

## Discussion Items for Our Section

### Modified Philosophy

At this meeting, the Modified Committee discussed feedback and input they have received from the sections on the following five areas of concentration. These areas of concentration were developed by the NYSPHSAA Modified Sub-Committee in March 2017 to examine modified athletics in response to the NYSPHSAA 2016/2021 Strategic Plan.

- Consideration for extended playing time to mirror HS rules, to begin in the 2018-2019 school year
- Consideration to have the “option” for more games, to begin in the 2018-2019 school year
- Consideration for the name “Modified” to be changed to “Middle School Athletics” or another name, to “rebrand” the program
- Consideration for re-formatting of online rules, including links to governing rules and regulations
- More emphasis on modified rules at the annual fall athletic directors’ workshops

### Summary of Sectional Representatives’ Reports Regarding

#### Modified Philosophy

- Sections had mixed feelings about changes that would move modified rules and standards closer towards mirroring those of the high school level
- No section felt that increasing the number of modified games was realistic, as budgets are still tight.
- Re-naming “Modified” athletics must make an impact. Any alternative name has to be used, or don’t bother to change it. The Committee thought that the name “Junior High School Athletics” was closest to the philosophy we desired. The current use of “Modified” has been questioned, as it leans towards an interpretation that its focus is athletics for special needs students.
- The roll-out of refining “Junior High School Athletics” will be delayed to the 2019-2020 school year. Everything is still up for discussion – from the suggested new program name to the editing of standards, Game Rules and Game Conditions for every modified sport. Further discussion at the sectional level is needed now for any changes suggested at today’s meeting. We will also need the input of the Safety Committee, the HS Central and Sport Committees, and the Executive Committee over time. An examination of existing NYS Department of Education related documents will also need to be done over the next school year.

### Discussion Item #1:

Should the name "Modified Athletics" be changed?

What name would our section like to see used in re-branding the current "Modified" program?

### Modified Sports

The Modified Committee also charged all of our modified sports coordinators with the responsibility of taking a detailed look at their own sports. They must examine the specific, current Modified Game Rules and Game Conditions of their sport and the modified chart in the NYSPHSAA handbook. They should compare the modified information with the existing handbook High School Sports Standards and the rules of their sport, as played at the high school level. Contact with the HS Sports Committees was expected. The sport coordinators will make recommendations for changes, if any, to the Modified Committee. The sports were reviewed in alphabetical order. Modifications of game rules and game conditions are listed for you. You are asked to discuss and record your section's feedback upon these recommendations:

Baseball. Steve Nolan reported that the high level is considering the use of shoes with metal cleats. Perhaps modified baseball players should now also be allowed to do the same.

### Discussion Item #2:

Basketball – Boys. Bob Hummel reported no requested changes.

Basketball – Girls. Jim Miller was absent from this meeting. There was no report.

Bowling. Only Section 8 hosts modified bowling. We will research appropriate modified standards for the sport.

Cheerleading. Alisa Pacheco developed a Modified Cheerleading Survey that will gather information in understanding how many of our sectional schools are participating in modified cheerleading, whether they are using Traditional or Competitive cheerleading, which sports modified cheer teams cheer for, whether modified teams collaborate with their high school squads, whether they have try-outs and cuts, whether modified cheerleaders attend summer camps, how large their squads are, whether the Athletic Placement Process is used to move modified athletes onto high squads, and whether cheerleading coaches recommend any changes in current cheerleading NYSPHSAA or AACCA rules and conditions. It will be distributed by the NYSPHSAA office. Look for and share the survey with your modified cheer coaches.

Cross Country. Modified sport coordinator Vera Trenchfield suggests that there be a minimum standard for the number of meets for cross-country to provide equitable experiences for modified athletes. A minimum of 6 meets was suggested.

### Discussion Item #3:

**Field Hockey.** Barb Felice reported that Modified and Varsity field hockey game rules are the same. There are no differences, and therefore no need for changes.

**Football.** Steve Nolan responded to a Section 6 concern regarding 11-Man Football Game Rule #2. For the defensive alignments for a 4 or 5-man front, the current rules restrict alignments to be heads up on the offensive linesman. Section 6's concern is that this may cause constant head contact between the defensive and offensive linesman. They would like to consider allowing the defensive linesman to align in a gap, as well as heads up. The HS Football Committee is not opposed to the gap alignment should it be clearly defined. If the sections agree, 11-man Football Game Rule #2 will need to be edited to allow gap alignment in the 4 or 5-man front. This will be evaluated at the sectional level as a Discussion Item for this sport.

**Other clarifications:**

1. There are no NYSPHSAA rule restrictions on live punts and live extra points. NYSPHSAA does prohibit live kick-offs.
2. NYSPHSAA rules do allow two receivers on either side of the ball with restrictions.
3. A team can fake punt if they line up in the acceptable alignment. If they align out wider than allowed, they must punt.

**Discussion Item #4:**

**Should 11-Man Football Game Rule #2 be edited to allow gap alignment in the 4-man and 5-man front?**

**Gymnastics.** Modified gymnastics sport coordinator Janice Trudeau provided the Committee with an excellent report, our first ever for this sport. Only three Sections offer modified gymnastics: Sections 7, 8, and 11. Each Section has their own set of guidelines that allow flexibility, but still meet modified guidelines: Section 7 (USAG Level 6 requirements with NYSPHS Technical Handbook modifications), Section 8 (USAG Levels 7 & 8 requirements with NYSPHS Technical Handbook modifications), and Section 11 (USAG Level 9 requirements with NYSPHS Technical Handbook modifications). Each section allows 15 minutes or more for warm-up. A gymnast may enter as many events as they are capable of doing safely; however, officials' fees may determine how many slots are available for competition. three events per meet.

