

EMSA Covid-19 Response Committee

Agenda

Thursday December 3, 2020 @ 7:00pm

Committee members:

In attendance: Eliana Caranci (EMSA), Michelle Orsini (EMSA), Jenn Groen (St. Thomas), Mark Locker (Tillsonburg), Dave Debenictus (London FC), Mark Mohammed (Alliance), Chris Gardiner (EMDSL), Abbi Lezizidis (Whitecaps), Tom Partalas (BMO), Dave Humphrey (EMSRA), Kayla Marcoux (West End Blues)

Regrets: Nelson Rodrigues (LAWSL), Dan Wybo (WRSL), Simon Karahalios (EMSA)

1. Welcoming Remarks: Michelle Orsini, 7:03pm
 - brief intro, newest member on the EMSA Board

2. EMSA Report: John Laverty
 - Ontario Soccer update, note bulletin 122 for colour coding
 - continue to consult with local health unit but follow the bulletin
 - OS believes there will be a significant drop in registrations this Summer
 - no details yet but their services may be more limited
 - districts should expect drop in registrations
 - from EMSA perspective, what issues come to me as president: usually concerns about following bubbles/cohorts
 - also get match official questions about “COVID no contact” soccer and what that looks like, perhaps the committee should chat with Dave H. in this meeting
 - best wishes this holiday season

3. Updates on *Committee Initiatives* from last meeting: Eliana and Michelle

ELIANA -Welcome a new member to the Committee, representing an LAWSL adult smaller club, from West End Blues-Kayla Marcoux

- Intros from new members, first time attendees:

- Dave H. - match official, many years experience, hope to contribute by learning how refs can be consistent in officiating, get some guidance
- Dave D. - FC, want to hear concerns, perhaps contribute, share ideas
- Jen - St. Thomas Club, consistency, hear ideas & contribute ideas
- Kayla - 20 year soccer player, very new to this, hear & contribute ideas, looking for guidance, wants to help
- Norwest (Jenn) has respectfully declined participation

ELIANA - still putting the questions together for the survey monkey. Goal to send it out in the new year to all the EMSA members.

- Eliana reminder to refer to the EMSA web page for information on the Committee and Covid (including Bulletins, list of Clubs and their Health Units).
- Eliana - Bulletin about the liability protection within minor sport organizations coming into law, please refer to it, important bit of legislation
- Michelle - Update on Covid funding relief for members - so far nothing found. Will look into local politicians both municipal and provincial
- Eliana - has spoken to Mark from Tillsonburg regarding challenges for rural Clubs to find indoor facilities for winter training. Options discussed; other indoor facilities, such as Woodstock fields, indoor baseball facilities, recreation gyms. Also discussed connecting with other Clubs to split field time/space. Discussion with BMO regarding providing information to Clubs when fields come available.
- Tom - they can always call each week and ask about availabilities, will look into posting availabilities on website
- Mark L. - Short notice is tough, Woodstock times are difficult

4. Round Table- League/BMO updates on Indoor Season: (e.g., important information to share, successes/challenges etc.)

ELIANA - would love to hear updates from those volunteers working right within the leagues/any concerns etc.

- Tom - preparing BMO for Winter season, our Health Unit may be moving into orange which involves more restrictions, he keeps an eye on case numbers etc. No parents or spectators allowed for players over 10 years +. Still working within 25 total people on a field, doing contract tracing, asking for physical distancing. Running festivals 1/mth so that teams can rotate players. Four teams play each other to stay under a 50 person bubble then change it up after the “quarantine” time frame.
- Chris - BMO doing a great job, have made adjustments as they go, maintaining the 12 per team (11 players 1 coach), want to maintain the fun of the game while keeping everyone safe
- Eliana - wants to share these structured indoor leagues so that moving into 2021 season some leagues can gain ideas of how to run within the COVID restrictions
- Tom - refs wear masks and have electronic whistles
- Dave H. - concerned about refs staying within a bubble moving into outdoor season
- Eliana - can refs be rotated every 2 weeks, Tom thinks would be very difficult
- Dave H. - ref meeting next week to plan 2021 season, he will bring up concerns about scheduling and bubbling refs
- Dave D. - OPDL has been looking into different solutions and possibilities for the summer leagues/seasons
- Abbi - he sees a season happening now that liability protection is in place
- Eliana - restrictions could very well be in place even once vaccines are available so important to brainstorm ideas to get a season

Specifying that we can learn from the indoor leagues/ BMO as it currently stands.

5. Group discussion-All
Outdoor 2021 Season

- Consider what is required for planning and anticipating. Emphasizing that we are not asking for leagues to make decisions now, but have a group discussion on what we have learned thus far, what challenges do we anticipate,

registration to leagues and dates (consider changes as it pertains to Covid, low Club/team registrants) etc.

- Eliana - any ideas about how can we get people more motivated to register and consider soccer this Summer
- Kayla - reassure players that we have really been doing well keeping players safe, encourage them to come and see what has been happening
- Eliana - any clubs need help with Return To Play so that they have something to share with their parents/players
- Abbi - I think that would be helpful, we want all the same clubs back
- Eliana - help and support clubs with sanitization, COVID forms, contact tracing
- Dave H. - has orders of how to proceed accordingly
- Eliana - How can we help match officials to be consistent in
- Dave H. - has only 83 refs return this season, 179 total, 96 brand new refs that have only 7 v 7 experience. WOSL, LAWSL would basically have only 83 refs
- Michelle - why did refs not come back? Fear of COVID?
- Dave H. - Good question - not really sure. Many ref waited too long to see what would happen. Seems like many refs didn't want to pay the registration fee without knowing what season would be like
- Abbi - At least 25 were forced to register and are not refereeing; many new refs came on because of online courses availability

6. Committee Initiatives: "Next Steps"

- Eliana - we are over the hour here. Just to recap, we will want to take some of these concerns back to EMSA, especially the ref concerns. Eliana to chat offline with Dave H about these concerns.
- Dave H. - all training is online, practical will be in person once conditions are appropriate.
- Mark - what is lead time for ref to register?
- Dave H. - need to be registered by March 30 and course complete by end of May
- Mark - concerned refs will wait again to register because they will wait to see what will be happening with leagues. Concerned. Can we be more flexible?

- Eliana - In January is there a discussion about registration deadlines etc? When will leagues even start? How can we creatively offer programming while COVID restrictions continue. Need to look into that. For next meeting, January 7th, Dave H. to bring some information from your referee meeting. OPDL who normally travels, could they play within local leagues to help?
- Abbi - Any athlete signed up with OPDL cannot play in local league game.
- Eliana - How can the 2 OPDL teams run appropriately if travel guidelines continue. Could OS relax some rules to allow competition. If you hear any concerns, please bring them forward to the next meeting.
- Dave H. - Have we reached out to our Northern & Southern remote small leagues?
- Eliana - Not yet, still new board and new committee gathering information. Will look to that in future. Dave H. to help us connect with us.

1. Meeting adjourned by Eliana 8:21pm