

From: J.B. Wilcox

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To: NJJGLL Member Club Representatives

First and foremost, the New Jersey Junior Girls Lacrosse League Board of Directors would like to thank those of you that took the time to provide us feedback on the 2009 season. Your comments are very important to us as we work hard to make sure that we are meeting your needs so you can continue to make lacrosse a positive and learning experience for our girls. Thank you again for all you do.

I'm happy to share with you now the results of the survey and some of the observations and initial discussions from our recent NJJGLL board meeting. The survey was sent to all NJJGLL member clubs and the NEC2WL Officials. Also attached are two separate documents that contain some of the comments made by both the clubs and the umpires. As a reminder, the survey asked for two different types of questions. Some of the questions asked for a "YES" or "NO" answer. For these questions, the resulted is expressed as a percentage of "YES" responses. Therefore, an 80% numbers means that 80% of the respondents answered "YES" to the question. The other type of question used the 0-4 scoring scale shown below:

4	Excellent	Exceeded ALL Expectations	Extremely Positive	Strongly Agree
3	Very Good	Exceeded MOST Expectations	Very Positive	Agree
2	Good	Met SOME Expectations	Positive	Somewhat Agree
1	Poor	Did NOT MEET Expectations	Not Positive	Disagree

For these questions, the AVERAGE of all respondents is shown in the result. Scores above 3.0 suggest a strong satisfaction with the issue. Scores below 2.0 indicate a general dissatisfaction. Scores between 2.0 and 3.0 indicate some mixed feelings and differences of opinions. This is always to be expected, and in fact, is the case for many of the questions we asked.

The board met on Tuesday, June 16th to discuss the results and talk about what next steps we should take based on the survey results. The following is a summary of our discussions.

Some general observations about the survey results:

OUR players scored better than **OPPOSING** players; **OUR** coaches scored better than **OPPOSING** coaches; and **OUR** parents scored better than **OPPOSING** parents. I guess this in to be expected. We think the umpire scores on this matter were more balanced.

When it came to **Honoring the Game**, **PLAYERS** did the best; **PARENTS** were next, followed by the **COACHES**. This was the same from the Clubs and the Umpires. We will continue to make "Honoring the Game" a priority at all of our coaches' clinics, education sessions, and league communications.

Umpires did not differentiate much between 5th/6th grade level games and 7th/8th grade level games. This is understandable since they played by the same set of rules in 2009. We had 87 responses from umpires so a small difference in scores is significant.

The 5th/6th grade level needs some attention. There was a wide range in scores and responses at this level. There was a lot of debate about what we should be trying to teach at this level and what level of rules we should be playing. More importantly, almost all the comments about negative events and coaches NOT Honoring the Game, came from this level. This tells us that we need to take some time and address this level specifically.

2009 Survey Specific Results:

Questions 1-2, Rules Clinic: Almost all clubs indicated their coaches attended and that they were helpful.

Questions 3-7, the “No-Pass” Rule at 7/8: We had a few mixed feelings here. While it did result in some “Coast-to-Coast” scoring plays, the board agrees with most of the clubs and the Umpires, that the girls should be learning how to stop the coast-to-coast play at this level.

The board is planning to leave the “No Pass” rule the same at 7/8 for 2010.

Questions 8-12, the “No-Pass” Rule at 5/6: We had much more debate at this level. One key indicator was that 36% of the respondents reported playing WITH a passing rule at 5/6 while only 10% reported this at 7/8. The ability and maturity of girls varies widely at this level and it is too easy for a single, dominate player to take over a game. The board has mixed feelings on a passing rule. It is artificial. We want the girls to be passing the ball up the field, making good decisions, and always looking to go to goal when they have an opportunity. Also, a passing rule will not stop a dominate player from taking over a game. We need to rely on coaches to ensure that they are emphasizing team play and appropriate decision making.

The board recognizes that 5/6 is a transition year for girls playing lacrosse. We intend to discuss the appropriate rules and skills we should be emphasizing at this level. We expect to engage the member clubs and umpires in a dialog specifically about this level of play, possibly even hosting a “5/6 Rules Summit” later this fall.

Question 13-15, Modified Checking at 7/8: Feed back was generally positive.

The board is planning to leave the Level A, modified checking rule the same at 7/8 for 2010.

Question 16-18, Modified Checking at 5/6: While the feedback was generally positive here as well, there were enough comments about the skill level and the transitional nature of this level that the board feels it is worth further discussion.

The board will include modified checking in the 5/6 Rules dialog planned for later this year.

Question 19-22, Four (4) Goal lead, indirect free position at 5/6 and 7/8: Feed back was generally positive.

The board is planning to leave the four (4) goal lead, indirect free position at 5/6 and 7/8 the same for 2010.

Questions 23-32, Current Team Structure at 5/6 and 7/8: Feed back was generally positive. 90% agree that we should strive for balanced team strength within a club. There was little support for either single grade level teams or A/B teams. The board does acknowledge a few comments about the challenge of keeping the game meaningful at a recreational level for those girls that are more advanced and want more of a challenge. The board feels that the Developmental Teams (D-Teams) meet this need satisfactorily. We realize that we have opportunities to improve the D-Team experience and expand it to allow more girls to participate, but we feel that this is a more appropriate course of action than altering the current league rules for team structure.

