From the Desk of the Executive Director:

Never have the words “stay safe” meant as much as they do today! Who would ever have imagined in a world with our technology, our science capabilities, etc. etc. that we would be having a situation like we are facing in our world today? It is without saying that we are sailing the WADA ship in uncharted waters, where a lot of what we are being asked to do is being made up as we go along and then changed or altered the next day because of new information, new guidelines or new government regulations.

Luckily for us, athletic administrators are the ones most adept to making changes on the run, at the last minute, always keeping in mind the overall mission but topping the list, the safety of our student athletes, coaches and our respective communities.

I can assure you that during this tough time your WADA leadership team is in almost daily conversation with the WIAA, discussing ways to maintain the safety of our students, schools and communities, while still trying to maintain some hope as remote as it may appear today, that we can resume interscholastic participation.

I’m reminded of the young man on spring break in Florida who said “It’s my spring break, if I catch it, I catch it, but I’m going to party”. Well as we have all educated our coaches…….one of our most important jobs as coaches is to teach life skills. The life skills we have to impart today are the most important we may ever have to instill……the importance of life versus death which in large part is no different than participating in a game….FOLLOW THE RULES!

My children constantly have scolded me over the past couple months….Dad you are not invincible here. You must follow the recommendations of the medical professionals and remember that while YOU may not get sick, YOU could pass it on to someone who might and their outcome may not be good. Thus, I have watched enough of the warnings and listened to the advice of our WIAA staff and their medical advisors and I have adopted some of the most significant life changing skills that I had never even conceived that I would in my lifetime.

In closing, I want to leave you with two of the most important things that I hope that you take from this letter; Stay safe, take care of yourself and follow the rules/guidelines, remember its not only your health that you should be concerned about. Second, in the history of every AD and coach in Wisconsin, our mission has never been more critically important. Students are not only not in school, where for some it’s their only stable part of their lives, but along with that for our student athletes, the disappointment of a premature ending to sports seasons, not to mention as I said the life & and death implications of this pandemic.
PLEASE visit our WADA website where we have listed several policies, ideas, strategies in our “Tool Box”, for you to consider in working through this event. I want to thank all of the contributors who have shared these documents and especially thank our WADA President Todd Sobrilsky and the Board for their dedication and continued work on WADA’s behalf in helping us all navigate these unfortunate and dangerous times!

STAY SAFE!

My thoughts and prayers are with all of you, your students, staff and communities!

Greg Smith, CMAA
Executive Director
WADA

ITEMS of INTEREST

1. WADA 2020-21 Conference to be held Virtually.

The following information is provide by Greg Smith, Executive Director to our Membership concerning the Boards recent decision to go virtual with the WADA 2020-21 Conference:

As you have heard through an email message from WADA President Todd Sobrilsky, last Sunday night, the WADA Board discussed and came to the conclusion that we could not in consideration of the Covid Virus pandemic, and everything that plays into the decisions that are affecting the education and participation of our students, continue with planning for a face to face WADA fall Conference. You should be aware this decision was not made in haste. In fact since March, your WADA Officers and Board have met thirty times (and counting) discussing ways for you, our membership to best cope with and deal with the changing landscape of what is transpiring as a result of the pandemic.

As a result of this decision, we are now involved in planning a “virtual conference” to try and best serve our membership as we move forward with the 2020-21 school year. By the middle of next week we will be opening our 2020-21 registration. There are several key things that you all need to be aware of as we open this new WADA year;

1. First as with past years, registration will be on-line through our WADA website, and hosted by our corporate partner rSchool Today. You “may” register via snail mail but you will have to go on-line, print off the registration form and then mail the form, with payment to the WADA Post Office Box in Monroe, WI. On-line registration is highly recommended and will certainly be easier and more efficient for all members.

