

MIAA Wrestling Committee Meeting

Tuesday, April 25, 2023 @ 10:00 AM

MINUTES

1. Call to Order @ 10:10 by Phil

a. Attendance

Joe Bianca, Mary Solok, Ann Palumbo, Brendan Kent, Jon Longley, Keith Poloskey, Eric Conti, Jason St. Peter, Paul Shvartsman, Steve Rotondi, Brian Brewer, Amy Daniels, Steve Sentes, Scott Tremlett, Desi Kaplan, Mike McLarney- MIWOA, Nate Montiero- MIWOA, Phil Napolitano, Katie Kampersal

2. [Minutes of January 19, 2023](#)- Motion to approve minutes by Joe Bianca 2nd by Mary Sokol (12-0-0)

3. New Business

- a. Transition with official's rep on the committee. Brian Tildsley focusing his on coaching and has resigned from the committee and the MIWOA. Mike and Nate from the MIWOA will speak on the official's behalf at today's meeting.
 - Ongoing poor treatment of officials- MIWOA
 - President of the MIWOA Mike McLarney is at today's meeting. This is an ongoing issue, we are losing a lot of great officials due to this.
 - Phil- This is an important topic, not just in wrestling but across all sports. How do we, as a committee, support our officials? We need to get to a place where our officials no longer dread/decline going to a certain location or match because of the treatment they fear they may receive. What can we do, what message can we get across, how can help AD's, Coaches and Principals?
 - Mike M- officials association try to do a great job recruiting, we started this year with 80 officials, at the last meeting we had 64 officials. I make 115 calls to recruit officials and can only get 10-15 people to come out. These officials have wrestled in high school and college, some have been college officials for many years and officiated over 100 matches. They are having their integrity questioned during and after these high school matches. The younger refs are being yelled at as they are leaving the gyms by the wrestlers and fans about calls they made an hour ago.
 - The rule book is there to protect the refs. Many times the gym is set up incorrectly. Dual meets are NOT tournaments, but they are typically set up as tournaments. Teams are not setting up gyms correctly, however the older experienced refs are able to still control the gym and the mats. The rules are there to protect everyone involved.
 - We need to teach our coaches how to speak to refs. Kids are learning how to speak/address the refs by how the coaches are speaking/addressing the refs. When you come to the table to question a call, a coach is really coming to the table to question the interpretation of the rule, not to question the call or the ref.
 - Phil- should we put together a document as a guide that references how coaches should approach officials and set up a gym. Principals, the CEO's of the school, should be included on the communication.

- Joe B- Can we as a committee compose a letter about the loss of officials and link that document to it? Talk about the expectations, resources, how the gym should be set up etc.?
- Mary- each year I host a meeting that has an officials rep prior to the start of each season- point of emphasis are addressed.
- Amy- This will also set the mark for all sports
- Nate- I also ref soccer and at the end of each game the players are required to fist bump me as a ref and say good game, this is not done at the end of wrestling. Wrestling is different.
- Nate- from a scheduling perspective, not all wrestling matches needs to be Wednesday and Saturday. This will help with many of new guys being paired up with our veteran officials.
- Joe- sounds like there is a problem with training coaches and even with refs knowing who to reach out if there is a problem while on site during an event.
- Steve Sentes- I didn't know how to talk to refs when I first started. I needed to learn the rule book and I needed to teach myself how to talk to refs. It would have been helpful if there was a class or a handout on how to approach a ref in certain situations.
- Desi- should there be a zero-tolerance statement from the committee?
- Phil- We have an idea of the things that we need to do for guides for supporting officials. I will draft something with your committee leadership.
- Paul- I think the parents have gotten significantly worse. Parents are approaching refs, reaching out via social media. I have told my parents that they are not allowed to talk to refs.
- Phil- That should go in our letter. Parents should not approach or speak to officials.
- Joe- as a principal in a building, I love recommended language- if there is something for AD's can provide us in certain situations.
- Eric Conti- you can only control so much. Who is in control of the site while we are there? If the site is "unsafe" then who needs to be there during the match, the AD, the principal? If the site isn't "safe" then maybe they cannot have matches there.

