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HONORING THE GAME IN SOUTHERN PENNSYLVANIA

Article: An Open Letter From Dan Wilmot
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The following was published by Dan Wilmot on 11/01/2007:

To All Lacrosse Enthusiasts in York/Adams and Surrounding Areas -

This is a heartfelt plea for help on behalf of all the male lacrosse players in York and Adams Counties that wish to represent their school on a lacrosse field. I recently had a meeting with some representatives of the YAIAA. It became very apparent to me that there are several AD's, superintendents, principals and board members in the local school districts that are very skeptical of fully supporting lacrosse in '09 (or even '10) season. This is largely because of the uncertainty of the availability of officials from the only existing lacrosse association. Although I can not speak with authority on this situation, I am certain that unless we do something now, there will be no YAIAA league in York/Adams playing PIAA lacrosse in the spring of '09.

There is currently 13 different boys lacrosse organizations in York/Adams County. Four of them currently have some degree of affiliation with their school but none of them is a fully sponsored high school sport. Our clubs have been working for years toward this end. The sport has finally received PIAA recognition for the spring of '09. However, because of a possible "official's fee" issue with some (not all) members of the current official's association, all that we have worked so hard to see happen in the spring of '09 will be lost.

Let me be very clear on this issue, I could make a valid argument that lacrosse officials should be paid what they currently make OR MORE, but that will not change the minds of the many dozens of people that we need support from to make this happen. We need to start a local lacrosse officials organization that will be willing to work with all the powers that be and those that influence the YAIAA. Without their vote of confidence, there will be no issue as to what YAIAA/PIAA officials get paid because there will be no YAIAA/PIAA lacrosse.

No one has made an ultimatum from either side of the issue. I am just passing on information that I know as to the reality of the situation. So here is my plea:

I implore every able body with interest to join us for two days in November and one day in December to take an official's certification course. It will be for three hours (6:30-9:30) on Thursdays Nov. 15th and 29th and on Dec. 6th. The classes will be held at the York Tech. We are going to start our own local officials organization. PIAA certification starts next year, but we need to have our organization in motion BEFORE the school districts send their budgets to the state in December for the '09 season.

I am going to get this information to as many interested people in York, Adams, Baltimore, Carrol and all other surrounding counties as I can. I am going to contact all the parents, high school players, coaches, assistant coaches, scorekeepers, board members, local college players and students,



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officials for other sports that I can. Please, please, do the same. Pass on this information to any and all that you think might have the slightest interest. Our target group is males in their 20's and 30's that can have an understanding with their wives that they will be working late days in the spring. But it is not limited to that, anyone can come get certified. Personally, I feel that if we have (and I think we will) a large number of interested participants in our certification classes, the word will get out quickly that we are determined to start a local league of PIAA lacrosse.

Many of you already have a good understanding of the game of lacrosse. If you do not, don't let that stop you from attending. The best thing that you can do to prepare is to get an '07 rule book and read through it. Bring your questions to the meeting. We will be focusing on the mechanics, positioning and how to take control in running the game.

It is my understanding that a girl's YAIAA lacrosse league will start in '09 if there is at least 6 schools sponsoring teams, and it appears there will be. This will happen even if the boys can't work things out. The girls lacrosse official's association has already worked things out with the YAIAA. That is good news that the girls will move forward even if the boys do not.

Grateful for your support,

Dan Wilmot