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Ejections Hit 11-Year Low In Michigan High School Sports

EAST LANSING, Mich. – June 19 – Evidence that progress is being made in its ongoing sportsmanship efforts became apparent during the 2000-01 school year, with the Michigan High School Athletic Association releasing statistics showing that ejections by officials of players and coaches at high school sporting events reached an 11-year low.

Since 1991, the Association has tracked ejections of players, coaches and others from high school sporting events, and recently has recognized those schools which have received a high number negative officials reports in a given season, as well as those which have received no negative officials reports at all.

An overall decline has been in progress since 1998-99, and has given MHSAA Executive Director John E. “Jack” Roberts some cause for hope.

“In school sports, we sometimes claim victory when we feel that things are not getting any worse when we compare ourselves to the deterioration of sportsmanlike behavior in youth, college and professional sports,” said Roberts. “But when we see hard data that show the number of ejections in our games is going down over the past 18 months, we become optimistic that we are actually turning the tide a bit.

“The credit for the decline has to go to schools, which have taken the time to describe and demand the appropriate standards of behavior to their players and coaches; and to some of our coaches associations, which have made sportsmanship a priority over teaching the X’s and O’s of their games to their members.

“That doesn’t mean we can relax, because the behavior in the stands at games by adult spectators, especially parents, may actually be getting worse at the same time that behavior on the field and on the sidelines may be improving,” Roberts concluded.

The numbers for the recently-completed 2000-01 school year (compiled as of June 18), showed that officials ejected an all-time low 591 players, and 130 coaches, the drop in the former number 15 percent from the year before, and for coaches, 27 percent from 1999-00. The year also saw the lowest number of officials reports submitted for concerns at high school events, 761, a drop of 24 percent since the all-time high number of 1,004 reports during 1996-97.

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2-2-2 – Ejections Hit 11-Year Low

The number of schools receiving three or more negative officials reports also hit an all-time low in 2000-01, as only 40 schools fit into that category. Schools which receive three or more reports of concern in a given year have their names published in the August edition of the MHSAA Bulletin as a measure to expose those institutions. Since the 1992-93 school year, over 600 schools have annually received reports of concern, but this year's total of 575 schools is the lowest since 1991-92, when 571 schools were written up. Approximately 170 schools will receive letters of commendation from the MHSAA for receiving no negative reports.

Officials reports praising the actions of a school, a team or an individual numbered 70 during the recently-completed school year, the second highest number in the 11-year tracking period, and a 15 percent increase over the previous year.

The one statistic that has actually gone up in the past few years is ejections for taunting, which is an automatic disqualification in any Michigan high school sporting event. Taunting-related ejections numbered 16 in 2000-01, the second highest number since that offense became an ejectionable action in 1993-94, when there were 33 such ejections, and an increase from nine in 1999-00.

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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ADVISORY –A set of graphs showing the overall decrease in negative officials reports and ejections can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

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