



**media
information**



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 28, 2004

Contact: John Johnson or Andy Frushour

517.332.5046 or www.mhsaa.com

Volleyball Rally Scoring, Details Of 2005 Lacrosse Tournament Highlight Spring Representative Council Meeting

EAST LANSING, Mich. – May 28 – Determining a format for using rally scoring for its post-season tournaments and regular-season play, and finalizing the details of its first post-season tournament in girls and boys lacrosse beginning in 2004-05 highlighted the actions of the Representative Council of the Michigan High School Athletic Association at its annual Spring meeting, May 2-4, in Thompsonville.

The Spring meeting of the 19-member legislative body of the Association's nearly 1,500 member schools is usually the busiest of its three sessions each year. The Council considered 76 committee proposals and also dealt with a variety of eligibility rule and post-season tournament and operational issues.

Rally scoring in volleyball, where a point is awarded on every serve, has been in use by some MHSAA member schools in various forms for regular-season play for several years. Beginning in 2004-05, the use of rally scoring becomes mandatory for National Federation of State High School Associations members. The Representative Council voted to utilize a rally scoring format of 25-point games in a best of five match, with the fifth game going to 15 points, for MHSAA post-season tournament play and varsity dual competition during the regular season. Local schools and leagues will determine what format will be used for scoring games and matches for other than dual meets at the varsity level during the regular season and for all subvarsity play.

A three-tiered post-season tournament will debut in lacrosse in the spring of 2005, the first year the MHSAA will provide schools with services in that sport, raising the number of tournaments sponsored by the Association to 28, 14 for girls only and 14 open to both girls and boys.

There will be two divisions of post-season tournament play based on the enrollments of the participating schools. Two MHSAA Lacrosse Committees, one for girls and one for boys, will meet twice each during the school year – the first time in February to choose host sites for tournaments and place teams into Regions based on geography and program strength; the second time in May to set the pairings in each Region and select officials.

(more)

2-2-2 – Spring Representative Council Meeting Summary

A third tier of the tournament will take place each year from 2005 to 2007 if a minimum of eight schools which are establishing their lacrosse programs for the first time declare prior to the February meeting of the Lacrosse Committee their intention to compete in this developmental level of competition.

“In order to provide schools with equitable competition opportunities in lacrosse, the Council has approved committee recommendations which may appear contrary to past positions the MHSAA has taken in regard to the seeding of tournaments,” said John E. “Jack” Roberts, executive director of the MHSAA. “A key to attracting schools to sponsor interscholastic lacrosse teams, allow them to grow and retain them in our ranks was to develop a start-up program for that sport which promotes such growth.”

It is expected that the first post-season tournaments in 2005 will consist of approximately 32 teams in each boys division and 16 teams in each girls division. The inaugural MHSAA Lacrosse Finals will take place on June 11, 2005.

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

Extended travel limitations to summer competition – During the school year, no MHSAA member school may travel to competition sites outside of Michigan beyond its contiguous states and provinces over 300 miles one way, and they may not participate at venues where teams from non-contiguous states have traveled more than 300 miles one way to the event. Except at camps conducted in Michigan, this travel limitation will also apply during the summer period when more than three students in grades 7-12 of the school district in basketball or volleyball, or more than seven in football, lacrosse or soccer are being coached by a school coach in that sport on any of the 15 days of competition allowed (7 in football).

Quoting MHSAA Executive Director John E. “Jack” Roberts – “It is not appropriate for teams which resemble school teams with their school coach to do in the summer what they cannot do in the interscholastic season. Reasonable perspective and a level playing field are lost for the school season if high school coaches are coaching what looks like their high school team in national-scope events during the summer.”

Approved a limited policy to allow eighth graders to compete in exclusively seventh grade events – The Council approved a policy which allows eighth graders who have not reached the maximum age for competition limited to seventh graders to play in events otherwise limited to seventh graders.

Quoting MHSAA Assistant Director Randy Allen – “At younger levels, grouping students by age may be healthier than group students by grade in school; and since the underlying philosophy of junior high/middle school sports is to maximize participation, this change makes good sense and will allow a limited number of kids an opportunity for more equitable competition.”

Extended the requirement of team forfeiture of contests to all sports – individual as well as teams; and to all regulations – rules of competition as well as rules of eligibility – When a student exceeded the limits of competition in individual sports, they have been required to forfeit only points or victories won by the ineligible; while in team sports, the use of the ineligible resulted in the event being forfeited to the opponent. The Council’s action will make the use of an ineligible for any reason be a forfeit of the team’s results in individual as well as team competition.

(more)

3-3-3 – Spring Representative Council Meeting Summary

Quoting MHSAA Associate Director Tom Rashid – “In reality, the Council action reaffirms what many schools have been doing for a long time – forfeiting total competitions whenever a student participates who was ineligible for any reason, including exceeding the limits of competition in an individual sport.”

