

MINUTES OF THE IHSA GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL ADV. COMMITTEE MEETING

December 3, 2024

The IHSA Girls Flag Football Advisory Committee met on Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. Committee members participating were: Lisa Willeumier Chicago (North Grand); Brian Peterson, Round Lake; Rachel Karos, Villa Park (Willowbrook); Jordon Hovel, Bolingbrook; Nate Dodson, Machesney Park (Harlem); joining virtually were Orlandus Thomas, Chicago (Intrinsic Charter-Downtown Campus), Mark Bacys, Danville on behalf of Gary Gritton; and Thomas Ross, Chicago. Conducting the meeting was Tracie Henry, IHSA Assistant Executive Director; and also participating was Juliana Zavala, Sports Administration Chicago Public Schools.

TERMS & CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. II. DATES AND SITES

Recommendation: Regional Quarterfinals: Monday, October 7, 2024.

These games will be played at ~~the site of the highest seed~~ the **regional host site**.

Rationale: Regional quarterfinals and semifinal will be played the same night to reduce travel for the competing teams and officials. Flag games typically last one hour and most teams play multiple games a night or weekend during the regular season. The committee believes playing the quarterfinals and semifinal on the same night mirrors regular season play and will assist host sites with scheduling.

2. VII. TOURNAMENT RULES

Recommendation:

B. Coaches: Teams are allowed ~~four (4)~~ **six (6)** coaches in compliance with IHSA By-law 2.070.

Rationale: The committee recommended increasing the number of coaches on the sidelines and believe it is important for the growth of the sport. Teams have offensive, defensive and special teams coaches as well as volunteer coaches. It is important to include coaches on the sideline and in the states series to provide all coaches on staff the opportunity to be on the sidelines versus excluding someone that is in compliance and has been coaching the team all season. Tackle allows 1A-4A: 20 passes for coaches, managers, video camera people, etc. and 5A-8A: 30 passes for coaches, managers, video camera people, etc.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION – II. DATES AND SITES

Recommendation: A. Regionals B. Sectionals

3. **A. Regionals B. Sectionals:** Adjust the regional host request form for Regional quarterfinals and semifinals. Quarterfinals and semifinals will be played on Monday/Tuesday of week 14 and regional final games will be played Wednesday/Thursday of week 14. Friday will not be an option to select on the host form and Saturday will be used for inclement weather and/or scheduling conflicts.

Sectional semifinals will be played on Monday of week 15 and Sectional finals will be played on Tuesday of week 15.

Rationale: The adjusted schedule does not allow regional host sites to select Friday on the hosting form thus avoiding conflicts with tackle games. In addition, specifying the preferred weekdays for quarterfinals, finals and semifinals will allow more regionals to be completed by Thursday of week 14 but still keeps the Saturday option, if necessary, due to weather or scheduling conflicts. The sectional semifinal schedule will allow for an additional day of rest on Wednesday for State Final qualifying teams.

ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION:

1. Tracie Henry communicated the function of the Advisory Committee. The committee shared feedback and discussed the regular season and state series. Tracie Henry shared the results of the feedback form survey sent to all athletic directors and coaches. The committee also reviewed the future team entries for 2025 and beyond. In the inaugural year of the IHSA State Series, 154 teams competed with an estimated 170 teams conducting the sport locally. The future entries form indicated that 181 teams may enter the State Series in 2025. IHSA Policy 19, 300 teams are required to increase to 2 classes: 1A & 2A.
2. The committee discussed the need for education regarding the seeding process. The IHSA will work to develop resources and additional documentation about the online seeding process. The committee discussed utilizing a RPI format from MaxPreps for seeding versus the current process in the IHSA Schools Center allowing coaches to seed from the information submitted by the coaches in the season summary. The committee believed the current RPI in MaxPreps could vary based on the league and conference teams compete in during the regular season.
3. The committee discussed the potential of implementing a required film exchange process similar to tackle football during the state series.
4. Tracie Henry discussed the timeline and implementation of the NFHS Girls Flag Football playing rules. The NFHS plans to have the playing rules released to states and schools by May of 2025. The committee made a list of potential state association adoptions for clock procedures based on the outcomes of the NFHS rules.
 - 6 minute halftime- upon mutual agreement of both coaches and tournament administration can be shortened or lengthened. 6 minutes will be used during the state series.
 - 2-20 minute halves with a running clock except upon touchdowns (extra points will not be timed)
 - Clock will stop in the final 2 minutes of each half
 - 25 second play clock upon change of possession will begin immediately, **not once the referee signals**
 - **Mercy Rule** adjusted to 30 points or more point differential the clock will not stop (clock will still stop on injuries and timeouts) instead of ending the game the clock will just continue to run.

5. The committee discussed adding a pre-game on field timing procedure to the managers manual recommendations. Including on field warm-ups, on field introductions and the National Anthem (when available).
6. Tracie Henry communicated the process to license as an official, including the clinic requirements. As of May 1, of 2025, all officials will have to attend an in-person clinic. All officials are encouraged to attend a clinic in 2025 due to the rule changes. Tracie Henry showed the committee the content and resources available in Flag Football Officials Education. The IHSA is working to expand the resources available for officials as well as clinics and dates.
7. The advisory committee would like the rules committee to review the following rules to make sure clarity is provided in the NFHS rules once produced: forward pass- must cross the line of scrimmage, impeding the rusher, pick plays, screening, extra points allowed to be run back for 2 points and ball placement.
8. The committee discussed expanding or moving the state series back a week or two on the IHSA standardized calendar.
9. The committee discussed expanding clinics to the southern part of the state to increase awareness of the sport downstate.
10. Tracie thanked the committee for their service. Many committee members hosted post-season regionals, sectionals and the state final which was greatly appreciated in the inaugural season.