

Spring 2010 Vol. 1 No. 3

benchmarks

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FALL

School athletic funding continues to drop at an alarming rate

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Cover Story: Can We Pump Life Into Sports Funding?



4 Athletic administrators across the state are faced with an unprecedented funding free fall, yielding budget challenges that seem as rigged as carnival games. What can be done to begin pumping life – and dollars – into our games?

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The Vault – 16

It's Never Over . . .
In 1999, five of the MHSAA Baseball/Softball Finals were decided in the winning team's last at bat.



MHSAA News – 22

.TV Pilot Takes Flight
The MHSAA.tv pilot program has been a success, offering schools unprecedented video exposure, and even a vehicle for generating revenue.



Regulations Review – 34

Exceptions and Changes
MHSAA Rules and Regulations are established with the well-being of school sports at the forefront. With that in mind, there are occasional exceptions.



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Time to Recover from Fumbled Finances



Oh, how we long for the days when our biggest financial worry for school sports was the high cost of fuel. Today, most of us would gladly trade \$4 per gallon gas prices for the financial problems now before us, and surrounding us.

Perhaps we should have figured that high fuel costs would undermine the gas guzzling automobile industry that fueled Michigan's economy for 80 years and created a comfortable middle class majority which was fooled into believing it would never end.

Perhaps we should have worried much sooner that an economy built on a single industry is precarious for all the private businesses and public services that depend on it.

Perhaps we should have anticipated that union-won legacy benefits that were proving unsustainable for workers in private business could not possibly be maintained for employees in the public sector, including schools.

Perhaps we could not have known that the global housing, investment, banking and insurance meltdowns would deepen and lengthen what might otherwise have been merely another cyclical downturn in Michigan's economy; but "Mistakes, we've made a few," to paraphrase Sinatra. Unlike the song, however, ours are not too few to mention. For example:

Proposal A was a mistake. Whatever good it has done in some respects is overcome by the damage it is doing in others.

Term limits was a mistake. Somewhere between the present lifetime *ban* to a legislative seat after a specific number of terms and the lifetime "right" to a seat that some previous legislators took for granted is the 'sweet spot' in this debate.

And it is a mistake to do nothing now to reverse those errors.

It's time for a "do-over," a mulligan.

In football, if there are infractions by both teams during a play, the down is replayed. Well, there have been mistakes by everyone involved in managing Michigan's economy and state budget. Let's wipe the slate clean and do it all over.

As for the role and responsibility of school sports leadership, that's the focus of the cover story of this issue of *benchmarks* (see pages 4-12).

And for additional reading, see:

- *Benchmarks* Fall 2009 (Vol. 1, No. 1) pages 8 and 9.
- *Benchmarks* Winter 2009 (Vol. 1, No. 2) pages 8-10.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John E Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

John E. "Jack" Roberts
MHSAA Executive Director

Where Did It Go?

Mainstays from the MHSAA *Bulletin* such as Representative Council and Executive Committee minutes are still accessible to our member schools and the general public at MHSAA.com from Schools/ Administrators. Sport-specific minutes, tournament information and brackets can all be found under the sport pages at MHSAA.com. Other MHSAA operational matters previously featured in the *Bulletin* will appear toward the back of each *benchmarks* issue in our "business" section.

A Better Time for MHSAA Down Time?

We are certain over the last year or more there has been a lot of conversation regarding the "Down Time" regulation of the MHSAA. I am a fan of down time and giving kids time off.

We would like you to consider an idea/concept that has been a topic of conversation for some time now. We would suggest that we keep the limitation simple and easy to understand. We would also suggest that it is consistent for each sport and each sports season.

We believe that the time before a season is not the best time to enforce down time, as that is the time a student-athlete is preparing to challenge for a position on a team. It is a time for coaches to create opportunities for kids to try out on a level playing field. We believe that open gyms can allow a student-athlete to hone his/her skills, increase their fitness levels and prepare sharp minds for competition, which includes the challenge of securing a roster spot.

To this end, we suggest that two weeks prior to a season (the earliest starting date to a season) until a predetermined date during that season be designated as down time for the other two seasons and all sports which take place during those other two seasons. We suggest in the fall that Sept. 15 be identified as the last date of down time. During the winter the date could be Jan. 1, and in the spring April 15.

One of the values of down time in our schools is to eliminate distractions that could keep students from participating in a school sport in the upcoming season. It helps us battle against specialization. We also believe it would be an additional method to protect coaches from themselves. They need down time too.

– Athletic Directors
Wolverine "B" Conference

"(Down time) helps us battle against specialization. We also believe it would be an additional method to protect coaches from themselves. They need down time too."

Blog Banter

The following are comments responding to various "From the Director" blogs on MHSAA.com. We invite you to check out the blog from our home page each Tuesday and Friday.

"Bowl Eligible"

Schools are having a legitimately difficult time finding enough opponents to fill out a (football) schedule. Why? Because everybody's paranoid about finding six wins. The same thing would happen if only 42 percent of schools qualified in basketball. But that's not what happens; 100 percent do. And if 100 percent of football schools qualified, the scheduling problems would also dissipate.

Should a school be able to fill out a schedule with similarly-sized schools and not subject itself to unreasonable travel? I say yes, and I think most people agree, except (perhaps) outside of a few metro areas where the locals have no real concept of what travel is like in the rural parts of the state.

.....

