

ATHLETIC COUNCIL MEETING November 16, 2011 – Agenda item 6.4

Modified Committee Report

November 2011

Chairpersons: Adam Stoltman (Boys), Katie McGowan (Girls)

NYSPPHSAA Committee for Modified Athletics Fall 2011 Meeting Report

The fall meeting of the State Committee for Modified Athletics took place on October 14, 2011 in Latham, New York. A synopsis of the meeting is as follows:

I. Items that will go to the State Executive Committee:

- A. Classification Methods for Modified Competition Motion:
*“Modified General Eligibility Rule #1 shall be edited to include the word ‘geography’ among the criteria for organization of competition:
“Schools, leagues and sections may organize Modified Program competition by age, grade, geography and/or ability levels within the limitations of the NYSPPHSAA Eligibility Rules to ensure safe and equitable competition.” (Reference: NYSPPHSAA handbook, page 130).
Approved 17-0. This item will also go to the Handbook Committee.*
- B. Softball Motion:
*“With section/league approval, innings 1-6 may be completed at five (5) runs or three (3) outs .The seventh inning shall be played as a normal inning, with three outs and no run restrictions for that inning.”
Approved 16-1. This softball pilot program has been completed with a positive response from the sections after two years of study.*
- C. Track and Field Motion:
*“With sectional/league approval, the height of the hurdle in the 55m modified boys’ hurdles may be increased from 30 inches to 33 inches.”
Approved 13-2-2. This track and field pilot program has been completed with a positive response from the sections after two years of study.
Motion: “With sectional/league approval, a six (6) pound shot put may be used for modified girls’ track and field, rather than a 4K shot put.”
Approved 13-0-4*

II. Action Item for Next Meeting

Football Motion:

“With sectional/league approval, a two-year pilot program in modified football will be used, allowing use of the kick-off at the 35 yard line, and waiving Modified Football Game Rule #3 (Reference: NYSPPHSAA handbook, page 144): ‘No kick-off – start play from own 35 yard line.’ “

UPDATE: At the October 17, 2011 Safety Committee meeting, the following suggestions were given to the Modified Committee regarding this proposed football pilot program: there will be no run back; the ball is dead after the catch or when it stops, and the educational component would be teaching the athletes how to run in the lane and block.

Do we wish to participate in this pilot program and survey our results?

III. Discussion Items for Next Meeting: Our input is requested on the following:

A. Awards in Multi-School Contests/Tournament Competition Motion:

“Modified General Eligibility Rule #10 (Reference: NYSPPHSAA handbook, page 132) shall be edited to allow multi-school contests/invitationals/tournaments to award place ribbons and order of finish items to the top competitors.”

Do we believe that modified athletes should be receiving award ribbons or order of finish items? Is it happening in our section’s schools?

Discussion Items continued

B. Basketball 3-Point Shot Motion:

"With sectional/league approval, a two-year pilot program in modified boys' and girls' basketball will be used, allowing the use of the 3-point shot, and waiving Modified Boys' Basketball Game Rule #4 and Modified Girls' Basketball Game Rule #5 (Reference: NYSPHSAA handbook pages 141-2.)"

Do we wish to participate in this pilot program and survey our results?

C. Pitch Counts in Modified Baseball

The NYSPHSAA Safety Committee has recommended that we examine pitch counts for modified baseball pitchers, rather than limit the number of innings that a modified pitcher may pitch (*Reference: NYSPHSAA handbook, page 143, Baseball Game Rule #2: "A pitcher may pitch no more than 12 full innings in any one calendar week and no more than 7 innings in any one game. After pitching 4 or more full innings in any one game, there must be at least 2 nights of rest before pitching again..."*).

UPDATE: At their October 17, 2001 meeting, the Safety Committee advised that it would be good to go to a pitch count rather than innings limitations in modified baseball. It was felt that there should be a maximum pitch count range, such as 80-90. Another inning cannot be pitched if the pitch count hits 80. If the pitch count hits 90, the pitcher must stop at that time.

