeat offenders and their coaches to avoid additional penalty minutes
2. **Application:** Varsity only for 2019 for cumulative penalty minute related guidelines. All other guides applicable to high school and middle school programs.
3. **Assumptions**
  - a) Tracking is across all games both conference & non-conference
  - b) Tracking to be completed using SISL website **Clarification: Tracking not enabled on website for 2018 due to tech issues – coaches are "self" tracking/policing**
  - c) Coaches will utilize "official" scorebooks and enter penalty data within 48 hours of game completion
  - d) Coaches are accountable for ensuring that players are eligible, i.e. similar to coach accountability for enrolled hours, grades, etc....
4. **Actions**
  - a) Excessive cumulative penalty minutes (Varsity ONLY)
    - (1) After the 3rd game of the season, if the average penalty minutes per game for a player exceeds TBD min, they are suspended for the next game. *Note: We are reviewing 2018 data to establish a threshold which will be aligned prior to the season start in early March.*
  - b) Excessive unsportsmanlike penalties in a single game
    - (1) After 2nd unsportsmanlike penalties in a single game, player is automatically ejected from the game.
  - c) Excessive ejections in consecutive games
    - (1) If a player is ejected either due to unsportsmanlike penalties or cumulative penalty minutes, i.e. 5m **in consecutive games**, they are automatically suspended from the next game. **Proposed clarification.**
5. **Repercussions:**
  - a) Knowingly playing an ineligible player will result in forfeit of game and ineligibility for conference tournament.

Note: Conference eligibility is forfeited even if it is determined that an ineligible player played in a non-conference game.

### B. Coaches

1. **Goal:** Improve professionalism on the field and incentive sportsmanship for their programs, i.e. players, coaches, and fans
2. **Application:** Varsity only for 2019 for cumulative penalty minute related guidelines. All others applicable to high school and middle school programs.
3. **Assumptions:**
  - a) Items relative to player penalty minute game averages shown above
  - b) Actions below apply to team head coach
  - c) Coaches are providing feedback on referees after each game using provided IHSLA tools.
  - d) Coaches are entering said feedback within 48 hours of game completion.
4. **Actions:**
  - a) Excessive cumulative penalty minutes (Varsity ONLY)
    - (1) After the 3rd game of the season if the average penalty minutes per game for the team exceeds TBD min, coach is suspended for the next game.

*Note: We are reviewing 2018 data to establish a threshold which will be aligned prior to the season start in early March.*

- b) Excessive unsportsmanlike penalties in a single game
  - (1) After 2nd unsportsmanlike penalties in a single game by the coaching staff/bench, coach is automatically ejected from the game.

*Note: This includes unsportsmanlike penalties from fans as this is considered a "bench" penalty.*

- c) Excessive ejections in consecutive games
  - (1) If coach is ejected from two consecutive games, they are automatically suspended from the next game.

5. **Repercussions:**

- a) Knowingly coaching when ineligible results in forfeit of game if in conference and ineligibility for conference tournament.

*Note: Conference eligibility is forfeited even if it is determined that an ineligible coach was present during a non-conference game.*

**C. Parents / Fans / Spectators**

- 1. **Goal:** Encourage sportsmanship, comradery, and competitiveness with professionalism
- 2. **Application:** All high school and middle school games
- 3. **Assumptions:**
  - a) Penalties assessed on spectators are "bench" penalties and are included above in section B, Coaches.
  - b) Fans will not be permitted to sit directly behind team benches. Both benches and score keepers table to be located opposite of spectators.
- 4. **Actions:**
  - a) Bench penalty, see section B, Coaches.
  - b) In the event that the field is not setup in accordance with section C.3.b above, opposing coach can demand a forfeit.

**II. Referees**

- 1. **Goal:** Improve professionalism on the field
- 2. **Application:** All high school and middle school games.
- 3. **Assumptions:**
  - a) Coaches are providing feedback on referees after each game using provided IHSLA tools.
  - b) Coaches are entering said feedback within 24 hours of game completion.
  - c) Coaches are not providing feedback directly to referees pre, during, or post game either verbally or via email.
- 4. **Actions:**
  - a) Coach feedback will be reviewed weekly by referees.
  - b) Referee scheduler will also review feedback for referees within his scheduling purview and provide guidance, mentorship or feedback as he deems appropriate.

**III. Escalation of Issues - Draft**

For the 2019 season, the conference is creating a 3-person board which will include the SISL President and 2 members drawn at large but not directly impacted by case under review. This panel will investigate abuses of the sportsman guidelines and/or requests for deviations/expectation, as they are submitted and provide rules/directions as deemed appropriate. Further clarity around the process will be provided once finalized and approved by a majority of HSLC members.