



Oregon School Activities Association

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October 23, 2020

TO: OSAA Executive Board

FROM: Kris Welch, Assistant Executive Director

SUBJECT: OSAA Soccer Contingency Group Meeting Summary

The OSAA Soccer Contingency Group met on October 22, 2020 via a Zoom meeting for the 9th time. Most members were present.

We began as a whole group of Season 3 sports with Football, Volleyball, and Soccer Contingency Groups together as the OSAA staff went over the current status as of October 22 for the 2020-21 Association year. This included a summary of our Delegate Assembly meeting caucus discussions, the Executive Board decisions during their work session, and updates on status of OSAA work in advocating for reclassification of sports and matrices. The Executive Board made the decision to have schools prioritize their schedules by local/regional as opposed to League schedules. In some cases, it would make sense to stay in leagues as that would be locally, but for some leagues it just does not make sense playing only league opponents with the transportation restrictions as difficult as they are. The Board also made the decision to suspend the use of Rankings for the 2020-21 school year in the hopes that would help schools determine schedules. Peter reiterated the OHA and ODE's stance on schools ability to compete indoors or not being based on schools' educational system in place; comprehensive distance learning (no indoor competitions, but can compete in outdoor activities and competitions), in-person or hybrid learning (indoor competitions could take place along with all outdoor activities and athletics). We continue to request the reclassification of the sports and potential loosening on the restrictions but have not heard back yet as their main focus is getting kids back in schools. After the completion of information and questions and answer session, the contingency groups broke off into their own break-out sessions.

The Soccer Contingency quickly reviewed our goal to develop a set of recommendations that we can present to the OSAA Executive Board, and 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 October 22: Season 3 (February 22 – April 28) our "traditional fall sports/activities followed by a week of culminating events; 9 days of practice are mandatory prior to the first contest and that soccer can play 10 matches.

After all of the information, the Group started discussing the focused questions.

With the Executive Board making the decision to prioritize Local/regional play and Rankings not being used, how does that impact the plans your school has made for the “regular season”?

The idea of playing local and not using the Rankings helps a bit, in Eastern Oregon, they are playing home and a way with a school during the same week to help on tracing. They will play their league schools for the most part, while adding their traditional games with Pendleton and leave openings for any other school who needs matches. They are willing to travel to neutral sites if needed. Most of the other schools have started the scheduling process, thinking they would play mainly league opponents, but also leave some openings for schools who need matches. Probably keeping the first two weeks open for these matchups and using the final five weeks for league games. In Eugene they are playing local, not league so they won't have to travel far. One of the challenges with soccer this year is the fact that Spring Break falls in the middle of the season (after the first 2 weeks of competition), most schools don't plan on playing that week. Ultimately, the schools are going to just be happy that they are playing matches! Some school districts are concerned that they may not be able to play soccer because their district is in CDL and their Boards are holding steady on the thought if not in-person learning, no contact in-person between coaches and athletes.

Covid-19 Sports Guidelines/Protocols?

The OSAA has been working on a document between the OAOA and OHA to create considerations for the sports officials when we return to competing in contests. This document hopes to make it clear between the schools and officials on who's responsible for all and that we try and protect everyone at contests. The goal is to create clarity and retain officials during this pandemic as there are concerns that the number of officials available are decreasing. Some consistency is needed no matter where in the state these contests take place for everyone. This document initiated conversation amongst the group that schools, coaches, and players are willing to do whatever it takes to play games! Having the same rules throughout the state would help the administrators with game management. The hope is that the State (OSAA) could create a set of rules for game management (i.e. are we allowing fans, etc...). That is difficult as some schools would be okay having fans, while others do not; it also creates a challenge for those schools who depend on parent transportation for their student-athletes to get to contests, some have to drive hours and that would not be fair to those families who drove a couple of hours to not be able to attend the contests. This brought up the idea of at least creating a pre-game checklist (similar to the one in the Event Management Information), that schools could use for their facilities, with COVID specific modifications so that the opposing school would be informed prior to arriving at the game. Some other examples would be game management and the host school “hiring” a COVID monitor to help with sidelines and spectators. Overall, this needs to be a group effort between everyone in order for the opportunity for student-athletes to compete in contests as there are many layers and different expectations between facilities and school districts. The OSAA could possibly come up with a guidance with suggestions to help schools. In the club sector, the athletes are already wearing masks in games so the expectation on the soccer realm has been established.

Culminating week, what does that look like?

We did not have the opportunity to discuss this topic, but we did talk about what would happen if Season 2 was unable to be played, would Season 3 want to start earlier. There was some discussion about contracts and coaches being paid during Season 1 and the majority of coaches who are not being paid. Schools

are used to and ready for 2-weeks of preseason prior to the first contest, so the majority of this group would like to keep Season 3 where it is.

The future meeting dates:

- TBD (6:30pm – 7:45pm)

We may need to add some more meetings depending on what we hear or need. Will send out the focused questions ahead of time. Kris will email that out with the invite for the next Zoom meeting.

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