

**NEW JERSEY STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION  
1161 Route 130 North, P.O. Box 487 Robbinsville, New Jersey 08691**

**GYMNASTICS COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**December 15, 2010**

**10:00 A.M.**

1. At 10:10, Larry White, NJSIAA liaison to the Gymnastics Committee, welcomed everyone and thanked the members and guests for attending the meeting. The committee went around and introduced themselves.
2. Present: Jennifer Spring, Central II Sectional Meet Director, Ann Danziger, North II Sectional Meet Director, Barbara Wallace, State Tournament Director, Dorine Shapiro, Central I Sectional Meet Director, Judy Meusel, North I Sectional Meet Director, Patricia Piotrowski, New North I Sectional Meet Director, Ron Mazzola, Central I Sectional Co- Director: Guests: Frank Brady, Assistant to Ron Mazzola, Jayne Devine, Coach Old Bridge, and Brant Lutska, Coach Bishop Ahr.
3. The committee reviewed the results of the 2010 Team and Individual State Tournament winners. The liaison congratulated the winners and the sectional/state directors for jobs well done. 12/14/2011 was penciled in as next year's date.
4. The committee then reviewed the 2010 Regulation changes for 2011. There is a new start of practice day per the new legislation: The third Monday in August is that day and on Page 1 of the 2011 Regulations will so note that. Trish Piotrowski will send to Dorine and NJSIAA liaison her contact information since she is now the North I sectional director. Ann corrected the fax number for Indian Hills HS. Since we need a new South Sectional site, only 4 sections have sectional dates for next year. That date is November 5, 2011. The times will be: North I – 3:15/3:30 Registration (5:45 Competition); North II – 9:30 Registration (@12:00 Competition); Central I – 8:30 Registration (11:30 Competition); Central II – 8:45 Registration (12:00 Competition); South to be determined by the host site. Also, the Official Individual Sectional and State Competition Entry Form and the Official Sectional and State Team Competition Entry Form will be put on the NJSIAA website in a pdf/Excel Spreadsheet so that this form can be emailed to the appropriate sectional directors/state tournament director. The Independent Entry Form will be studied to determine the feasibility of putting that form online also.
5. Dorine shared with the committee the concerns of the gymnastics' coaches, which came up at the coaches meeting. First, the coaches proposed raising the vault qualifying score from 8.3 to 8.5. This topic took the committee to another agenda item that will be written up latter in these minutes. Second, the coaches expressed their concern with the consistency of scoring/judging during the sectional meets. They recommend that the judges be assigned from geographical regions that are not their usual ordinary regular season sites. This brought up the topic of mileage

reimbursement. The liaison said that traditionally NJSIAA does not pay for mileage reimbursement. Barbara spoke up and said that the chapters have in their power to do so and that West Chapter #5 does that when needed. It was recommended by the committee that Barb Wallace will assign the judges to the sectional meets with an equal distribution of judges from all over the state to each of the sectional meets.

Within this agenda item, the concern of “new” and “independent” coaches was addressed from a “not knowing how a sectional/final meet” is conducted. It was suggested that at the coaches clinic that there be time to explain this. The problem is that there is no guarantee that the clinic will be held next year; probably not since there was no clinic this year. That lead the committee to determine that Brant Lutska will create a tutorial for coaches of individual/independent gymnasts that will explain all of this and the liaison will share it with all athletic directors of gymnastic teams/individuals/independents. Ron explained that by no real design he set up the team rotations for the finals by geography, meaning he put schools together in the rotations that were geographically near each other. The coaches on the committee expressed their great appreciation of this. Barb also extended an open invitation to all gymnastic coaches to attend the regional gymnastics’ official’s rules interpretation meetings. Those dates for next year will be August 27, 2011 at Motion Gymnastics from 9:00 AM to 12 noon; September 6, 2011 from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Bishop Ahr HS.

6. The first two discussion items on the agenda were grouped together: Realignment and numbers of teams, individuals and independents. The sectional meet directors shared their respective figures: North I – 7 teams, 16 different schools (3 independents, 13 schools), 55 on vault, 42 on bars, 53 on beam and 55 on floor, 60 total gymnasts; North II – 6 teams, 14 schools with 3 independents, 57 on vault, 42 on bars, 49 on beam, 54 on floor, 65 total gymnasts; Central I – 9 teams, 17 schools with 1 independent, 78 on vault, 44 on bars, 60 on beam, 53 on floor, and 105 total gymnasts; Central II – 9 teams, 11 schools with 2 independents, 76 on vault, 57 on bars, 62 on beam, 68 on floor, and 96 total gymnasts; South – 11 teams, 58 on vault, 38 on bars, 55 on beam, 51 on floor, total gymnasts not available. After sharing these numbers, two major changes surfaced. One the committee voted unanimously to raise the qualifying scores from 8.3 to 8.5 for both the vault and the floor exercise for sectional meets. The other two, bars and beam, will remain the same. The second proposal from the committee is to create a sub-committee to study the shifting of some schools from one section to another. The sub-committee will consist of the NJSIAA liaison and the sectional directors of North I, North II, Central II and Central I. The south section director will be included if we have someone in place by the time of the meeting.

