

SBC set up well for six-week football schedule with six-team divisions

Matthew Horn

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Maybe six teams in a conference was just the right number after all.

The Sandusky Bay Conference knew something everyone else didn't?

Ohio has a plan for football to start August 24 as the coronavirus pandemic rages elsewhere in the country, with five more games through September 28. Contact sports have yet to be granted government approval.

Of 22 total schools, there are six for football in the SBC Lake, Bay and River divisions. Conceivably, each division could play a conference schedule in Week 2-6 and add a crossover game with another division or traditional opponent.

SBC and Three Rivers Athletic Conference athletic directors met Monday to discuss schedules and challenges. Of course, ideal schedules would include three home games and three on the road.

That's easier said than done, especially if some teams have two home games before looking at the nonconference possibilities.

"The what ifs go on forever," SBC commissioner Gregg Hedden said. "The tricky part, they're trying to take something last minute and equalize things home and away. You play five in your division and somebody is out a home game.

"Who can play who, home and away. I don't know about any money this year, but you want home games."



If a season is played, there won't be much revenue. Fans will be limited, if allowed at all.

The River won't want to match with the Lake in Week 1 if possible.

Clyde, Bellevue, Sandusky, Norwalk and Perkins play football in the Lake Division. The Tornadoes were Ross' opponent for Week 1 on the original schedules.

Port Clinton, Oak Harbor, Huron, Edison, Vermilion and Willard play football in the Bay Division. Margaretta is in the River Division for football, along with Gibsonburg, St. Joseph Central Catholic, Lakota, Tiffin Calvert and Hopewell-Loudon.

Danbury and St. Mary Central Catholic play eight-man football. Old Fort and New Riegel don't have football.

The SBC's three divisions cross five counties and health departments ultimately will dictate who can play where.

Fremont Ross plays schools in the TRAC in Lucas County, which are appealing to reinstate fall sports. Clay won an appeal in Oregon.

After athletic directors agree, there are other administrators that must do the same. None of it matters without the Governor's blessing.

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All parties are working as fast as they can to coordinate definitive schedules, possibly this week.

“Board approval,” Hedden said. “Contracts. We’re working on a daily basis to figure how to let student-athletes play in the best way we can.”

Unofficially, Ross would play Clay, Findlay, Lima Senior, Toledo Whitmer, Toledo St. John’s and Toledo St. Francis the first six weeks. All teams have the option to compete in the postseason or schedule regular season games instead.

“I’m thankful our ADs are working their tails off,” Little Giants coach Chad Long said. “They want to play football, like we are as players and coaches. There’s anxiety for them. A lot of emotions. There’s a lot. The kids are worried because the Big Ten is cancelling the season.

“Coaches, same thing, it takes a toll mentally. There’s heartbreak. We shortened practice (Monday). This is the biggest toll I’ve had as a coach to keep kids’ minds positive.”

Teams can also schedule games within the final four weeks after they’re eliminated from the postseason. Maintaining the second longest consecutive game streak in the state with Sandusky would be a priority for the Little Giants if possible.

Ross could play the Blue Streaks in the postseason, depending on how regions are configured.

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