
GEORGIA



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HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

TO: GHSA LACROSSE COACHES
FROM: RALPH SWEARNGIN
DATE: AUGUST 5, 2008
RE: SCHOOL vs. NON-SCHOOL TEAMS

Since GHSA Lacrosse evolved out of a club setting, several questions have arisen over the past two years about the nature of a GHSA sport. Last year the emphasis was placed on the rules regulating coaching outside the Lacrosse season. This year the emphasis is being placed on the relationship of school and non-school teams during the season. These regulations apply to all GHSA sports, but the recent issues have arisen in Lacrosse.

GHSA by-law 2.62 specifies that a member school may not have more than one varsity team, one JV team, and one 9th-grade team in any given sport. Middle school teams are not under the regulations of the GHSA except in certain areas applying specifically to 8th-grade students. It appears that some schools may be "sponsoring" a club team in Lacrosse along with two or three school teams – often using some of the same players. This practice is a problem because:

- a) it can circumvent the game-limitation rule that is in place for all GHSA sports
- b) it allows a school-based team to play teams that are not members of the GHSA – in violation of GHSA rules
- c) it can circumvent academic eligibility rules by allowing ineligible players to have a year of competition on the club team

The GHSA demands that there be a strong "firewall" between school teams and non-school teams. The GHSA believes that a club team is under the authority of the school if the club team:

- a) is publicized on the school web site or other means of publication
- b) utilizes coaches listed as school coaches
- c) utilizes funds out of the athletic budget or the school's boosters club budget
- d) utilizes school transportation services
- e) carries the school's name

It is important to remember that students at a member school participating on a club team are not covered by the GHSA catastrophic insurance policy.