Added language to the regulation covering regular-season competitions which are suspended due to weather and other emergencies – In those instances when a regular-season multi-team event is suspended, it shall be counted as a contest or day of competition for any school which has had one or more eligible student-athletes participate, regardless of scoring opportunities or results.

Quoting Jack Roberts – “This addition to the regulation takes the guesswork out of determining whether or not a suspended event counts as a day of competition for a school. When any member of a team is engaged in a competition, it is a day of competition for the entire team.”

Authorized a survey of all member and non-member junior high/middle schools -- Acting on a recommendation of the Junior High/Middle School Committee, the Council approved a survey which would determine why some junior high/middle schools choose not to be MHSAA members; the number of games and length of seasons for non-member schools; and other demographic information.

Quoting Randy Allen – “The Junior High/Middle School Committee wants to determine why schools choose to be or not be MHSAA members, and to study further how those non-member schools conduct things differently from member schools.”

Adopted a set of standards for Officials Assignors -- The Officials Review Committee recommended a set of standards, which were approved by the Council for individuals who assign officials for leagues and conferences, approved officials associations or a group of schools, leagues and conferences within a geographic area.

- Assignors shall be paid by either leagues and conferences, or members of an approved association, who elect or hire an individual to assign for them. Turnback fees, paid to an assignor by an individual official, are permitted. Assignors shall not collect fees for their services from both a school, league or conference, and a individual official.

- Assignors shall not require an official to be a member of a specific approved officials association in order to be assigned contests under the control of that assignor.

- Assignors shall not require an official to pay a fee to participate in a camp, clinic or training activity in order to be evaluated and considered for assignments under the control of any assignor.

Involvement in free events, for the same reason, are permitted.

Quoting MHSAA Assistant Director Mark Uyl – “Schools are increasingly turning over their authority for contracting officials for games to local assignors. This change has not come about without the need for standards and guidance from the MHSAA. The Council’s approval of the Officials Review Committee’s recommendations will help provide some consistency to the process, better service to schools and protection for individual officials who have felt pressured by assignors.”

In bowling, modifications were made to uniforms and Regional singles qualifying games; and a rules meetings series was established – The Bowling Committee recommendations of restricting the wearing of blue jeans during competition and increasing the number of games an individual bowls at the Regional round of the MHSAA post-season tournament to potentially qualify for the Finals for four to six were approved by the Council. In addition, effective with the 2004-05 school year, a series of annual rules meetings for bowling coaches will take place.

(more)

4-4-4 – Spring Representative Council Meeting Summary

Quoting Randy Allen – “The Bowling Committee was quite happy with the first year of the MHSAA post-season tournament. Adjusting the uniform rules to restrict the wearing of blue jeans in competition was a minor change which was necessary; and the Committee felt that bowling six games at the Regional level of competition for individuals to qualify to the Finals was a better indicator of the skill levels of the bowlers, without adding too much time to the length of a Regional meet.”

In girls competitive cheer, the Council encouraged the continued development and discussion of policies and procedures schools have requested relative to cheerleading – The Council stated that such proposals should assure that MHSAA Competitive Cheer is administered according to policies that parallel other interscholastic sports, both in and out of season and that assist schools in promoting sideline cheerleading squads that focus on spirit and sportsmanship at games and engage in limited, if any, actual competition. Development and discussion will take place within the membership during the upcoming months, with the Council to take action on specific policies and procedures at its December meeting.

Quoting Jack Roberts – “Girls Competitive Cheer was added a decade ago to provide schools with tools they asked for to treat the student-athletes in this sport like all other sports. We have schools, some with and others without competitive cheer teams, still allowing their sideline – or game -- cheerleading squads to engage in competitions at times and in ways in which teams in competitive cheer and other sports are not allowed. This discussion, followed by action later this year, will help fine tune what is happening in the cheer community related to actual competition and the traditional support role.”

In golf, the Committee recommendation to allow coaching during Regional play was adopted, and a proposal to revise the format of the Boys Tournament was defeated – The Council voted to allow the coaching of players between the green and the next tee box during the Regional round of competition, provided a school provides a qualified observer to replace the coach in other duties. This practice was put in place for the Finals two years ago. A proposal which would have addressed the number of participants at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Boys Golf Finals and improved the pace of play by adding a District round of competition and qualifying fewer teams and individuals to the Finals was discussed at length before being voted down.

Quoting Randy Allen – “The coaching of individual players as they move from the green to the next tee box has worked well at the Finals tournament, and the Golf Committee felt such a move would be good to implement at the Regional level as well. A little coaching during that brief walk can be of great benefit to a competitor. Everyone acknowledges that the size of the field at the Lower Peninsula Finals for boys has become difficult to work with and has resulted in an increased length of play, but the Council felt the initial proposal needed additional work to address this issue without creating other problems.”

