

MPA Report on 2017 Season

Summary

Growth of lacrosse

- Collegiate level – lost U Maine Farmington in 2017
- Youth & middle school – significant growth continues
- Scholastic – expanding north of Waterville

Scheduling games

- Scheduling
 - Games well distributed on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays
 - Maine Youth League moved *some* games to Sundays; still a challenge
 - Bad weather caused nearly 300 games to be canceled.

Association & assigning

- Membership
 - Recruitment & training ~ 78 active members; down 1 from 2016
 - Attrition ~ 7 new members; below replacement
- Geographic distribution ~ 12, or 15% of membership per year
- Experience level – shortages below Kennebunk & above Lewiston
 - 50% over 5 years – one indicator of capability
 - 17% with 1 or 2 years – stable core
- Assigning objectives – difficulty recruiting during past 2 years
 - One experienced official as Referee on every varsity game
 - Minimize repeat partners, to promote consistency & provide training
 - Minimize repeat trips to schools, to maintain objectivity
 - Control travel expense for remote schools

MLOA's Rob Pfeiffer Award

- Awarded to a coach who exemplifies sportsmanship and partnership with officials
- 2017 recipient is Wade Ward of Camden Hills Regional High School

Youth Lacrosse

To support youth lacrosse, MLOA has trained Junior Officials (primarily high school players) since 2005.

Too many youth contests are still scheduled on Saturdays, when Junior Officials play.

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Growth of lacrosse

Games Scheduled Level	League none	MBYLA	MAISAD	BA	KVAC	SMAA	WMC	MPA	Total
3/4 Youth		279							279
5/6 Youth	3	358							361
Jamboree - Youth *4		38							38
Middle School	38	183			5	15	35		276
Middle School DH *2	8	29				9	25		71
Jamboree - JV *4		6							6
Summer League	18				10				28
Play Day	44								44
Exhibition / Preseason	2		3		17	40	21		83
1st Team	6				6	22	5		39
JV	18	13	19		102	88	77		317
Varsity			32	6	113	84	79		314
Tournament, JV			2						2
Tournament			2		14	7	6		29
Championship			1					2	3
Total	137	906	59	6	267	265	248	2	1890

MLOA scheduled 1890 games in 2017, up from 1863 in 2016 and 802 in 2010. The growth has primarily been at the elementary and middle school levels (red shaded above). Consequently, new officials are able to learn their craft at lower levels of play.

There were no new varsity programs, but many games were scheduled by rising programs, including Bangor/Brewer, Gray/New Gloucester, Somerset area, Sanford and Traip. There was even an event in Houlton!

MLOA covered 605 MPA sanctioned freshman, JV and varsity games (green shaded above). This could increase nearly 10% in the near future.

Quality of officiating

In 2012, MLOA implemented an observation program to provide constructive feedback to officials. In 2017, MLOA observed nearly every member, whether during preseason, regular or post-season.

Since 2013, MLOA has required officials to join US Lacrosse, the national governing body, which has implemented multiple initiatives to improve officiating nationwide. All MLOA members must meet USL certification standards to officiate. Several MLOA members have also been certified by USL as trainers and observers. One member is on the USL officials' training committee.

18 MLOA members are currently certified to officiate at the collegiate level, including 3 at the NCAA Division 1 level. These members provide training and mentoring throughout MLOA's ranks. They are typically assigned as Referee on Varsity contests.

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Scheduling games

MLOA Game Distribution

# of Games								
League / Level	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
BA	2			2			2	6
MAISAD		7	7	16	1	10	18	59
KVAC	8	28	61	32	70	24	44	267
SMAA		33	76	36	38	37	45	265
WMC		40	47	44	47	30	40	248
MBYLA	132	26	41	62	63	36	546	906
MPA							2	2
none		16	9	30	10	12	60	137
Total	142	150	241	222	229	149	757	1890

School administrators expect MLOA to assign only full MLOA members (adults) to all games at the middle school level and higher. This is due to the risk of injury as players become stronger / faster with age. These games were well distributed across the days of the week in 2017.

MLOA thanks the conferences (MAISAD, KVAC, SMAA & WMC) for their cooperation!

MLOA's biggest current challenge is covering youth (elementary) level games, which are scheduled mostly on Saturdays, when MLOA members are busy officiating and Junior Officials are usually playing. MLOA is working on this issue with the youth league (MBYLA); however, they continue to overload Saturdays .

Weather

In 2017, nearly 300 games were marked as canceled or rained out, primarily due to a very wet spring. (Some cancellations were due to unsustainable JV programs.)

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Association and assigning

MLOA Membership

MLOA ended 2017 with 78 members, a slight decrease. We need to improve both recruitment of new officials and retention of officials with 3 to 5 years of experience. New officials work primarily middle school and below, to learn the craft. Ideally, an official should have 2-3 years of experience before receiving varsity assignments. Due to availability constraints and weather impacts, some 2nd year officials work varsity games.

Experience level	End 2012	End 2013	End 2014	End 2015	End 2016	End 2017
Over 5 years	30	31	35	39	40	46
5th year	1	6	6	5	7	8
4th year	8	6	4	8	9	6
3rd year	7	5	7	12	9	6
2nd year	9	10	14	11	7	5
1st year	13	16	18	12	7	7
Total officials	68	74	84	87	79	78

MLOA has been training officials from other sports and lacrosse players as lacrosse officials. MLOA continues to recruit aggressively in the southern and midcoast areas, in order to make more officials available for schools on the geographic perimeter. ***Expansion above Waterville is underway.***

Assigning

MLOA has a deputy assigner, to handle middle school and youth assignments. MLOA continued to balance competing assignment priorities.

Experienced Referee on every game

Every varsity game is a “big” game for the players on the field and an experienced Referee is needed to manage behavioral issues and unusual circumstances.

Frequency of officials working at schools

Having any official see a particular team too many times can create problems between the official and the coach. This is particularly challenging at more remote schools.

Frequency of officials working together

To promote consistency of officiating across the association, MLOA again attempted to have senior officials work with as many partners as possible.

Management of mileage costs

To reduce mileage costs, the same pair of officials is routinely assigned to both Varsity and JV games played at more remote schools.