



**media
information**



1661 ramblewood drive east lansing, mi 48823 517.332.5046 fax-517.332.4071 www.mhsaa.com

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Contact: John Johnson or Jack Roberts

517.332.5046 or www.mhsaa.com

MHSAA Launches “High School Sports: It’s About TEAM!” Program; Schools Sent Videotapes, Brochures To Promote Mission of H.S. Sports

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Aug. 11– To better define the mission of high school sports as educational support programs which help develop tomorrow’s community leaders – not the starting lineups for tomorrow’s collegiate or professional teams – the Michigan High School Athletic Association has released a new video and brochure with the theme, “High School Sports: It’s About TEAM!” which is being sent to member schools in time to use for preseason meetings for Fall sports teams and throughout the year.

The six-minute video, hosted by sportscaster Jim Brandstatter, promotes the proper perspective that should be brought to high schools sports, a perspective that educational athletic programs should strive to develop all the kids who want to participate to be their best in all respects – not just in athletics; and to provide meaningful playing opportunities for all participants -- not just an elite few.

Annually, the MHSAA produces a video resource for schools to utilize in meetings with student-athletes, coaches, parents and community members, and Executive Director John E. “Jack” Roberts says the It’s About TEAM! theme comes at a crucial time in the history of educational athletics.

“This is a message about what defines our games as unique from all other levels of sports,” Roberts said. “All of the different messages we have talked about for so long – above all that our games are educational – are summarized in this one presentation.

“The need to deliver this message in a repackaged format comes at a time when others – non-school entities – wish to define high school sports in a way that serves their own purposes. We need to combat the thinking that our games serve as the training ground for tomorrow’s collegiate and professional sports teams with a message that focuses on the fact that we’re an educational tool and that we’re here for all kids – not just the elite ones.”

The video is being mailed with a colorful brochure to reinforce the message. In addition, the Association will utilize the It’s About TEAM! slogan as its primary message for the upcoming school year, setting aside the long-standing use of sportsmanship themes built around the slogan, Good Sports Are Winners!

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2-2-2 – It's About TEAM! Program Launched

Schools are being provided artwork and ready-to-print articles for their regular season and MHSAA post-season tournament souvenir programs utilizing the It's About TEAM! slogan. Public address announcements scripts and public service announcements for radio and television are also in development. The It's About TEAM! logo will soon take a prominent place on the home page of the MHSAA Web site, and link to the variety of resources that are being produced to help deliver the message.

"It's important that we do everything we can to provide schools tools to help promote this message," Roberts added. "We want this message to not just be preached to the choir – our school people, but to the public as well. We plan as a staff, and are asking our members to be proactive in presenting this message in community forums of all types – not just at their school buildings. We must preserve high school sports as educational, as local, as a vital part of schools and communities, and as something which primarily exists to prepare young people for the next level of life – not necessarily the next level of sports."

Also included on the videotape are five other presentations: an updated message about the MHSAA and its role in educational athletics; an overview of MHSAA eligibility standards and their adoption and enforcement by member schools; the popular 1999 presentation, "What Kids Wish Their Parents Knew About Sportsmanship;" the 2000 presentation about officials, "STRIPES: Caretakers of the Games;" and the 2001 piece about multiple sport participation, "We Got Games!"

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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MEDIA ADVISORY – A copy of the It's About Team! brochure is enclosed in this mailing. Selected media members will be sent a copy of the videotape in a separate mailing. The video can be viewed through the MHSAA Web site at one of two addresses:

For Broadband Connections – <http://www.mhsaa.com/services/aboutteam-bb.wmv>

For Dial-Up Connections – <http://www.mhsaa.com/services/aboutteam-du.wmv>

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