

MPA Report on 2012 Season

Summary

Growth of lacrosse

- Collegiate level – recent new teams promote the sport
- Youth & middle school – 40% growth
- Scholastic – 22% growth (668 MPA games)

Scheduling games

- Scheduling – “busy” days are hard to cover
 - 57% of MPA games on Wed & Sat
 - 43% on other 4 weekdays
- Weather – was less disruptive than 2011
 - 7% of MPA games canceled – JV contests, down from 15% in 2011
 - 17% rescheduled – down from 24% in 2011

Travel expense

- Per school per season
 - Average / median \$318 / \$325 – down from 2011

Association & assigning

- Membership ~ 64-68 members
 - Recruitment & training ~ 15-20% of membership per year
 - Attrition ~ 10-15% of membership per year
- Geographic distribution – shortages below Kennebunk & above Lewiston
- Experience level – one indicator of capability
 - 45% over 5 years
 - 30% under 2 years
- Assigning objectives – current assigning priorities
 - 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 schools

RECOMMENDATION – Encourage schools to schedule weekday games throughout the week

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Growth of lacrosse

Games Played	League								
Level of Play	none	CCC	SMMSAC	MAISAD	KVAC	SMAA	WMC	MPA	Total
Rec 3/4	81								81
Rec 5/6	107								107
Middle School	191	93	37						321
1st Team					7	17	8		32
Preseason JV						11	9		20
JV				26	84	90	65		265
Play day				6		25	16		47
Exhibition / preseason					2	30	25		57
Varsity				34	99	90	66		289
Tournament, JV				2					2
Tournament				2	6	9	7		24
Championship, JV				1					1
Championship				1				2	3
Total	379	93	37	72	198	272	196	2	1249

MLOA covered 1249 games in 2012, up from 979 in 2011 and 802 in 2010. The growth has been primarily driven by recreation league and middle school games. ***This growth may result in more schools adding boys lacrosse as a varsity sport.***

MLOA covered 668 MPA sanctioned freshman, JV and varsity games (shaded above), or 56% of non-collegiate lacrosse in Maine. The increase from 547 in 2011 is primarily because fewer JV games were canceled by weather.

Quality of play

The quality of play is uneven. One Athletic Director has observed that 40% of MPA varsity contests were blowouts, decided by 10 or more goals. Blowouts are often more difficult to officiate than close games and are more likely to generate behavioral problems.

Quality of officiating

In 2012, MLOA implemented an observation program to provide constructive feedback to officials. Every official was observed once pre-season and once during the season.

In 2013, MLOA will require officials to join US Lacrosse, the national governing body, which has implemented multiple initiatives to improve officiating nationwide.

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Scheduling games

MPA Game Distribution

Games Played League / Level	Day of the Week						Total
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
KVAC	23	14	58	15	43	37	190
1st Team	3		3			1	7
JV	11	8	24	6	20	15	84
Varsity	9	6	31	9	23	21	99
SMAA	15	9	89	14	25	45	197
1st Team	4	4	3		1	5	17
JV	6	2	44	7	12	19	90
Varsity	5	3	42	7	12	21	90
WMC	16	18	37	17	16	35	139
1st Team		1	1	1		5	8
JV	8	9	17	8	8	15	65
Varsity	8	8	19	8	8	15	66
Total	54	41	184	46	84	117	526

35% of the MPA games were played on Wednesdays and another 22% on Saturdays. ***On the busiest days (16 to 22 varsity games scheduled), some officials worked at multiple schools. Excessive travel is common on such days.***

Rescheduled Games

Rescheduled	Level	Play		1st			Grand
League	MS 7/8	day	Exhibition	Team	JV	Varsity	Total
KVAC	1		0	0	22	27	50
SMAA	44	0	0	1	11	8	64
WMC	17	0	0	0	11	6	34
Total Resched	62	0	0	1	44	41	148
Orig Games	126	41	32	22	231	253	705
Rescheduled	49%	0%	0%	5%	19%	16%	21%

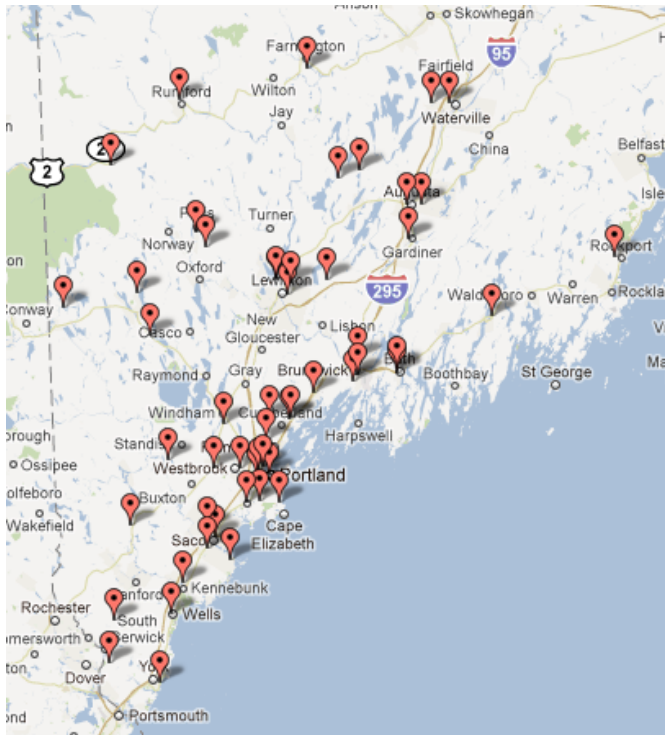
Weather caused 54 JV and exhibition contests to be canceled. In addition, approximately 17% of all regular season games were rescheduled, primarily due to weather. (The SMAA affiliated middle school schedule was completely changed *after* officials had been assigned.)

