

AIA Football Sports Advisory Committee
December 11, 2012
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
AIA Office Board Room

Call to order: 9:00 a.m.

1. Roll Call

Members in attendance:

All Committee members present

2. Review of AIA Football Sport Advisory Meeting minutes April 17, 2012

3. New Business

- a. *Discussion with Dr. Cardenas regarding the protection of AIA football and maintaining safety within the sport for players*

Dr. Cardenas had other obligations pending and was unavailable to attend today's meeting. Football Advisory Committee was invited to attend the January AIA Sport Medicine Advisory meeting to take part in discussing safety issues within the game (practice and game) and involve committee to receive input regarding steps the AIA can take to lessen the safety issues but protect the game.

- b. *Discussion: AIA bylaw; article 23.5.3 (ten game regular season rule for players) versus forty quarter rule*

Coaches on the committee shared their frustration related to their ability to dress lower level players for varsity games to give added depth to their program and how the present ten game limit for players hurts lower level players who might get limited time in a varsity game but then be restricted from playing significant minutes in their school's lower level game. Concern was raised regarding the limited numbers of players available for lower level games and the potential for lower level programs to be dropped by schools.

A potential solution, from the view of several coaches was to change the ten game rule to a forty quarter rule for all players. Committee members were asked to get feedback from the schools administrators and football coaches that they represent.

- c. *Report (Chuck Schmidt) from the AIA Executive Board Discussion on :*
1. *Requested format change/ venues for neutral sites for Div. IV/Div. V*
2. *Request to increase Div. II/Div. III playoffs to include 24 teams*
(Div. II=44 schools, Div. III=48 schools)

Chuck Schmidt reported that the AIA Executive Board is presently reviewing state tournament formats and venue determinations for Division IV and Division V.

Committee members shared their concern for the number of teams in the Division II and Division III in relation to Division I. Concern was raised regarding all division, with the exception of Division VI, having a sixteen team bracket format. Division I representatives do not want their playoff format of sixteen teams reduced. Increasing the number of teams in the playoffs for Div. II and Div. III would either increase the length of the playoffs by one week or cut into the number of games in the regular season.

Discussion resulted in a concensus agreement to recommend leaving the sixteen team playoff (twelve for Div. VI) as it is with further study regarding playoff equity issues.

Regarding neutral sites, weather plays a role in the selection of game sites as well as the availability of schools, due to facility liability concerns, able the host and soccer conflicts, to be available for Association usage. Their were mixed views by members regarding locations of neutral site games. The Metro Phoenix area as the location for neutral sites hold merit due to the size and quality of facilities. Rural schools that are high seeds would like quarter and semi-finals closer to their fan base area.

Lee Haws reminded the committee that it the responsibility, per bylaw, for the AIA Executive Board to determine the sites for tournament games.

d. MaxPreps Seeding System:

1. How does it work?
2. How should school athletic directors schedule freedom games for varsity football in an advantageous way for their school team?

Coach representative expressed concerns/frustration related to their control (lack of) with freedom games. Coaches want to know how to best effect their seeding through the scheduling of games

It was announced that there will be an information meeting offered at the AIA, with MaxPreps representatives present to seeding program and scheduling questions. It was also announced that there will be athletic director meeting on Jan. 24 to discuss freedom game schedules.

The AIA Executive Board will be taking feedback from each sport advisory committee to determine the automatic qualifiers for each sport versus the at-large team that will make up each bracket. This item will be part of the January 22, 2013 AIA Executive Board meeting agenda.

e. Discussion: Football officials accountability/review process for varsity head coaches

Chuck Schmidt informed the committee that there is currently a pilot online basketball officials evaluation being utilized. He indicated that the expectation is for an online officials evaluation tool for coaches to be available by fall 2013.

Lee Haws expressed concern that schools feel there is no recourse or accountability for an ineffective or poor official. Chuck countered by sharing that officials are constantly being evaluated. He shared that individual officials have been suspended and terminated. He indicated that the officials, in every sport, are very active in self policing....varsity officials evaluate freshman and junior varsity officials and varsity officials are evaluated by AIA Officials Evaluators throughout each season of every sport.

f. *Div. VI Football:*

1. *Is a ten game season being discussed by the AIA Executive Board or AIA staff for Div. VI (eight man football)?*
2. *Are football bylaw specific to Div. VI necessary?*
3. *Can seniors play in sub varsity level competition? See AIA bylaw; article 14.3.2.2 (junior varsity competition exception for 1A Conference schools)*

At the present time, the AIA Executive Board is not looking at increasing the regular season games for Div. VI from eight to ten. No specific bylaw changes for Div. VI are presently being looked at. There is a need for all Division VI athletic directors to understand the NFHS field expectations for eight man football and comply with the NFHS rules.

There is an exception for senior to play in sub varsity level competition. See AIA bylaw; article 14.3.2.2 (junior varsity competition exception for 1A Conference schools)

g. *Start date for 2013 AIA Football (per AIA bylaw; article 23.2.3)
Practice: no sooner than 8/5/13*

Competition: no sooner than 8/28/13 unless granted exception by the AIA Executive Board

h. *Discussion: Roster limit for AIA State Football playoffs*

Committee members were asked to get feedback from the schools administrators and football coaches that they represent.

i. *Discussion: Varsity football coaches limitation for AIA State Football Championship family passes.*

Committee members were asked to get feedback from the schools administrators and football coaches that they represent.

4. *Consensus recommendations for the AIA Executive Board*

For AIA State football, do not constrict the state brackets from their present bracket format of sixteen teams for Division I/II/III/IV/V and twelve teams for Division VI and request that the AIA Executive Board continue further study on the equity issue as it relates to the size of divisions and the number of teams on the state bracket.