



media information



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MHSAA Provides Member Schools Annual Hot-Weather Practice Information

EAST LANSING, Mich. – July 26 – The heat and humidity of July signals the approach of another high school sports season, and the Michigan High School Athletic Association continues its role in providing its member schools educational materials to assist them in minimizing the possibility of heat-related catastrophic injuries to student-athletes.

The topic of heat-related injuries receives a lot of attention at this time of year, especially when deaths at the professional, collegiate and interscholastic levels of sport occur. In football, data from the National Federation of State High School Associations shows three cases of heat stroke death at the high school level in 2004. In the past 10 years, 24 young football players have died from heat stroke (19 high school, 3 college, and 2 professional).

Each Spring, the MHSAA has provided information to its member schools to help them prepare for hot weather practice and game conditions in the late Summer and early Fall. Football practice begins at MHSAA member schools on August 8, followed by boys golf on August 11 and all other Fall sports on August 15.

"Heat Stress & Athletic Participation" is information from the National Federation of State High School Associations which the MHSAA annually distributes to schools for use by all Fall sports teams. The information points out that student-athletes are subject to a variety of maladies from heat cramps to heat strokes at this time of year. Preventative steps are outlined, as well as a table describing the combination of relative humidity and air temperature impact on athletic activities. A copy of the information is available on the MHSAA Web site – <http://www.mhsaa.com/resources/conditioning.pdf>

“There is no excuse for any number of heat stroke deaths since they are all preventable with the proper precautions,” said John R. Johnson, communications director for the MHSAA. “The hydration of

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athletes is essential. It is an absolute necessity that water be available in unlimited quantities at all times during practices. At the same time, coaching staffs need to be tuned into their student-athletes and be sure they are partaking of water. If schools and their student-athletes follow these guidelines, then we minimize the risk for heat-related problems."

Johnson added that as student-athletes work out on their own individually or with a group of teammates in informal settings during the summer, they also need to be aware of their hydration.

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,600 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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NOTE TO SPORTS EDITORS/DIRECTORS: Some media outlets may wish to treat this topic as a hard news or health story. Please forward a copy of this release to your news or assignment desk if you feel that is how your outlet will cover this story. The MHSAA is pleased to provide supporting artwork at this link on the Media page of its Web site: <http://www.mhsaa.com/media/water.html> We thank you for your efforts to help promote the safety and well being of student-athletes.

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