b. Review of the 2023 Individual Wrestling Tournaments

- Tournament Directors' Reports
 - * Steve Sentes- Division 1 Tournament Director
 - At D1 Central/Metro, the Wi-Fi was in the wrong room, had to trouble shoot quickly. Everything was fast and finished early.
 - D1 States at Methuen- someone was marked as missing during weigh-ins but was actually there, 1st round match went off and the wrong kid wrestled, and he won. Both coach and wrestler were very understanding when he was told he needed to re-wrestle.
 - Also had 4 biting incidents-sent out an email about biting to all schools.
 - * Scott Tremlet – Division 3 & All State/Girls All-States Tournament Director

- Weigh-ins went really fast; skin checks need more refs as it took a little longer
 - Mohawk Regional – Not ideal gym- 2 separate rooms with mats, but it worked out well
 - Wayland- worked like clockwork
 - Tewksbury- Mats down the middle went well
 - Foxborough- no issues
 - States- Wakefield- Great crowd control, great site lines
 - All States/Girls All-States- Need a doctor there to help with skin checks had some questionable checks, weigh ins went quick
 - Reading- Did a great job, size of gym was a little small maybe due to the growing size of Girls?
 - Girls All State almost doubled in size, had their own side during the tournament. In 2022 (88 wrestlers) in 2023 (177 wrestlers)
 - Future- maybe charge a little more and go to a venue like the Mullen Center
 - List of approved coaches from the schools from AD's not just a number of coaches from school. Each coach would need to check in and only those coaches would get the "coaches" lanyard and be allowed on the mat.
 - Scott- I always make sure I am in during weigh ins and skin checks. I would rather take the extra time to make sure that is done correctly than have to take the extra time to redo something.
- All-State and Girls All-State Finals format
 - Discussion on possibility of running a two mat final during the All-State and Girls All-State Finals, only. One mat for All-State championship, one mat for Girls All-State Championship.
 - Do not want to go backwards with the progress we have made running 3 mat finals at all tournaments, however, at the All-State & Girls All-State it is something to explore to further highlight those matches.
 - Would help will re-setting up the gym, allowing for more space for bleachers/spectators

c. Looking ahead

- Reminder of new [NFHS weight classes](#) – MA adopted Girls (12) & Boys (14). Effective next season. All forms will be updated by Phil. Desi will update FloArena
- [Approved MIAA Rule Change Proposal](#) – Wrestling specific rule changes in proposal 37 and 38
- Girls All-State Tournament
 - Rule 84.4.6 - Must weigh in at scratch weight once during regular season (girls weight classes)
 - Development of qualifying criteria or qualifying tournament- Subcommittee will meet to discuss

- Seeding Format
- Update on the impact of recommending 5 qualifiers from each section to compete at states
 - TMC rejected the proposal to send 5 qualifiers from each section to compete at states.

d. Other

4. MIWOA Fee Discussion-

Presentation by Nate Montero

- Currently there is not a flat fee, it is by bout/number of mats/number of officials/site
- Officials are asking for a flat fee
- Officials are not all making the same amount for working the same type of tournament (sectionals)
- Current system is hard to budget and plan for
- Only 1 head official is getting paid for skin checks/weigh ins even if more than 1 official is helping with skin checks/weigh ins
- Proposal B outlines this year's tournament with the increase of pay
- Phil reminded group that this would be a recommendation to Games Officials. This committee cannot approve it alone.
- Discussion- Only concern is mileage- it is not consistent with other sports. If all officials are doing skin checks then there is no need to include an extra 25 for the head official. It is just part of their responsibilities.

Motion to approve proposal B with the amendment of with no mileage and the flat fee of \$25 for skin checks to be included in the rate (Eric, 2nd by Mary) Approved 12-0-0

5. TMC Update

- Update on TMC review of current tournament structure (Brendan)
- 2023-25 Wrestling Alignments (*attached*)

6. Coaches Input

7. Officials Input

8. Executive Session

- Review of incidents throughout the tournament, including a hearing with one school.

9. Meeting Dates to Remember: 2023-24 meeting dates are TBD

Adjournment @ 1:35 by Phil