The board is planning to leave the current team structure in place for 2010.

Questions 33-41, Overall Conference structure and administration: While there seemed to be general satisfaction here, we definitely have some improvement opportunities. The scheduling process only got a 79% approval rating. This, combined with a 49% percent response that the league should re-evaluate the geographic alignment of the conferences created some discussion at the board meeting. Also, while the board is committed to US Lacrosse Level 1 Certification and Background checks for coaches, there is not universal understanding or support from our member clubs.

The board is committed to further discussions on all of these topics. More information will follow.

2009 Survey Specific Results (cont.):

Questions 42-49, overall officiating: We got a lot of varied opinions on the overall officiating in 2009. The good news is that 100% reported that they had two officials for every game. That is a credit to Laura McCarthy, our scheduler. Thank you Laura.

On the other hand, only 54% of the responding clubs reported that the officiating was fair and consistent. Based the comments, it was more about consistency than it was about fairness. The board agrees with this observation based on our own experiences. The growth of the game has created new demand for umpires so consequently we are seeing more and more young, inexperienced umpires. Girls' lacrosse is a fast game on a big field and a lot of the rules are judgment calls. A certain amount of variation from umpire to umpire is to be expected. This, combined with the number of new umpires explains a lot of the inconsistency.

The board also feels that the clubs need to take some responsibility. While 81% reported that their coaches took the time to meet with the umpires before each game, less than 40% reported that a sideline manager met with the officials prior to each game.

86% of the clubs responded that they felt Red and Yellow Cards were used appropriately.

57% of umpires reported issuing yellow cards in 2009. Average number of cards was 3.5 this season.

5% of umpires reported issuing a red card in 2009. In each case, they reported issuing only one (1) red card in 2009.

The board is committed to providing fair and consistent officiating to our clubs. We will continue requiring all officials be fully trained and licensed. We will also continue to try and schedule inexperienced officials with more experienced officials whenever possible. The board will continue to require all coaches attend a rules clinic each year. We will also put more effort into encouraging coaches to attend the Umpires Rules sessions each winter.

Additionally, the board will provide more guidelines and emphasis next year on the providing sideline managers at every game. We will also reinforce the requirements for sideline managers, coaches, and umpires to meet before EVERY game for introductions and to discuss areas of emphasis.

Questions 50-56, Did we Honor the Game? These results are very encouraging, especially when you read through some of the comments. Most felt that the league as a whole is much better at honoring the game than in previous years. Most incidents and examples cited appear to be isolated events. One note of concern is that most of the examples noted were at the 5th/6th grade level. Winning is important, but not that important, especially at the 5th/6th grade level.

When it came to **Honoring the Game**, **OUR** players scored better than **OPPOSING** players; **OUR** coaches scored better than **OPPOSING** coaches; and **OUR** parents scored better than **OPPOSING** parents, and **PLAYERS** did the best; **PARENTS** were next, followed by the **COACHES**.

The board will continue to make "Honoring the Game" a priority at all of our coaches' clinics, education sessions, and league communications.

Thank you again if you provided input to the survey, we appreciate your comments. The board has committed to several things because of this survey, one of which is a continuing dialog about the rules and emphasis that we should be using at the 5th/6th grade level. **Please notify your conference president if you or someone from your club would like to participate in this dialog over the course of the next several months.**

Thank you.

**J.B. Wilcox / Mark Coan
Secretary / President
New Jersey Junior Girls Lacrosse League**

"Honor the Game"

NJJGLL 2009 Feedback Form					
NJJGLL Rules and Guidelines				Clubs (16)	Umpires (87)
1	Did ALL your coaches attend a rules clinic this year?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	94%	N/A
2	Was the rules clinic helpful?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	100%	N/A
3	Evaluate the “No – Pass” Rule (7/8): Overall Impact	1 - 4		2.80	3.15
4	Your Coaches embraced the spirit of this rule by putting a high premium on teaching defense and emphasizing team play and the value of passing the ball to move down the field and create scoring opportunities.	1 - 4		3.05	2.93
5	From your observations, OPPOSING Coaches also embraced the spirit of this rule.	1 - 4		2.70	
6	This rule did <u>NOT</u> result in an excessive amount of “Coast-to-Coast” scoring plays by a team’s best player.	1 - 4		2.67	2.84
7	Did you ever agree to play WITH a passing rule?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	10%	16%
8	Evaluate the “No – Pass” Rule (5/6): Overall Impact	1 - 4		2.29	2.91
9	Your Coaches embraced the spirit of this rule by putting a high premium on teaching defense and emphasizing team play and the value of passing the ball to move down the field and create scoring opportunities.	1 - 4		3.21	2.98
10	From your observations, OPPOSING Coaches also embraced the spirit of this rule.	1 - 4		2.46	
11	This rule did NOT result in an excessive amount of “Coast-to-Coast” scoring plays by a team’s best player.	1 - 4		2.17	2.85
12	Did you ever agree to play WITH a passing rule?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	36%	18%

