



Oregon School Activities Association
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May 28, 2020

TO: OSAA Executive Board

FROM: Kris Welch, Assistant Executive Board

SUBJECT: OSAA Soccer Contingency Group Meeting Summary

The OSAA Soccer Contingency Group met on May 28, 2020 via a Zoom meeting for the third time. Most members were present; the attendees included: SRI Patrick Duffy; Dave Hancock, AD South Eugene HS (6A); Darren Goodman, AD La Grande HS (4A); Missy Smith, AD Oregon Episcopal (3A); Monty Hawkins, Head Boys Coach – Sherwood HS (6A); Jaime Rivera, Head Boys Coach – Hood River Valley HS (5A); and OSAA staff members, Kelly Foster, Brad Garrett, Kyle Stanfield, and Kris Welch; Mike Blok, AD Beaverton HS (6A) and Stephanie Vanderbusch, Head Girls Coach – Phoenix HS (4A) sent me their answers to the focus questions.

We began with quickly reviewing our goal to develop a set of recommendations that we can present to the OSAA Executive Board to help our 179 membership schools who sponsor soccer during these unprecedented times of uncertainty.

We went over all of the information that we know as of May 28: the Association year ended on May 25; we clarified the Governor’s Executive Order 20-20 of when schools are actually closed; depending on when a school’s calendar ends and the teacher’s last day is the end of the closure; so the schools now have taken over responsibility to follow the Governor’s mandates. It is even more important now that this group come up with some recommendations to help clarify what the membership can do over the summer. Our ability to find creative solutions to have coaches and kids back together safely is ESSENTIAL!

We then started into the focused questions segment of the meeting.

- How has the release of OSAA “Phase 1” guidance been received? What types of activities are you structuring for your athletes?

For some schools they appreciated the document, but it really did not make a difference as the school districts have made the decision to close their campuses until July 6th and have continued with the no face to face contact. Some schools are even more confused and not sure what they need to do to get their campuses open for their coaches and athletes. Other schools are hoping to get started on June 13. Some schools are requiring their coaches to put a plan together showing that they are following the recommendations and those proposals are going to the Principal, or Superintendent’s office to make the decision if it meets their approval. Most coaches are maintaining a positive attitude standing by to see what changes are going to happen. One school district already purchased sanitary kits and are beginning to send out communications to their

communities and parents making them aware of what the school district is planning. Some schools are meeting virtually starting to set-up conditioning and individual drills for their athletes and building relationships for their programs.

- Continued use of face masks and physical distancing are likely to be a part of any recommendation until a vaccine is available. As we move through the different phases it is likely that group size will increase. What does practice look like as we move through the next couple of months?

The ability to share equipment amongst the pods increases the amount of drills the athletes can do. Athletes can work on spacing (physical distancing) and running play patterns, shadow activities, set offenses, all being safe for the athletes. Soccer allows for “mini games” allowing maybe 8 v. 2 where physical distancing is maintained by limiting defensive pressure and even could work on finishing goals. The group also discussed the need for team building activities like hiking and other outdoor activities. In soccer, the individual drill foundation is so important, being able to dribble, striking the ball, free kicks, going to the goal without a goalie, combination of ball receiving are all components that coaches can apply in Phase 2. This will probably be good for the game of soccer, creating the proper lines and spacing! Coaches can be creative to implementing drills for soccer.

- Starting with the assumption that the State Championships date will not change. What would be a good frequency of contests, taking into consideration loss of class time impact, flexibility of modifying schedules, officials’ availability?

Schools who have lights should try and utilize them by playing later in the day and try and schedule some Saturday league games so kids don’t miss school. Maybe we need to consider limiting preseason and make sure we fulfill our league schedules. Two games a week is about the correct amount as the game of soccer is physically demanding and athletes need three days of rest between games. Three games a week would not be ideal. There is a concern on the number of officials this year. In some of our areas, we are already seeing a decline in officials which this would compound the issue even more. There would be a concern that the goal is to complete the Varsity schedule and the lower level loses out, which would not be good! As far as the State Championship, if we needed to move facilities, there are other facilities around the state that could host the event and make it a real positive experience for the kids. We should not lock ourselves into having to be done by a certain date. Schools would be willing to move the Championship to another site and date if we needed to.

- If your season was shortened (2 weeks, 4 weeks, etc....) are there specific rule exceptions that might have to be made? Impact on qualifying procedures (seeding, rankings)? Thoughts on playing in county (local/regional) regardless of classification? Cancellations/Forfeits – no contest, no penalty?

This topic brought lots of discussion, from just playing league matches to only playing schools on the same side of the state. If we are going to be able to play matches this year, we would need to throw out the Rankings system and just play games. If we get to have playoffs, the “old system” can be adjusted for a year and let leagues determine their seedings. The bigger concern is how we get the teams transported with the restrictions we have in place right now. Athletic Directors will need to become creative in scheduling and coaches, while not ideal, playing a lower classification, would need to accommodate to ensure a positive experience for all involved. The final reward is the ability to just play games and to make it as fair of a game as possible. There should be a policy put in place by the OSAA to help with the scheduling, otherwise teams will be left out as schools will jockey around to play other higher ranked teams. It was agreed that no matter what, the schools would like to have some type of playoffs if at all possible. If a team had to cancel due to the

pandemic or circumstances beyond the control of the school, that team should not be penalized and given a forfeit it should just be eliminated, no consequences taken.

The future meeting dates:

- Thursday, June 4 (4:00pm – 5:15pm) potentially cancelling this meeting
- Thursday, June 11 (4:00pm – 5:15pm)

We may need to add some more meetings depending on what we hear or need, if we do we will stay on Thursdays at 4:00pm. Will send out the focused questions ahead of time. Kris will email out that with the invite for the next Zoom meeting.

Thank you for everyone's willingness to be on this group and for your insight!