Currently, two team members are permitted to enter all events as All Around gymnasts. Janice noted that this rule needs review. The number of competitive spaces that are available and the number of athletes on the team play a role in how many events an athlete can compete in. Generally, in modified athletics, we like to include and involve most athletes on the team in a meet, in the spirit of maximizing safe participation

**Discussion Item #5:**

Should modified gymnasts be permitted to enter more than 3 slots per meet?

Should modified gymnastics allow more than two All Around gymnasts?

Ice Hockey. Dean Berardo was absent from this meeting. There was no report.

Boys' Lacrosse. Gordie Pollard reported on the 2019 Boys' Lacrosse Modified Rules. The standards in the handbook will be edited to exclude already-stated NFHS rules.

Discussion Item #6 - Exceptions: Agree or Disagree with each?

1. The length of quarters, including a fifth quarter, shall be 10 minutes.
2. For extended play, there shall be four quarters of 11 minutes each.
3. In the event of a tie, there shall be one 4-minute sudden victory overtime.
4. A one-arm swing with a crosse, whether contact is made or not, shall be considered a personal foul-slashing. This includes the over-the-head check.
5. There shall be no such thing as a "brush" in the modified program. Contact between the crosse and helmet is a personal foul.
6. In a five-period lacrosse game, the "mercy rule" shall be in effect at the end of the third period of play.
7. Substitutes are permitted whenever the ball goes out of bounds. Substitution during live play shall be on the fly.
8. When a goalie gets a penalty, the home player may serve the penalty.
9. A goal will be disallowed after the horn sounds to indicate the end of the period.

Girls' Lacrosse. Beth Staropoli clarified the modified girls' lacrosse checking rule in effect and reviewed girls' lacrosse rules changes and points of emphasis. No other changes were recommended.

Boys' and Girls' Soccer. Matt Wood proposed several changes in modified boys' and girls' soccer:

Discussion Item #7: Agree or Disagree with each?

1. Change to two 40-minute halves for boys and girls.
2. One time-out per half for girls and none for boys.
3. Allow the sliding tackle, overhead scissors kick, and flip throw-in in modified soccer.
4. Do not allow overtime in boys' soccer. Allow two five-minute overtimes in girls' soccer.
5. Continue to allow free substitution.
6. Continue to use the foam helmet and mouthpiece for the goalie, and traffic cones or flexible corner flags

7. Continue to waive uniform requirements of the numbered goalie jersey and dark home uniforms for modified athletes

Softball. Micki Bedlington made possible suggestions to bring modified softball closer to HS rules

Discussion Item #8: Agree or Disagree with each?

1. Changing the maximum number of games to 16
2. Allowing more scrimmages
3. Increasing the number of doubleheaders permitted from two to three
4. With section/league approval, allow a 40' pitching distance.

Boys' and Girls' Swimming. Tom DeYoung reported no need for changes in modified rules or standards for swimming.

Boys' and Girls' Tennis. Tom Fitzpatrick made no recommendations for tennis changes.

Boys' and Girls' Track and Field. Modified sport coordinator Vera Trenchfield suggests that there be a minimum standard for the number of meets for track and field to provide equitable experiences for modified athletes. A minimum of 6 meets was suggested.

Discussion Item #9:

Boys' and Girls' Volleyball. Mira Martincich noted that there are many modifications available in modified volleyball with sectional/league approval:

Discussion Item #10: Agree or Disagree with each?

*With Section/league approval...*

1. The number of points in each game of the modified match shall be consistent
2. Either 20 or 25, but not less than 20 points per game may be used
3. Two tosses will be permitted per turn of service.
4. The service line may be moved up into the court, at a distance not to exceed two meters from the regulation service line
5. The use of the three-game match, rather than the five-game match may be used
6. The libero player may be used at the modified level
7. The minimum net height shall be seven feet for boys and girls
8. The volleyball rotation may be adjusted so that when a modified player successfully serves five consecutive serves that are not returned, the team rotates to the next server

Discussion with the HS committees found that the HS Boys' Volleyball Committee questioned the allowance of two tosses per serve, and the HS Girls' Committee questioned why modified volleyball allowed team rotation after five consecutive unreturned serves. They felt these

modifications were too lenient and recreational in nature. They voiced no concern over the other available modified volleyball rule variations.

**Discussion Item #11**

**Should the minimum time between contests of two nights rest for modified volleyball be reduced to one night?**

**Wrestling.** John Richard reported that he made suggestions to the Modified Committee to bring modified wrestling very close to HS standards. In the past few years, we have increased the number of wrestling matches to 4 in a day (the HS allows 5); we have allowed for overtime choice of rideout situation, allowing a winner in a bracket style competition (like the HS); we have increased the available points for the total number of competitions to 14 (the HS allows 20 points); we have changed the weight variance to 10 pounds (same as the HS), and we have changed the rest time between matches to 30 minutes (same as the HS). John felt that all other modified game conditions allow modified wrestlers to be in a good position of preparation for the HS varsity level. No further changes were suggested.