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## **Compliance Plan Accepted By District Court In Sports Seasons Case**

**EAST LANSING, Mich. – Nov. 11** – On Friday (Nov. 8), the United States District Court in Kalamazoo accepted the compliance plan submitted by the Michigan High School Athletic Association to reschedule its post-season tournaments consistent with the District Court’s opinion and order of August 1, 2002.

Unless the MHSAA prevails on appeal, it will reschedule its Lower Peninsula Golf and Tennis tournaments, moving girls tennis and boys golf from Fall to Spring and boys tennis and girls golf from Spring to Fall. The MHSAA will offer Upper Peninsula Soccer Tournaments for boys in the Spring and girls in the Fall.

“This configuration complies with the Court’s August 1 Injunctive Order,” states the Final Injunctive Order issued on Nov. 8.

Girls basketball and volleyball seasons would also be reversed by the Court’s order of August 1. However, all these changes are subject to appeal, and on May 9, the U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, Ohio, stayed the District Court’s order that the changes take place in the 2003-04 school year.

In issuing its stay of the District Court’s order that seasons be changed, the Sixth Circuit stated, “...it is clear the stay motion raises serious appellate issues concerning liability under Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause.” The decision also states, “...the defendant (MHSAA) has articulated a variety of harms that it, its member schools, and student-athletes may suffer if it must comply with the injunction by bringing its scheduling into compliance with the district court’s ruling...” The first round of the Circuit Court appeals process is expected to take approximately one year, delaying the implementation of any District Court ordered plan until at least the 2004-05 school year.

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 1.6 million spectators each year.

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