2. This year we will have three types of membership; Regular, Associate and Retired.

3. WADA continues to be a “dual membership” state, which means that your membership includes both membership in WADA and the NIAAA. You MUST join WADA to continue or for new AD’s, to gain the benefit packages from both WADA & the NIAAA, to include the liability and life insurance coverages from both organizations.
4. This year the various options for memberships automatically includes access to the virtual conference. Only WADA members will be given the access code/password to participate in the virtual conference.

5. The on-line registration will also include the option to sign up for LTI classes. Please take advantage of these learning opportunities and enroll in the classes that interest you and those which may lead to your certification(s) through the NIAAA.

6. Finally, please remember what I said in my opening article…..we are ALL navigating new waters in dealing with the pandemic and a virtual conference. In that regard please be patient and if you have questions, reach out to your respective District Representative, WADA Officers, or to me.

7. The membership types are again;
   - **Regular Membership** – This is reserved for active athletic administrators at either a high school or middle school/junior high school, to include Assistant AD’s. This membership includes all benefits that are outlined on the WADA and NIAAA websites. The cost of this membership this year is $160 and as mentioned previously includes access to the virtual WADA Conference.
   
   - **Associate Membership** – This is reserved for those affiliated with athletic administration but not serving directly as a regular AD as described in the paragraph above. These members will receive all WADA and NIAAA benefits excluding the life insurance benefit from WADA and the liability coverages that come with the NIAAA portion of this membership. The cost of this membership is $125 and as mentioned previously includes access to the virtual WADA Conference.
   
   - **Retired Membership** – This is open to all inactive/former AD’s. The cost of this membership is $60 and includes all WADA benefits excluding the life insurance benefit and all NIAAA benefits excluding the liability coverage, along with access to the virtual WADA Conference.

*Please watch the WADA website starting the middle of next week to see when official on-line registration begins!*

I look forward to seeing all of you “virtually” in November!

Stay safe and wear your masks!!

Greg Smith, CMAA
Executive Director
WADA

2. **Other WADA News:**

   ➢ This will be the last WADA weekly newsletter, with the start of the school year we will be switching our newsletter to a monthly format. Watch for the next issue in the last week of September.
➢ Change in our State LTI-Certification Leadership . . . John Frizell has decided to step away from being the State LTI-Certification Coordinator. We would like to extend a huge thank you to him for 15+ years of dedicated service to the WADA membership and the development of these programs in our state. As a result of John stepping away the WADA Executive Board has approved Mellisa Gehringer (former assistant to John) to take over as the new Chair of both LTI and Certification for the state. This also means that we are currently looking to fill the role of Assistant LTI-Certification Coordinator. If you are interested please go to this [link] for more information. Information on how to apply to be considered for this position can be found [here].

➢ Here is the latest [WADA Survey] - we also included this in last week’s newsletter. It focuses on the open questions of school year contact, competition types being planned on, and gives a space for other questions and topics needing clarification. We are looking to collect this data to share with the WIAA Staff before their next Board of Control meeting. As of today we have no responses from Districts 1, 2, 3, & 6. *If you want your opinion heard - FILL OUT THE SURVEY!!!* We would appreciate everyone taking the time to complete this, probably about 3-5 minutes.

➢ Meeting Minutes from August 23 WADA Board Meeting. The next WADA Board Meeting is scheduled for Wed. September 2, 2020 @ 2:30 PM. Feel free to contact your District Rep with any items you would like brought to the Board to discuss.

➢ A friendly reminder that amidst the chaos of the first few weeks of school start up the WIAA will be holding their area meetings throughout September. It was decided at the WIAA Board of Control meeting last week to hold these meetings virtually this year. Watch your email inbox for more details from the WIAA office on how to register to attend. Here is a [link] to the scheduled dates for the meetings.