Patricia Piotrowski was formally introduced to the committee as the new Sectional Director of North I, even though every one knew her from years of coaching at Ridgewood. Congratulations, Trish.

7. Fran Brady was then re-introduced to the committee and he shared a handout with the committee titled An Excel Spreadsheet for scoring NJSIAA Gymnastics Sectionals. He quickly went through the packet, explaining it in brief detail, and answering any questions from the committee. Everyone was truly impressed. It was decided that Frank would 1) create a manual as to how to operate this program, and 2) Frank would conduct an in-service program for all sectional directors (except Dorine for she uses it now) and the computer person(s) that will be using the system. The time and place (probably NJSIAA offices) will be determined at a later date (after we get a new host for the South site).
  
8. At this time, Jayne Devine, coach of Old Bridge, was asked to share her concerns with the committee per her invitation. She explained her history with Old Bridge as it related to the last two seasons and her team not making the finals. Last year she agreed that they were not one of the best teams and did not really deserve to go to Montgomery HS. This year that was not the case. Her major concern is that the judging is very subjective at the sectional levels and that competing in one section during the regular season but competing in another section for the sectional meet puts her team at a distinct disadvantage. This topic was also a point that Dorine was going to make from the coaches meeting to the gymnastics' committee, also. Brant had sent a compilation of scoring sheet data to Kathi Ortiz, State Rules Interpreter, but she was not able to attend. The liaison shared that for the past two years he had monitored the sectional scores of the 10 teams that made it to the state tournament and 1) last year all 10 schools scored anywhere from .75 to 3.00 points lower than they did at the sectional meets, and 2) only Bishop Ahr this year scored higher at the state tournament than they did at the sectional meet. Once school scored more than 5 points lower at the state finals than at the sectional meet. Jen Spering strongly advocated a "sharing of officials" as a possible way to address this issue. The coaches, through Dorine, mentioned a possible shift to a format that would be the top 10 teams score wise from wherever in the state would advance to the state, along with any sectional winning team, even if that team was not in the top 10. The committee did not like this idea at all but recognized that this was not a proposal. Ultimately, the committee approved of a sub-committee, consisting of the NJSIAA Liaison, Barb Wallace and Jen Spering, to study the feasibility of moving judges from one section of the state to officiate sectional meet(s) in another section of the state.
  
9. Ann Danziger brought up the next agenda item, which dealt with the number of practices required by a school for an individual gymnast to attend in order to compete in post-season tournaments. She explained that the league in which she and Trish belong has addressed this issue and she read the wording from that league's constitution/bylaws. Ann was looking for the committee to take some type of action but the committee concurred that this is an individual school/coach issue and as such should be handled as such.

10. Stephanie Szoke, South Sectional Meet Director, informed NJSIAA that Jackson Liberty is not able to host the South Sectional meet next year. The NJSIAA liaison will reach out to two schools, Seneca HS and Washington Twp HS, to see if they would be willing to do so.
  
11. The last real topic of discussion was the issue of officials and conflicts of interest. It came to the attention of the NJSIAA liaison just before the state tournament that our Meet Referee's daughter was a coach of one of the teams that would be competing at the finals. Also, the liaison became aware of the fact that some gymnastic coaches are also officials and that these coaches officiate meets where schools/teams in their leagues/sections compete. Both of these situations represent a conflict of interest. It was decided that the liaison would write a letter to all gymnastic chapters addressing these issues and referencing the 2010-2011 Officials' Handbook as it pertains to Conflict of Interest.
  
12. It was noted that NJSIAA will need a new State Rules Interpreter for Gymnastics since Kathi Ortiz will be moving to Massachusetts. The liaison will confer with Kathy as to whom she would recommend as a viable replacement.
  
13. The committee wished Judy Meusel a fond farewell as she retires from teaching, coaching and serving as a Sectional Director for many, many years. She will be missed tremendously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry White