



michigan high school athletic association

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High School Sports Participation in Michigan Ranks Sixth in 2007-08

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Sept. 17 – Michigan slipped to sixth place nationally in participation in high school sports during the 2007-08 school year in figures released recently by the National Federation of State High School Associations, but those numbers continue to rank higher than census figures would predict.

After four straight years of ranking fourth in girls participation, Michigan dropped to sixth nationally last year, in spite of posting near record numbers. Overall participation for the year was 315,734, with 131,895 girls and 183,839 boys taking part. All three numbers ranked sixth nationally. In the 2006-07 participation numbers, Michigan was fifth overall. According to 2007 U.S. Census Bureau figures, Michigan continues to rank eighth in both females and males of ages 14 through 17.

Three boys sports – bowling, ice hockey and skiing – rank third nationally, with bowling falling from second a year ago. Tennis, in spite of a double-digit percentage drop in participation after moving to the fall, maintained a fourth-place ranking. Boys basketball, football, track and field, and wrestling are all in fifth place, although basketball dipped a notch for the second straight year. Dropping one spot to sixth place were cross country and golf; baseball jumped up one spot and lacrosse slipped a place to both end up in seventh; soccer held its ground, and boys swimming and diving dropped four places to both be in eighth.

Skiing was the highest-ranked girls sport in third, but was down one place from a year ago. Girls volleyball, bowling and tennis all dropped from third to fourth. Girls basketball slipped a spot for the second straight year to fifth, where it joined cross country and golf, the latter also one spot lower. In sixth place were soccer and track and field, which held their spots; along with competitive cheer and swimming and diving, the former dropping two places, the latter dropping one. Softball remained in seventh, lacrosse fell two places to ninth, and gymnastics was down one slot in 12th.

National participation in high school sports in 2007-08 was up to 7,429,381, again setting a new record. Nationally, 54.8 percent of high school students participation in sports, in Michigan, that figure is 59.1 percent, a figure down 1.3 percent from a year ago.

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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