3. Please remember to check out [gowada.org] for regular updates and resources. If you would like to share resources or templates we would love to have your submissions, please email to Eric Plitzuweit, eplitzuweit@basd.k12.wi.us

4. The latest [NEWS] from the NIAAA and NFHS concerning the NADC.

5. **From our WIAA Liaison, Tom Shafranski:**

Athletic Directors were provided a new link (via email) on the WIAA website entitled “COVID SEASON PLACEMENT REPORT” on Wednesday, August 19 and a reminder on Tuesday, August 25. This report provides a drop-down, user friendly list of Fall sports allowing the AD to
easily identify the season of participation for each sport. The fall sports include Boy's Cross Country, Boy's Football, Boy's Football 8-Player, Boy's Soccer, Boys Volleyball, Girl's Cross Country, Girl's Golf, Girl's Swimming & Diving, Girl's Tennis and Girl's Volleyball. The link is found below:

https://schools.wiaawi.org/Reports/COVIDReport/

The due date to identify the season your Fall sport teams will be participating in is Tuesday, September 1. It is vital the WIAA office receives this information by this date so that we are able to begin to plan and schedule culminating events/tournaments for each sport.

If for any reason an Athletic Director is not able to identify the season a team will be participating, please indicate the Fall season for now. Should there need to be a change to a different season, Athletic Directors will be allowed to contact the WIAA office to make a change in seasons.

The revised 2020-21 WIAA calendar, as approved by the Board of Control at their August 14 meeting is available on the WIAA website by clicking on the “CALENDAR” heading. Below you will find a link to this new calendar:

https://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Calendars/deskcalendar2020-21b.pdf

This calendar contains the new starting dates, first days of competition, tournament dates and State tournament dates should these events be able to be held. Please know all of these dates remain fluid and may be changed based upon the circumstances presented by the COVID-19 scenarios throughout Wisconsin.

We know these links can provide Athletic Directors with key information as you continue to plan and schedule your 2020-21 seasons. Working together we keep providing athletic participation opportunities for our high school student athletes. These athletic participation opportunities are proving to be truly great, well-received experiences for all involved! Keep up all your hard work and keep wearing a mask—it is making a difference!!

Tom Shafranski, CAA
Assistant Director

6. Message from Dave Anderson, WIAA Executive Director:

We identified a new condition in our office this week, “Corona Fatigue” (tongue in cheek). Others have described it with a reference to the 1993 movie, “Groundhog Day.” Call it what you will but it is clear that many have been toiling, day-in and day-out only to see many day’s efforts to be “no good” by tomorrow – and then we start again. That cycle can bring
with it a weariness by days end, even for the most positive, determined and dedicated professionals we know.

And yet, within this draining and seemingly toil-without-end universe, we have made progress. We have seen the beginnings of “good” and of “hope” emerging and we can’t lose sight of that. The fatigue of wrestling with these challenges-without-end cannot hold back or contain the smiles and the joy of those kids who’ve had their first school competitions in swim, tennis or golf this past week. Every day we see in the WASDA Newsletter, those members who are making decisions about their school year as well as their sport seasons. The fact that decisions are being made is in itself, progress. Whether or not it “feels” like a big-deal, it’s giving us a starting point and – hope – for a different tomorrow. Even in those instances where some sports are being moved to the alternate season – they are delayed – but not cancelled. It is a decision to preserve hope.

None of us are naïve. Challenges remain. And we will most likely need to take one step forward and two back, for some time yet. But as we see neighboring states communicate and share ideas and see our members and conferences working together, sharing and using the best ideas in order to keep making progress, in all these things we still see “hope”.

We hear from principals and AD’s, we see and hear their determination to find a way. Despite the occasional – and understandable, moments of angst and frustration, this membership is confronting every challenge and adversity being placed in its way. Sooner or later, this force, the collective determination and spirit of this membership will win-out.

I am certain you don’t hear it enough, so “Thank You” - for your willingness to continue to do daily battle and to find ways and for working together to help young people.

Don’t be discouraged.

Lastly, our thoughts and prayers also go out to our friends in Kenosha who are dealing with many other challenges beyond and in addition to Covid right now.

Take Care,

Dave Anderson

The next WIAA Board of Control meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 18, 2020.