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Spring Representative Council Meeting Summary

EAST LANSING, Mich. – June 7 – A variety of measures dealing with eligibility rules and sports issues were addressed by the Representative Council of the MHSAA at its Spring meeting, May 6-8, in Gaylord.

The Spring meeting of the 19-member legislative body of the Association's 1,273 member schools is usually the busiest of its three sessions each year. The Council considered 37 committee proposals and discussed a number of eligibility and operational issues.

As a result of the Council's actions, opportunities for more flexibility in scheduling will occur in some sports, additional competitors were allowed in one sport, safety issues were addressed in two sports, and the point differential rules were modified in two sports.

"Not all Council meetings are about selecting venues for tournaments or major rules revisions," said MHSAA Executive Director John E. "Jack" Roberts. "The role of the Representative Council is to establish guidelines to assist schools' day-to-day interscholastic athletic business, and to determine terms and conditions for participating in MHSAA post-season tournaments. The work of the Council is important, even when some of the topics addressed aren't very glamorous."

One of the actions of the Council was to encourage more flexibility in scheduling in junior high/middle school girls volleyball and wrestling, and in high school wrestling. A recommendation of the Junior High/Middle School Committee was approved to allow 3 days of competition in girls volleyball and 3 weigh-ins in wrestling in a one-week period (Monday to Sunday) on one occasion during the season, with only 2 of the days of competition occurring on a day or night before a school day. In high school wrestling, teams may participate in a maximum of 3 days of competition in a one-week period, but only 2 of the days of competition may occur on a day or night before a school day; and a team is limited to 5 days of competition in any 14-day period, Monday through Sunday, during the regular season.

In girls competitive cheer, a modification was made in the competition rules to allow up to 16 competitors in Rounds 1 and 3 of a meet, and up to 12 competitors in the second round. Previously, up to 12 competitors were allowed in the first and last rounds, and 12 competitors were allowed in the middle round.

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Addressing risk management issues, the Council adopted a rule that will require helmets in skiing in both the slalom and giant slalom disciplines for regular-season meets and the MHSAA post-season tournament effective next year. The helmets will be required to be of a style and standard which meets the consensus of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, other state high school associations, the International Ski Federation and the United States Skiing Association. The standards will be available to member schools by September 1. In baseball and softball, the Council authorized a survey of member schools to determine if there was interest in the use of a double first base option for regular season and MHSAA post-season tournament games.

Point differential rules in two sports – ice hockey and basketball – were modified by the Representative Council. The Ice Hockey Committee recommendation of using a running clock whenever a team establishes a 10-goal or more lead during the first or second period of the game was adopted. It continues that any game in which a team leads by 10 or more goals after the completion of the second period or any time during the third period shall be terminated. In basketball, the Council voted to continue the use of the running clock in any game at all levels of play for 2001-02, and adopted a modification where the clock will stop for the shooting of free throws during the final 2 minutes of a contest. These rules will be in effect for all regular season and MHSAA post-season tournament contests in 2001-02 for both sports.

Here is a summary of other actions taken at the Spring Representative Council Meeting:

Modified the penalty to coaches who violate undue influence rules. The Council added to the penalty that any coach who violates undue influence rules may not only not coach for a one-year period at the school where the rule was violated, but also may not coach for a one-year period at any other MHSAA member school in any MHSAA tournament in any sport.

Quoting Jack Roberts – “There was concern that a coach who moves from one school to another after having their previous employer penalized for the coach’s actions was able to avoid any kind of punishment.”

Voted to allow, at the Lower Peninsula Boys and Girls Golf Finals, a team to substitute a player or players for the second day of competition. Previously, once a team submitted its lineup of five players and the Final tournament began, substitutions were not allowed.

Quoting MHSAA Assistant Director Suzanne Martin – “We have had situations in the past where a team may have had an injury or illness occur during or after the first round of play, or there was a scheduling conflict where players had to choose between participating in the MHSAA Finals or a significant event at home. The Council’s action follows the logic that substitutions are allowed during play in many other team sports.”

Approved an experiment during the 2001-02 MHSAA Lower Peninsula Boys and Girls Golf Finals to allow school coaches to coach on the course during the second day of the tournament. Only those coaches that provide an observer to monitor a foursome’s play on the second day of the tournament would be allowed to coach players on the course. Each school would only be allowed one coach on the course, the coaching could only take place while walking between each green and the next tee box, and coaches would not be allowed to assist players in lining up putts or walking off yardage.

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3-3-3 – Spring Representative Council Meeting

Quoting Suzanne Martin -- “There has been enough interest in allowing coaches to do during the Finals what they are allowed to do all season – coach on the course – that the Golf Committee wanted to experiment with the concept, and yet preserve the vital function of the on-course observers, which was a task only coaches were entrusted with in the past.”

In soccer, the Council voted to approve the Soccer Committee recommendation that there may be no more than three games and/or scrimmages per week, Monday through Sunday. The addition to this rule is that scrimmages are now included in the count.

In tennis, the Council approved the Tennis Committee recommendation to survey Division 4 schools to determine if there is support a Number 4 Doubles flight for the MHSAA post-season tournament in the Lower Peninsula – Based on a previous Council action a year ago, the fourth doubles event was added to the MHSAA tournament series in the Lower Peninsula during the 2000-01 school year in Division 1, 2 and 3 play. It was determined at that time there was not sufficient interest in the additional flight in the smallest enrollment division, Division 4.

The new date for the two-pound growth allowance in wrestling will be January 1. The Council adjusted the allowance date so that it would be easier to track for all parties involved, and not occur on a day of competition.

Approved the recommendation of the Wrestling Committee to survey principals of Upper Peninsula schools to determine their interest in participating in a unified Individual Wrestling Tournament. If changed, the individual tournament conducted as a one-class event in the Upper Peninsula, would be abolished, and the 16 schools which conduct wrestling from the U.P. would be reclassified by enrollment into the tournament with the 438 schools from the Lower Peninsula.

Quoting MHSAA Assistant Director Bill Bupp – “There has been enough interest expressed on the part of different coaches and administrators from the Upper Peninsula in a unified individual tournament, that the Wrestling Committee felt it was time to conduct a more formal survey of U.P. schools, which have always had the privilege of determining if it was in their best interest to compete in a tournament with downstate schools, or have a separate U.P. championship conducted by the MHSAA.”

The Council also reviewed reports on cooperative programs, of which currently stand at 140 at the high school level, and 51 at the junior high/middle school level have now been reached; eligibility advancement applications, which numbered a record low 21 for 2000-01; school violations; attendance at athletic director and coaches in-service workshops; on 11,283 officials being registered as of April 15; rules meeting attendance; officials reports submitted for the past three sports seasons; and training and awards activities for officials during the Spring. The Association’s \$7.4 million budget for the 2001-02 school year was also approved.

The Representative Council is the 19-member legislative body of the MHSAA. All but 5 members are elected by member schools. Four members are appointed by the Council to facilitate representation of females and minorities; and the 19th position is occupied by the Superintendent of Public Instruction or designee.

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4-4-4 – Spring Representative Council Meeting

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, which attract approximately 1.3 million spectators each year.

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