



# media information



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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:** John Johnson or Andy Frushour

517.332.5046 or www.mhsaa.com

## **Winter Sports Season Underway**

**EAST LANSING, Mich. – Dec. 13** – Over 80,000 student-athletes are now engaged in 11 different winter sports at member schools of the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

This biggest change in winter sports a year ago was the debut of bowling for girls and boys, with that tournament involving nearly 200 schools and 3,300 student-athletes – the second largest high school bowling program in the nation. Growth is expected to continue in that sport, which will return to Sunnybrook Lanes in Sterling Heights for its Finals, March 4-5.

Another sport experiencing growth for the new winter season is Girls Competitive Cheer. Approximately 40 new programs will begin in 2004-05. The Competitive Cheer tournament ranks second only to basketball in Final-day attendance in girls sports. Last year, a record 5,272 fans were in attendance at the Finals at the DeltaPlex in Grand Rapids, where this year's event will take place on March 12.

The biggest visible change in any sport this winter takes place in girls volleyball, where rally scoring will be utilized across the board. For the MHSAA post-season tournament and varsity dual play, matches will become the best of five, with the first four games being played to 25 points (no cap), and 15 points (no cap) deciding the fifth game when necessary. Let serves will also become playable serves effective this year.

In wrestling, deductions for disqualification have been increased from one to two team points. In ice hockey, any player who incurs any combination of five penalties in a game shall be assessed a game misconduct penalty.

Previously announced changes in basketball include: The kicking rule now applies to any part of the defender's leg if it is ruled that it was used to intentionally affect the flight of the ball. Purposefully obstructing an opponent's vision has now been extended to all players on the court, not just a player without the ball. The third change involves penalties for players who leave the bench during a conflict on the court. Previously, a conflict was labeled as a fight only if there were punches involved, but now the rule will include any situation in which a fight may occur. Therefore, any person who leaves the bench for a fight or potential fight will be subject to ejection from the game.

(more)

## 2-2-2 – Winter Season Underway

The tournament calendar will see the Girls Volleyball and Boys Basketball tournaments taking place a week earlier this year. The Girls Volleyball Finals will take place March 10-11-12, and the Boys Basketball Finals will be March 17-18-19.

The 2004-05 winter campaign culminates with championships beginning with the Upper Peninsula Swimming and Diving Finals and Individual Wrestling Finals in mid-February.

Here is a complete list of winter championship dates:

### **Boys Basketball:**

Districts – Feb. 28-March 5  
Regionals – March 8-12  
Quarterfinals – March 15  
Semifinals – March 17-18  
Finals – March 19

### **Bowling:**

Regionals – Feb. 25-26  
Finals – March 4-5

### **Girls Competitive Cheer:**

Regionals – March 5  
Finals – March 12

### **Girls Gymnastics:**

Regionals – March 5  
Finals – March 11-12

### **Ice Hockey:**

Regionals – Feb. 28-March 5  
Quarterfinals – March 8-9  
Semifinals – March 10-11  
Finals – March 12

### **Skiing:**

Regionals – Feb. 17 or 18  
Finals – Feb. 28

### **U.P. Swimming:**

Finals – Feb. 19

### **L.P. Boys Swimming & Diving**

Diving Quals – March 8  
Finals – March 11-12

### **Girls Volleyball:**

Districts – Feb. 25 or 26  
Regionals – March 4 or 5  
Quarterfinals – March 8  
Semifinals – March 10-11  
Finals – March 12

### **Individual Wrestling:**

U.P. Finals – Feb. 18-19  
L.P. Districts – Feb. 19  
L.P. Regionals – Feb. 26  
L.P. Finals – March 10-12

### **Team Wrestling:**

Districts – Feb. 16 or 17  
Regionals – Feb. 23  
Finals – March 4-5

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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