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Athletic Participation At MHSAA Schools Hits All-Time High

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Aug. 1 – Fueled by the continued growth of girls sports and a boom in boys sports like soccer and ice hockey, participation in high school athletics at Michigan High School Athletic Association member schools hit an all-time high during the 1999-00 school year.

There was a total of 282,426 participants in sports in which the Association sponsors post-season tournaments during the past school year. Among the participants, a record 118,292 took part in sports in which the MHSAA sponsors tournaments for girls only, which was a record 41.9 percent. The participation figures do count each team a student is a member of, meaning students who are multiple-sport athletes are counted more than once.

The participation figures for girls are up over 13 percent since the 1994-95 school year. Boys are up six percent over the same time period.

The greatest growth in girls sports during the 1994-95 to 1999-00 time period came in soccer, which was up 55 percent, from 7,684 players to 11,921; and golf, up 52 percent, from 2,343 participants to 3,564. Other girls sports with record participation numbers last year were competitive cheer with 3,019 athletes; cross country with 6,761; swimming and diving with 6,652; and tennis with 8,757. Volleyball was the most popular sport for girls for the fourth consecutive.

Of the boys sports, ice hockey grew 57 percent in the past five years, from 98 teams and 1,900 participants in 1994-95, to 142 teams and 2,989 players last year – a trend which is expected to continue. Boys soccer has grown over 25 percent to a record 12,987 participants in 1999-00. Football continues to be the most popular sport for boys, and its numbers have remained stable over the past decade.

The participation figures are gathered annually from MHSAA member schools to submit to the National Federation of State High School Associations for compiling its national participation survey. The results of the survey from 1998-99 may be viewed on the NFHS Web Site – www.nfhs.org.

(more)

2-2-2 – 1999-00 Sports Participation Figures

The following chart are participation figures for the 1999-00 school year from MHSAA member schools in sports in which the Association sponsors a post-season tournament:

Sport	<u>Boys & Girls Teams</u>		<u>Girls Only Teams</u>	
	Schools	Participants	Schools	Participants
Baseball	624	19,466		
Basketball	721	23,085	705	19,760
Competitive Cheer			145	3,019
Cross Country	591	7,594	575	6,761
Football	620	42,743		134
Golf	559	8,274	268	3,564
Gymnastics			90	1,078
Ice Hockey	142	2,987		
Skiing – Alpine	85	1,098	84	795
Soccer	403	12,987	335	11,921
Softball –Fast Pitch			634	16,806
Swimming & Diving	220	4,325	228	6,652
Tennis	359	7,717	349	8,759
Track & Field- Outdoor	649	21,923	646	17,971
Volleyball			694	20,934
Wrestling	456	1,1935		138

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,300 public and private senior high schools and junior high/middle schools which exists to develop common rules for athletic eligibility and competition. No government funds or tax dollars support the MHSAA, which was the first such association nationally to not accept membership dues or tournament entry fees from schools. Member schools which enforce these rules are permitted to participate in MHSAA tournaments conducted in 12 sports for girls and 12 sports for boys which attract approximately 1.3 million spectators each year.

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