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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Four Years In A Row! **Athletic Participation Sets Records At MHSAA Schools Again**

EAST LANSING, Mich. – June 3 – Participation in high school sports took place in record numbers at Michigan High School Athletic Association member schools across the state for the fourth straight year in 2002-03.

There was a total of 294,012 participants in sports in which the Association sponsors post-season tournaments during the past school year, topping last year's mark of 287,795. Among the student-athletes, a record 124,393 girls participants took part, up from 119,195 last year and the 2000-01 record of 119,586; and boys participation also hit a new high of 169,619, up from the old record of 168,600 last year. The totals count students once for each sport in which he or she participates, meaning students who are multiple -sport athletes are counted more than once. The participation figures in MHSAA tournament sports for girls are up 19 percent since the 1994-95 school year. Boys are up nine percent over the same time period.

Volleyball continues to be the most popular sport for girls, with 21,678 participants in 2002-03, the 2000-01 record of 21,572. Girls sports hitting their all-time highs in participation last year were basketball, competitive cheer, golf, soccer, softball, and tennis.

The most popular boys sport continues to be football, with last year's 44,480 participants an all-time high for the third straight year. Other boys sports hitting new participation highs last year were ice hockey, soccer, and tennis.

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 the 2000-01 school year on may be viewed on the NFHS Web Site – www.nfhs.org. Nationwide results for 2002-03 will be available later this summer.

The following chart shows participation figures for the 2002-03 school year from MHSAA member schools in sports in which the Association sponsors a post-season tournament:

(more)

2-2-2 – 2002-03 Sports Participation Figures

SPORT	Boys		Girls	
	SCHOOLS (A)	PARTICIPANTS	SCHOOLS (A)	PARTICIPANTS
Baseball	637 / 648	19,479		4*
Basketball	728 / 728	23,922	709 / 714	20,831 / 6*
Competitive Spirit			165 / 161	4,165
Cross Country	579 / 620	7,465	556 / 602	6,615 / 15*
Football - 11 player	624 / 643	44,480		31*
Golf	571 / 570	8,323	317 / 313	3924 / 56*
Gymnastics			91 / 108	1,108
Ice Hockey	186 / 209	3,494		4*
Skiing-Alpine	93 / 102	1,045	90 / 101	789
Soccer	439 / 442	14,416	388 / 381	13,473 / 135*
Softball-Fast Pitch			612 / 638	17,180
Swimming & Diving	244 / 269	4,523	256 / 276	6,592 / 55*
Tennis	340 / 360	8,299	342 / 348	9,134 / 100*
Track & Field - Outdoor	636 / 671	22,549	622 / 662	18,345
Volleyball			698 / 708	21,678
Wrestling	469 / 480	11,624		/153*

(A) The second number indicates the total number of schools that sponsored the sport in MHSAA tournaments, including secondary schools in cooperative programs, as of May 15, 2003.

* Indicates the number of additional girls playing on teams consisting primarily of boys and entered in boys competition.

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,200 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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CORRECTION FROM LAST YEAR'S RELEASE – In last June's press release announcing athletic participation at MHSAA member schools, the numbers used were **total participation** figures, which were all records for total participation, but which included sports in which the MHSAA does not sponsor post-season tournaments. Here are the numbers used compared to the actual numbers from participation in **MHSAA tournament sports** and how they rank:

- Overall Participation – 301,544 was the number used; 287,795 was the actual – still a record at that time for MHSAA tournament sports
- Girls Participation – 127,178 was the number used; 119,195 was the actual – second all-time at that time for MHSAA tournament sports
- Boys Participation – 174,366 was the number used; 168,600 was the actual – still a record at that time for MHSAA tournament sports

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