

MIAA Soccer Committee Minutes

January 21, 2025 -10:00am MIAA

Virtual

1. Call to order
 - a. Welcome and Introductions – Steve Dubzinski MIAA Assistant Director
 - b. Welcome and Introductions- Dan Erickson, Chair, Karen Guilmette, Vice Chair
2. Approval of Minutes – September 18, 2024 – Chris Schmidt, Nicole Viele
3. Tournament Review – Jeff Newhall, Tournament Director
 - State Final Sites feedback- Steve Dubzinski
4. Infraction Reporting – Overview, Steve Dubzinski
5. Coaches Representatives Report – Laura Ramos, David Gavron
6. Coach of the Year/Official of the Year Promotion
7. Referee Update – Ric Beaudoin
8. Next Year's Tournament Calendar Dates/Cutoff
 - 2025 Tournament Format
9. New Business
 - 3 Officials – Should we start earlier?
 - Club Teams and MIAA Limitations
10. Future Meeting Dates
11. Adjournment

Notes:

- Meeting Called to order
- Infractions Report – Steve D. Consistent as years past. Three schools reached a maximum of 16 but did not exceed. Emailed Athletic Directors and Principals as the season progresses. Emphasis to apply yellow cards. Good year overall, everyone who needs to be is aware and responsive. We are reporting cards in a timely manner.
- Coaches Rep Report – Dave Gavron
 - Card limits – Coaches are concerned of the difference between tactical fouls vs. dirty play. This has been addressed in past years, generally we don't have schools going over the limit. One school was asked to come before the Sportsmanship Committee.
 - League schedule is weak – anything we can do to help schools schedule outside of their league? It's not just a soccer issue; it's across the board. Western Mass does struggle with issues in terms of power rankings. We'll let Jim Clark address that. It's on the leagues to figure out a system of how to schedule games to take advantage of power rankings. There are pockets

of groups/leagues that don't mix in enough. Should leagues cross over, partnering with another league? Pick a week to schedule two leagues. It falls on the schools and leagues to schedule. Power rankings still need work. Keep the discussion going. There are good coaches being put in hard situations, all sports not just soccer. Continue to be a good coach. Margin of victory discussed extensively in our office.

- Three-man crew assignment. We utilized everyone across the state, some recommended by other assigners. Refs were excited to work games they normally wouldn't, grateful to be asked. Are there enough officials for the entire tournament? Comes down to dates. It's tough to juggle. Club games always have a 3-man crew. If possible, that would be outstanding. 2-man system is challenging, what would happen with 3? Look at last year's schedule to see if it is doable. When western Mass only played western Mass that pocket of 16 teams goes to 30-40 teams. Pool expands, and the number of teams expands so power rankings would change. The more outside competition the better. Power rankings have gotten much better.
- Continue to nominate officials and coaches of the year.
- Referee Update – Ric Beaudoin
 - The number of officials has grown 10% from last year.
 - Shin guard rule change effective July 1, 2025. 100% on the player to wear them. No size or placement, just wear them.
 - ERICKSON – International Association says shin guards must be worn.
- Next year's calendar dates – Jeff Newhall not present but is comfortable with keeping calendar the same as last year.
 - Earlier rounds felt rushed. Should we keep an extra week or move playoffs a week back? It felt like a lot of room between the last two rounds. Avoid games on Halloween. Keep in mind that a good quality regular season is important as most teams do not make it into the tournament. Any time you can steal a day or two is better.
 - Push back from some AD's when bracket release is on a Saturday. Not every AD is full time. Seeding on a Monday is far more desirable. Issues in the past with AD's not getting information in on time, MIAA is ready to post brackets whenever.
- New Business – Should we start earlier?
 - ERICKSON – Proposal – cut-off day, Thursday October 30th, release day Saturday November 1st, tournament begins Monday November 3rd. Sean Mackin – 2nd it. 10 hands in favor.
 - Preliminary Rounds – 11/3 – 11/5
Round of 32 – 11/5 – 11/8
Round of 16 – 11/10 – 11/12
Round of 8 – 11/12 – 11/15
Final 4 – 11/17 – 11/19
Finals – 11/21 – 11/22

- Club Teams and MIAA Limitations
 - Club teams are leaving kids with a tough decision between their High School team and a Club Team.
 - Kids must play at least 50% of the season. The Bona Fide rule is clear.
- Future meeting dates
 - May 7th or 10th at 10am - Virtual
- Tournament Concerns to Talk to Jeff About
 - D3 played on the last day of the semi-finals. Other divisions had more time to rest.
 - We had very good feedback on going to college sites.
- Adjournment