Do we want to count pitches instead of limit the number of innings for modified baseball pitchers? What concerns/limitations would we suggest?

Information Items

1. Many sections across the state are experiencing severe reductions in their modified program; some schools have eliminated modified athletic programs. We must continue to advocate and educate to maintain modified athletics. There are ways to cut costs while supporting modified athletics: scheduling up to three scrimmages in addition to the allowed number of games, scheduling up to 50% of your scheduled games as scrimmages following the NYSPHSAA guidelines, sharing transportation to away games by having multiple teams travel together (boys' and girls' teams, or modified with high school teams), the use of Extended Playing Time, and the use of doubleheaders and multi-school contests. The direction that some sections are taking is combining grades 7-8-9 in the modified program, especially when HS freshman and JV teams are being cut. There is fear that the 2012-2013 budgets will result in further cuts in modified athletics.

2. Modified/JV Program Pilot Proposal

A Modified/JV program pilot program draft was presented to the Modified Committee for consideration. A subcommittee was established for further discussion. The objective of the proposal is to limit the number of students who, due to the fiscal crisis and elimination of programs, will not have the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics. This program seeks to make the transition easier from the modified to the varsity level, and will only be used when a JV program does not exist in a school district. The following requirements were proposed:

Grade Levels: 7-8-9

Season starting dates: the modified start dates

Minimum practices: HS grid, page 108 of NYSPHSAA handbook

Maximum number of games: HS grid

Nights rest: HS grid

Games per day: HS grid

Game length: Modified rules

Overtime: Modified rules

Sport Rules: Modified rules in handbook, as agreed upon in each section.

Maximum 3 games per week will be waived, providing that one game is on a day in which there is no school the next day.

The subcommittee requested that this proposal be taken to the Safety Committee for their input at this time. At their October 17, 2011 meeting, the Safety Committee did not feel there were any safety concerns regarding this pilot program. Therefore, the subcommittee members will continue their discussion on this issue, make any revisions they feel are necessary, and present this proposal for consideration by the modified Committee at the Spring 2012 meeting. We will bring you updated information as we receive it.

3. Because modified scrimmage guidelines do not exist, we must follow the existing sport-specific high school level Scrimmage Guidelines.

Information Items continued

4. Any coach/athletic director/school representative can suggest a game modification to their modified sectional representative or share a good idea; we are open to making a recommendation to the State Committee for our section. Please remember that the State Committee will emphasize safety and educationally sound decisions; some variations may not fly for younger athletes.
5. With sectional/league approval, the modified softball pitching distance may be established at either 40' or 43'. There was a lot of discussion regarding what distances the sections are using. Many coaches feel the 43' distance is too long for modified athletes, but shared facilities are often set at the HS distance. Wear on fields may be driving the decision. How many schools in our section are using 40 feet? How many use 43 feet? Is anyone using a shorter distance?
6. There was a lot of discussion regarding the criteria for competition at the modified level. Schools, leagues and sections may organize Modified Program competition by age, grade, geography and/or ability levels within the limitations of the NYSPHSAA Eligibility Rules to ensure that "safe and equitable competition" is prioritized.
Which of these criteria is most important to us? We must be consistent as we schedule teams in our leagues, and we must declare our criteria. 7-8-9 teams CAN play 7-8 teams if we determine that the competition will be "safe and equitable".
7. Need for Modified Gymnastics and Tennis Sports Coordinators. We continue to be in need of a modified sport coordinator for girls' gymnastics, and a boys' and girls' tennis coordinator. If you have interest in filling one of these roles, please let us know; your participation on the State Committee would be welcome!

Remaining 2012 NYSPHSAA Modified Committee Meeting

The spring meeting of the Modified Committee will take place on:

Friday, March 30, 2012 9:00 AM

The meeting will take place at the NYSPHSAA office in Latham, NY.