This not only creates a significant workload for the assignor, but also tends to increase travel expense. Most officials plan and make commitments based upon their original game schedules and are unable to share rides when assignments change at short notice.

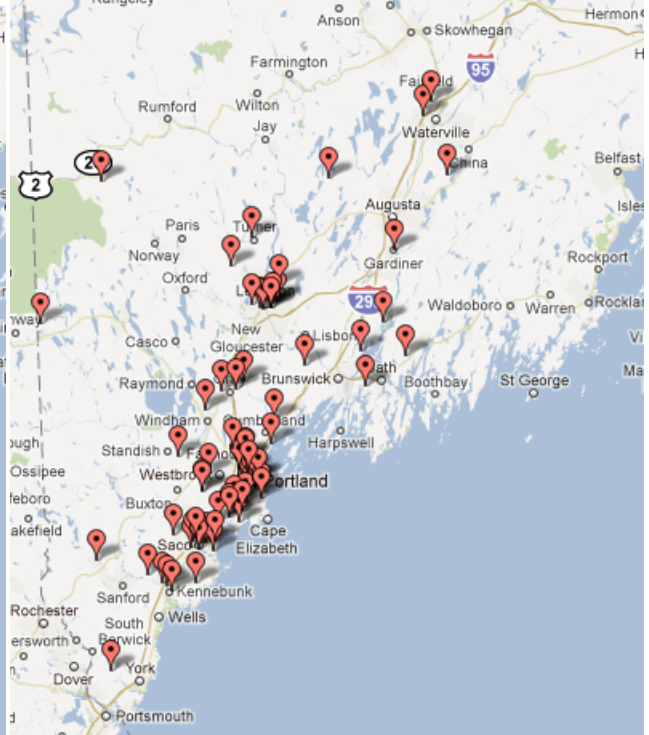
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Travel expense

Game Sites



Officials



Schools and officials are not geographically aligned. Most officials live between Kennebunk and Lewiston. As a result, it is necessary to set travel distances quite high to achieve a reasonable pool of officials for the most remote schools, for example:

School	Camden	Fryeburg	Lincoln	Marshwood	Mt Blue	Mtn Valley	Wells	York
One way mileage	60	45	45	35	45	45	35	35
Resulting pool	20	22	28	20	18	20	20	20

Assignments for remote school are made first, with ride-sharing strongly encouraged, but travel costs for remote schools are higher than average.

Regular season costs for each MPA member school, normalized for 6 for varsity / JV home dates, were as follows:

- MPA base officials' fees \$1,308
- Average mileage expense \$318 (24% of base fees)

When analyzed by school, however, there was considerable variation:

- Median mileage expense \$320
- Maximum mileage expense \$492
- Minimum mileage expense \$167

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The school with the **highest** mileage expense scheduled varsity and JV on *different* fields at the *same* time on its Saturday home dates. This resulted in two sets of officials traveling to the school on those Saturdays. In addition, this school is near the southern end of the state.

Remote schools on the perimeter of the lacrosse geography tended to see higher travel costs. Schools on the Kennebunk to Lewiston axis tended to see lower travel costs.

The school with the **lowest** mileage expense scheduled several varsity / JV doubleheaders on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when the demand for officials is lowest. In addition, this school is located in the Portland area.

Once games are rescheduled for whatever reason, particularly on busy Wednesdays and Saturdays, providing qualified officials takes priority over reducing mileage.

Recommendation

Encourage schools to schedule weekday games more evenly throughout the week. (Usually, all officials are available on Saturdays, whereas many officials have time and mileage constraints during the week.)

This would benefit both officials and schools:

- Smooth out the workload for officials
- Improve the availability of officials
- Reduce travel expenses for many schools

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Association and assigning

MLOA Membership

MLOA ended 2012 with 68 members, up from 64 at the end of 2011 and 2010. MLOA lost 5 to injury, 2 to retirement and 1 to sea duty. MLOA recruited 15 new officials; 12 completed training. On busy days, we were stretched very thin.

Experience level	Start 2011	End 2011	End 2012
Over 5 years	34	31	30
5th year	8	8	1
4th year	1	1	8
3rd year	8	8	7
2nd year	8	8	9
1st year	9	8	13
Total officials	68	64	68

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.

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 towards Bangor will be a challenge.

Assigning

MLOA continued to balance competing assignment priorities. In particular, we sought to have officials see more different teams and officials, without unduly increasing mileage.

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 control behavior. Until more Varsity games are moved away from Wed & Sat, few games will receive two “Referee caliber” officials.

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. The distribution of officials across teams was similar to 2011.

Frequency of officials working together

To promote consistency of officiating across the association, MLOA again attempted to have senior officials work with a greater number of partners than in previous years.

Management of mileage costs

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