



media information



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 27, 2004

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Tournament Contingency Calendar Announced; Membership Review & Survey To Lead To December Council Vote

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Sept. 27 – While the status of sports season litigation is still on appeal, the Michigan High School Athletic Association has developed a draft proposal for the rescheduling of several of its post-season tournaments which will be circulated and discussed by member schools during the next two months.

The proposed calendar was approved by the MHSAA Executive Committee at its Sept. 15 meeting, and mailed to member schools last week. The Association will utilize a variety of meetings and other forums to gain feedback on the proposals. A survey may be sent to schools in November for a formal response, and the process would be finalized by a vote of the Representative Council at its next meeting on Dec. 3.

“The proposals demonstrate how MHSAA tournament dates could change in the event that the order of the U.S. District Court in this case is unchanged by further judicial review,” said John E. “Jack” Roberts, executive director of the MHSAA. “This will help schools know the general details for MHSAA tournaments if they must be changed at the end of the current litigation, so they might be more specific in their contingency planning for their regular seasons.”

Roberts added that while decisions regarding the scheduling of regular season competitions and practices are under the exclusive jurisdiction of local schools, often in coordination with their leagues, such matters will be discussed at a series of MHSAA sponsored Athletic Director In-Service meetings around the state in October.

Under the court-ordered rescheduling, the girls basketball and volleyball seasons would switch, with basketball moving to the winter and volleyball to the fall. The golf and tennis seasons in the Lower Peninsula would switch, with boys golf and girls tennis moving from fall to spring; and girls golf and boys tennis moving from spring to fall. In the Upper Peninsula, MHSAA soccer tournaments must be offered in the fall for girls, and in the spring for boys.

Here is a sport by sport summary of the proposed tournament contingency calendars:

(more)

2-2-2 – Proposed Contingency Calendars Announced

- **Girls Volleyball** – The MHSAA Finals would be conducted on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, with the Regionals and District tournaments on the preceding weekends. At this time, no Finals site is confirmed. For those schools wishing to enter the MHSAA tournament, the start of practices would coincide with other Fall team sports, which is Monday the week of August 15, and first competition date would be 11 calendar days after the first practice.

- **Girls Basketball** – The MHSAA Finals would conclude on the weekend prior to the Boys Basketball Finals, and District and Regional competition for girls would precede boys by one week. The Finals could be conducted at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing, the site of the Girls and Boys Basketball Semifinals and Finals during the 2004-05 school year, pending approval by Michigan State University. For schools wishing to enter the MHSAA tournament, the starting date for girls practice and competition would each precede the boys date by one week. The tournaments for girls and boys would be structured so that games for both genders would not occur on the same day during those two weeks in which they overlap.

- **Lower Peninsula Golf** – Because of school sponsorship, 25 percent fewer Regional and one less Finals site would be needed for girls play in the fall; but 33 percent more Regional sites and one additional Finals site would be needed for boys play in the spring. For schools wishing to enter the MHSAA tournament, girls golf would assume the first practice and competition policies previously applicable to boys, and vice-versa. The girls tournament would assume the same dates in the fall currently used for the boys. However, to accommodate regular season practices and competitions for nearly twice as many boys teams in the spring on fewer available golf courses, the boys tournament would be delayed compared to the current spring schedule. Regionals would be two weeks later than currently contested, and the Finals will be one week later. The Finals may be moved to a weekday schedule since most schools would have completed their academic year. This schedule would accommodate a District level of play if the boys tournament is modified to reduce the size of the Finals qualifying field.

- **Lower Peninsula Tennis** – The boys and girls tournament, as well as first practice and competition dates, would switch and most Finals sites would continue to be utilized.

- **Upper Peninsula Soccer** – The MHSAA would offer separate Upper Peninsula soccer tournaments, for girls in the fall and boys in the spring, with each concluding one week prior to the Lower Peninsula tournament in that season.

(more)

3-3-3 – Proposed Contingency Calendars Announced

Additional information, such as sample calendars showing the proposed dates for the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years; and a chart showing how the proposed calendar compares to other states, can be found on the MHSAA Web site.

The MHSAA is still waiting to hear from the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals regarding its request for an *en banc* reconsideration – a hearing by all 13 judges -- of a July 27 decision by three judges from that court which upheld the District Court decision in this case. Roberts said a decision could come from the Sixth Circuit at any time, and that regardless of the final outcome at the Sixth Circuit, an appeal of that decision to the U.S. Supreme Court was likely.

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.

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