

Lloyd;

I am writing to you as a follow up to the issue of helmets in girls' lacrosse. This past weekend, my younger daughter, Carley (age 14) was playing in a sectional game. As she and an opposing player jumped for a ball in the air over their heads, the opponents elbow came down and smashed into Carley's mouth. Though she was wearing a mouth guard, she had 4 front teeth disrupted from their roots and pushed inward. Fortunately, Carley was able to see her dentist right away who stabilized her teeth with braces and sutured her gum line. Even if her teeth do stabilize over the next few weeks, she will most likely have to face several root canals and ultimately artificial implants. Earlier the same week, Carley incurred a blow to the face which resulted in bruising and swelling from the goggles. I think that these events answer the question of what type of helmet is needed in girls' lacrosse-one with a face grid.

As you can imagine, I am distraught over these injuries in addition to Erin's concussion a few months ago. In my office, I have continued to treat significant head and face injuries in girl's lacrosse players. (Interestingly, I have not seen these type of injuries in boys lacrosse where they wear helmets!). The time has come for action. Could you please send me the names, numbers and e-mails of the girls' lacrosse coordinator and the Executive Director Nina VanErk? Though data collection and research are certainly important components in solving this problem, the heads (brains) and faces of our girl lacrosse plays need "required" safety equipment as soon as possible.

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From: Lloyd Mott [mailto:L.Mott@nysphsaa.org]
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2008 8:26 AM
To: jbright1@twcny.rr.com
Subject: RE: concussions in girls lacrosse

Cindy,
Thank you for this communication. I will include your letter with the items for the April 30, 2008 NYSPHSAA Safety Committee Meeting. I have forwarded your letter to the committee members, our girls' lacrosse coordinator and our Executive Director, Nina VanErk. The safety committee will initiate a plan for collecting data and reviewing research on this topic.
I will keep you informed.
Lloyd

Lloyd L. Mott
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From: Cindy Bright [mailto:jbright1@twcny.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 15, 2008 11:46 PM
To: Lloyd Mott

Cc: 'Brian Rieger'; claire.duffy@TAP.com

Subject: concussions in girls lacrosse

Dear Mr. Mott:

I am writing to you to follow up our phone conversation about the need for head protective gear in girl's lacrosse. As I mentioned to you, I am a Pediatrician in the Syracuse area who has treated many lacrosse injuries as well as a mother of a daughter who suffered a serious concussion in January. Erin is 16 years old and is a midfielder for both her high school's Varsity team and several indoor teams. While defending another player, she was accidentally struck in the head by her opponent's stick after a shot on goal. Erin immediately fell to the ground, was disoriented and had a staggering gait. She had to be brought to the emergency room for evaluation for persistent concussive symptoms. Thankfully, Erin has recovered completely but this is her second sports concussion and puts her at risk for further head injury. I discussed with her the possibility of wearing the soft, soccer goalie helmet which you mentioned, but she said that she would rather quit playing than be the only player on the field with head protective gear.

I have watched Erin and her sister, Carley, play girl's lacrosse for years now and am amazed at what a fast paced yet skilled game it has become. With increased strength and conditioning, I have also noticed how the sport has become more aggressive. No one has to worry that adding helmets to the game will make it more aggressive as it is already at that point, in spite of the strict rules. Even if girl's lacrosse was not aggressive, accidents and head injuries are inevitable in a sport that involves a stick, a ball and speed around player's heads.

It is my understanding that girl's lacrosse has one of the highest concussion rates during games of all sports; girls and boys. With the most recent understanding of the potential for long term consequences from concussions, it apparent that helmets are a necessity for this sport in particular. There is ample scientific evidence that helmets have decreased the incidence and severity of head injuries in many activities and sports including biking, skiing, skateboarding, boy's lacrosse, baseball and football, to name a few. Knowing this information, yet not requiring helmets in girl's lacrosse puts your committee and the entire NYS high school athletic association at risk for liability with each concussion.

Please, consider the wisest choice and protect the heads of girls playing lacrosse in New York State!

Sincerely,

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