In ice hockey, the Council approved a plan to add geographically determined brackets within each Regional beginning with the 2005-06 tournament – This will place schools into pre-determined brackets to minimize travel.

Quoting Randy Allen – We have Regionals to the West and North in which it causes great travel to have a single, pre-determined site with a completely blind draw. Breaking these Regions down into subsets of geographically close schools makes sense for the earliest rounds of play, having these pre-Regional feed a pre-determined Regional Final site.”

(more)

5-5-5 – Spring Representative Council Meeting Summary

In skiing, the Committee recommendation of applying the limited team membership rule to individual skiers from the point of the team’s first participation in a contest or scrimmage, was passed

– This is a change from other sports, in which the limited team membership rule applies for an individual based on that individual’s first participation in a contest or scrimmage with the team. An individual is allowed to participate in two events or contests while not representing their school during the season for that sport. Participation in excess of two non-school events results in the individual becoming ineligible for a minimum of three days of competition.

Quoting MHSAA Assistant Director Gina Mazzolini – “This is the second step the Ski Committee and the Representative Council have taken in two years to promote the concept of true high school ski teams. A year ago, the Council set a minimum of four meets in which an individual must participate in order to be eligible to enter the MHSAA post-season tournament in skiing. This latest action will help prevent individuals from joining their high school ski team at the latest possible time. It promotes the concept that a high school team is one where all individuals are part of the team all season long – not one where a so-called ‘star’ athlete drops in for a tournament, displacing someone who had otherwise been with the team from the beginning of the season.”

In soccer, the Council approved Soccer Committee recommendations to require two full days of rest between the Regional Semifinal and Regional Final if those Semifinal games are played on separate days; and the Council extended the application of the point-differential rule to the Final game of each tournament level

– The point-differential rule applies whenever a team takes a 10-goal lead at any point beyond the 10-minute mark of the second half of a contest. Previously, the rule did not apply to the Final game at the District, Regional or Final round of the tournament.

Quoting MHSAA Assistant to the Director Tom Minter – “Getting at least two days of rest for each team was a matter of fairness at the Regional tournament when both Semifinal games at that level could not be contested on the same day. The point-differential rule applies to the Final game in all other sports in which it exists, and this vote of the Council brings soccer in line with other sports.”

In wrestling, a series of items were passed related to weight issues – The changes included: eliminating the 50 percent rule that required athletes to have wrestled at least half of their matches in a certain weight class during the regular-season in order to wrestle at that weight in the MHSAA Individual Tournament series; allowing wrestlers to compete at their lowest approved minimum weight during an appeal to a lower weight; establishing a procedure for a home weigh-in when a day of school attendance does not precede a schedule meet; and adopting the online weight certification program of the National Wrestling Coaches Association. Many of these changes were made to streamline existing procedures, and the weight certification program will move from an in-house, paper-driven system, to an online program through the National Wrestling Coaches Association.

Quoting Mark Uyl – “These changes will be more easily understood by the membership, and going to an online program for our already successful Michigan Weight Monitoring Program will take some of the labor out of the process for our schools and staff.”

There were also a number of other sports-related votes taken by the Council. In baseball and softball, District managers will be allowed to conduct their tournament draws three weeks in advance of the tournament. In basketball, the Committee recommendation to allow leagues and conferences to modify the

(more)

6-6-6 – Spring Representative Council Meeting Summary

current point-differential rule for junior high/middle school play was adopted. In gymnastics, Finals hosts will be required to provide a spring floor for the floor exercise effective in 2004-05. Tennis had several changes: increasing the number of allowable seeds for the MHSAA Finals to six; decreasing the number of points to 10 for a team to become an additional qualifier from the Regional to the Finals in a draw of eight schools; and stipulating that two schools cannot draw each other more than twice in their first match competition in all flights at the Regional or Final level of play.

The Council also reviewed reports on membership, with an increase to a modern high of 765 senior high schools; eligibility advancement applications, which decreased to 16 for the past school year, compared to 24 the previous year; the use of Educational Transfer Forms, which was relatively stable this year; school violations, which were down again in the past year; attendance at athletic director and coaches in-service workshops, which were up by more than double the previous year's totals; another increase in registered officials during the 2003-04 school year; rules meeting attendance; officials reports submitted for the past three sports seasons; and a review of risk minimization issues in various sports. The Association's \$8.1 million budget for the 2004-05 school year was also approved.

The Representative Council is the 19-member legislative body of the MHSAA. All but five 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.

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,500 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.

-0-

RL04-081

Farm Bureau Insurance and MEEMIC Insurance are year-round MHSAA Corporate Partners