

5A SPORTS ADVISORY MEETING

NOVEMBER 12, 2009

GILBERT COMMUNITY CENTER

5A FOOTBALL REPRESENTATIVE PROPOSALS

SUBMITTED BY

**5A REGION REPRESENTATIVES ON BEHALF OF THE
5A FOOTBALL COACHES**

PRESENTED BY

DANA ZUPKE – PINNACLE HIGH SCHOOL



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5A FOOTBALL REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE PROPOSALS SUMMARY

SPORT: Football

REGION: 5A Regional Representatives and Conferences

PROPOSAL:

- Spring Practice Equipment Use (Proposal No. 1)
- All Star Football Game (Proposal No. 2)
- 60 Quarter Rule (Proposal No. 3)

QUESTIONNAIRE:

- Number Sent: 63
- Number Returned: 61
- % of Responses: 97%

RESPONSES:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|-------|---------------|
| • Spring Practice Equipment Use | Yes: 56 | No: 4 | No Opinion: 3 |
| • All Star Football Game | Yes: 58 | No: 3 | No Opinion: 2 |
| • 60 Quarter Rule | Yes: 53 | No: 7 | No Opinion: 3 |



PROPOSAL NO. 1

SPRING PRACTICE EQUIPMENT USE

SPORT: Football

REGION: 5A Regional Representatives and Conferences

PROPOSAL: Spring Practice Equipment Use

The use of shields, dummies and sleds to be allowed during spring practice.

Rational

It is hitting that separates football from all other sports. Time must be spent on teaching basic techniques to emphasize the importance of body control for the safety of our student athletes.

Most injuries occur when student athletes are not performing at “top speed”. Hesitation occurs when the athlete does not fully understand his role or responsibility. Uncertainty stems from coaches not having enough practice time to ensure that all players fully understand the techniques being taught. Spring practice is used to reiterate a program’s fundamentals to current team members and to introduce basic fundamentals to new team members with little to no football experience. Coaches are not burdened with preparing their teams for the upcoming game and focused can be placed on the teaching the fundamentals of football. Spring practice is the best time to assure a safer playing experience by allowing coaches to use the proper equipment to emphasize correct hitting techniques.

Hitting (blocking and tackling) is the fundamental aspect of football that must be taught above all others. Making contact with the feet and shoulders rather than leading with the head, must and can only be mastered through repetitive game simulated drills to prevent head and neck injuries. As a coach, it is our responsibility to place our players in the most realistic situations in order to best prepare our athletes for “game speed”. Without having the ability to mimic the most fundamental aspect of our sport (hitting) with the proper equipment, we are putting our athletes at great risk.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

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- Number Returned: 61
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RESPONSES:

- Spring Practice Equipment Use Yes: 56 No: 4 No Opinion: 3



PROPOSAL NO. 2

ALL STAR FOOTBALL GAME

SPORT: Football

REGION: 5A Regional Representatives and Conferences

PROPOSAL: All Star Football Game

Allow the All Star football games to be played during the Christmas break.

1. Players that participate in a winter sport will not be selected to the teams.
2. High schools will not be required to provide equipment to selected players.
3. The games and practice will be played during the Christmas break so that no school is missed.
4. Educational seminars on academic requirements and the recruiting process will be held in order to assist all players in trying to obtain scholarship money for a higher education.

Rational

The All Star football games have been develop to honor the best high school football players in Arizona and provide added exposure to student athletes who may have been overlooked by college coaches in an attempt to place them in a college or university.

Safety

All sports are not created equal and should be evaluated accordingly for the safety of our student athletes. The type of equipment, the level of conditioning needed and the practice time required to hold an all star football game versus any other sport greatly adds to the risk of injuries.

Should this proposal be adopted, the games will be played within a few weeks of the completion of the season while participants are still in “football” shape. This is an item that should not be taken lightly. Conditioning and strength training play a vital role in preventing avoidable injuries due to the level of contact specific to the game of football.

Many of the state’s best players cannot participate in the all star games because the game is held within eight weeks from the start of college practice. These players remove themselves from the roster at the direction of their college coaches within a few weeks from the all star games. Because of this, alternate players are selected to participate. Many of which never expected to play football again and have not maintained their condition or football knowledge. This causes a major discrepancy of playing ability among the athletes on the field and leads to mismatches and avoidable injuries. Over the past five years, we have averaged around 35% use of alternate players.

The All Star games are currently held in June of each year with an average temperature of 105-degrees. The required football equipment is unlike any other outdoor sport which greatly increases the risk of heat related injuries. Compounded with the equipment, is the necessary practice time needed to properly coordinate team members for a safe all star game. Although precautions have been taken to prevent heat related injuries, it is our great concern that an easily avoidable problem will occur in the future.



College Placement

Arizona places on average of 27 student athletes to NCAA Division I football programs but falls short on assisting athletes to lower level athletic programs. Arizona is regionally bound and student athletes do not realize the numerous scholarship opportunities available to attend college by using their passion to play a sport.

Each year, we have players participating in the all star games that should be attending college but could not afford tuition. If the all star games were held during the Christmas holiday, many student athletes that had been overlooked would receive scholarship money to attend college. This has been proven by the 42 scholarships our players received last year from 33 lower level colleges that attended a college placement football fair in December 2008.

It is not our goal to use the all star games to simply place more football players in college. It is our goal to assist our student athletes in using their passion to exhaust all possible opportunities in order to further their education. This format will provide national exposure for our student athletes and open many opportunities for a better future.

Winter Sports

The current proposal includes the stipulation that no player participating in a winter sport can be selected to the all star teams. We are willing to work with the AIA to prevent any abuse of this requirement. We are confident that the proper guidelines can be set so that no winter sport is affected.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

- Number Sent: 63
- Number Returned: 61
- % of Responses: 97%

RESPONSES:

- All Star Football Game Yes: 58 No: 3 No Opinion: 2