NJJGLL 2009 Feedback Form				
NJJGLL Rules and Guidelines			Clubs (16)	Umpires (87)
13	Evaluate “Modified Checking” (7/8): Overall Impact	1 - 4	3.67	3.46
14	Your Coaches taught appropriate use of modified checking and the girls were able to understand and apply proper checking techniques during games.	1 - 4	3.39	3.12
15	From your observations, OPPOSING Coaches also taught appropriate use of modified checking and their players were also able to apply these techniques.	1 - 4	3.22	
16	Evaluate “Modified Checking” (5/6): Overall Impact	1 - 4	3.60	3.18
17	Your Coaches taught appropriate use of modified checking and the girls were able to understand and apply proper checking techniques during games.	1 - 4	3.41	2.92
18	From your observations, OPPOSING Coaches also taught appropriate use of modified checking and their players were also able to apply these techniques.	1 - 4	3.00	
19	Four-Goal lead Indirect Free Position rule (7/8): Overall Impact	1 - 4	3.80	3.56
20	Did you change anything in your games when leading by four (4) goals or more?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65%	59%
21	Four-Goal lead Indirect Free Position rule (5/6): Overall Impact	1 - 4	3.50	3.61
22	Did you change anything in your games when leading by four (4) goals or more?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	89%	55%
23	Current Team Structure Guidelines (7/8): Overall Impact	1 - 4	3.50	N/A
24	Do you agree with the “Balanced Team Strength” approach?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	90%	N/A
25	Single grade level teams would be a positive change.	1 - 4	2.05	N/A
26	Ability level teams (“A/B”) would be a positive change.	1 - 4	1.82	N/A
27	Did you have a D-Team this year?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	55%	N/A
28	The D-Team was a positive experience this year.	1 - 4	3.00	N/A
29	Current Team Structure Guidelines (5/6): Overall Impact	1 - 4	3.44	N/A
30	Do you agree with the “Balanced Team Strength” approach?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	92%	N/A
31	Single grade level teams would be a positive change.	1 - 4	1.68	N/A
32	Ability level teams (“A/B”) would be a positive change.	1 - 4	1.86	N/A

NJJGLL 2009 Feedback Form					
NJJGLL Officiating and Conference Administration			Clubs (16)	Umpires (87)	
33	Overall Conference structure and administration was effective at supporting your town / club efforts.	1 - 4		3.41	N/A
34	Did you play the majority of your games within your conference?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	100%	N/A
35	Was the scheduling process satisfactory for you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	79%	N/A
36	Did you confirm each of your games?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	92%	N/A
37	Should the League re-evaluate the geographic make-up of the individual conferences?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	42%	N/A
38	Are the guidelines and procedures for your coaches to obtain US Lacrosse Level 1 Certifications clear?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	75%	N/A
39	Having our coaches US Lacrosse Level 1 Certified will have a positive impact on our club and the game.	1 - 4		3.00	N/A
40	Are the guidelines and procedures for conducting background checks on your coaches clear?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	60%	N/A
41	Conducting background checks on our coaches will have a positive impact on our club and the game.	1 - 4		2.95	N/A
42	Overall the Officiating was positive and effective.	1 - 4		3.20	N/A
43	Did you have two (2) officials for the majority of your games?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	100%	98%
44	Was the officiating fair and consistent throughout the season?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	54%	N/A
45	Did your coaches take time to meet with the opposing coaches and the officials before each game?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	81%	85%
46	Did you have a sideline or site manager at each HOME game?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	57%	55%
47	Did your sideline or site manager meet with the officials and opposing coaches prior to each HOME game?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	36%	N/A
48	Did your opponents have a sideline or site manager at each AWAY game?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	39%	N/A
49	Were Yellow / Red Cards used appropriately?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	86%	N/A
	Did you Issue any Yellow Cards / How Many?				57% / 3.5
	Did you Issue any RED Cards / How Many?				5% / 1

NJJGLL 2009 Feedback Form					
NJJGLL Officiating and Conference Administration				Clubs (16)	Umpires (87)
50	Did we Honor the Game this year?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	100%	N/A
51	OUR PLAYERS honored the game by playing hard while respecting their opponents, coaches, officials, fans, and teammates.	1 - 4		3.85	3.46
52	OPPOSING PLAYERS honored the game by playing hard while respecting their opponents, coaches, officials, fans, and teammates.	1 - 4		3.65	
53	OUR COACHES honored the game by teaching the game in a positive way and by respecting their players, opposing players and coaches, officials, and fans.	1 - 4		3.62	3.21
54	OPPOSING COACHES honored the game by teaching the game in a positive way and by respecting their players, opposing players and coaches, officials, and fans.	1 - 4		3.35	
55	OUR PARENTS honored the game by letting the players play, the coaches coach, and the officials officiate. They respected all the players, coaches, and officials.	1 - 4		3.83	3.42
56	OPPOSING PARENTS honored the game by letting the players play, the coaches coach, and the officials officiate. They respected all the players, coaches, and officials.	1 - 4		3.77	