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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Concussion Palm Cards Donated To MHSAA Schools By Brain Injury Association Of Michigan

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Sept. 8 – The Brain Injury Association of Michigan has made a donation to Michigan High School Athletic Association member high school and junior/middle school that will help coaches and trainers identify athletes who are suspected of sustaining a concussion during practice or competition.

During the past month, 20,000 sports concussion cards were distributed to MHSAA member schools. The cards provide sideline evaluation guidelines, as well as recommendations of when to allow the athlete to return to play when a concussion is suspected or has occurred.

“The Brain Injury Association of Michigan is committed to reducing the number of concussions, also known as a mild brain injury,” said Joseph Richert, chairman of the Brain Injury Association. “We are pleased with MHSAA’s recognition of the seriousness of concussion injuries and its desire to educate coaches.”

“The MHSAA has become increasingly concerned with the numbers of athletes at all levels of competition that sustain a concussion,” said MHSAA communications director John Johnson. “Earlier this year, we made a commitment to increase the knowledge of our member schools’ coaches and staff about how they can recognize this type of injury and its seriousness.”

An estimated 300,000 cases of traumatic brain injury occur each year in sports and recreational settings. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, some 500 deaths annually result from sports-related head trauma; most of these occur among 15 – 24 year olds. Dr. Edward Wojtys, team physician for the University of Michigan Athletic Department commented “Most concussions are minor, causing short-lived symptoms that clear up pretty quickly. The real danger with some minor concussions is that they can make the brain and nervous system susceptible to another blow – if it comes along, that can cause the nervous system to deteriorate rapidly.”

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2-2-2 – Concussion Palm Cards Donated To MHSAA

Wojtys stressed the need for parents, coaches and trainers to know the basic signs of concussion. He said the use of a simple sideline evaluation that tests an injured athlete's memory, which is a good indicator because memory is particularly sensitive to alterations in brain function. If a player cannot pass the evaluation, he/she should be sidelined.

Richert added, "use of these sports concussion cards will give all high school and junior middle school coaches and trainers in Michigan a tool to make such a sideline evaluation"

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,300 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 conducted in 12 sports for girls and 12 sports for boys which attract approximately 1.3 million spectators each year.

The Brain Injury Association of Michigan is headquartered in Brighton. It was formed by family members in 1980 and incorporated in 1981 as a not-for-profit organization. It's mission is to enhance the lives of those affected by brain injury through education, advocacy, research, and local support groups; and to reduce the incidence of brain injury through prevention.

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NOTE – For more information about the Brain Injury Association of Michigan, contact Michael Dabbs at 810/229-5880. Parties wishing to order palm cards can call 800/321-7037.

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