More Than a New Year

I think your assessment of the future road of Michigan and U.S. high school sports is right on the money. At least for most of the past 80-90 years, the North

American system of school-based youth athletics has had great merit in balancing athletic pursuit with academic formation. Other countries' models are geared squarely for athletic glory, while the MHSAA model helps keep the balance of pursuing excellence and providing an "open door" for boys and girls.

My son, who currently attends a Christian middle school, likely may not take part in an MHSAA-sponsored activity. But, should we choose to send him to an MHSAA-member school (and many of our school's athletic policies, such as the medical form, are MHSAA-compliant), we know what the expectations are, how he needs to continue his academic pursuits, and to practice the "Good Sports Are Winners!" philosophy.

Keep the good fight.

.....

Sports In Perspective

I wish more coaches, athletic directors, high school principals, and superintendents subscribed this philosophy. I believe extracurricular athletics at the developmental levels should be concerned with developing skills and character, not with winning records. I also believe the athletic setting should be considered an extension of the classroom, and behaviors of the athletes and coaches should always be appropriate and consistent with what is expected in a classroom.

Shots on Goal offers readers a forum for feedback. Submit your opinions, share your experiences or offer suggestions to benchmarks@mhsaa.com. Be sure to visit MHSAA.com for MHSAA Executive Director Jack Roberts' twice-weekly blogs. Comments are encouraged, and may also appear here in **Shots on Goal**.

Picture yourself at the county fair.

As you enter, you buy cotton candy. You tear off more than a mouthful, but stuff it in your mouth anyway. And in a matter of seconds, it disappears. The taste explodes on your tongue, but then you find there's almost nothing to swallow.

You continue down the arcade. You take a turn throwing a soft, misshapen ball at a row of rag dolls placed so closely together it seems impossible you couldn't knock one over. But you find that your first two tosses pass harmlessly between the dolls because their cores were very skinny; it was just frills that made them appear so close together. And even when your third toss hits that solid core, there's not enough weight behind the ball to knock the doll off its perch.

**COVER STORY
RELATED CONTENT**

[Expense-Reducing Ideas - Page 8](#)

[Unfunded Mandates - Page 9](#)

[Our Views - Page 12](#)

["Save Our Schools" - Page 13](#)



Welcome to the

cover story

GRAND ILLU\$ION

As athletic funding continues its unprecedented free fall, administrators face budgetary gymnastics akin to carnival games.

Your wallet lightened by the disappearing confection and the rigged game, you continue down the arcade. You pass by the “Hall of Mirrors” where images are distorted. You’re fat here, skinny there; tall here, short there.

Next door there’s a man hiding a pea under one of three small cups. He deftly moves the cups around and around, and he challenges a crowd of onlookers to put down a dollar for the chance of winning two if they can correctly say under which cup the pea will be found.

Now picture you are the superintendent, business manager or board of education member of a local school district in Michigan. Does it feel any different managing your district’s budget than walking down the carnival arcade? Funds that are here today are gone tomorrow because the state adopted its budget months after you are mandated to approve your budget.

Funding for K-12 education in Michigan has become a carnival: a place for illusions and tricked-up games. Money is hidden and moved around by sleight of hand. One day things look this way; next day they look quite different. And usually, things look much worse.

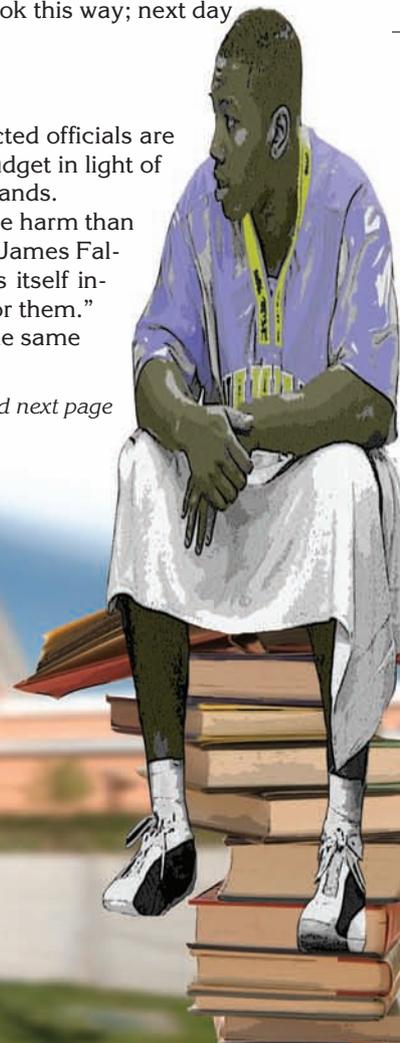
Citizens Respond

As increasing numbers of concerned Michigan citizens conclude that our elected officials are incapable of restoring the state’s economy, or at least restructuring the state’s budget in light of our long-suffering economy, groups are forming to take matters into their own hands.

Ballot initiatives are likely to proliferate, and the worry is that they will do more harm than good, as California’s example would suggest. “Through ballot measures,” writes James Fal-lows in Atlantic magazine’s Jan./Feb. 2010 issue, “California’s electorate votes itself in-creasing benefits; through other ballot measures, the public limits taxes to pay for them.”

Calls for a constitutional convention are likely to increase as well, and carry the same potential for unpredictable, even counterproductive, results.

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More positive are the initiatives of SOS! (Save Our Students, Schools and State) whose agenda is to prepare and promote to passage a new school funding system as well as assist school districts to make their internal operations as efficient and effective as possible (see page 13).

The Michigan Society of Association Executives – whose membership is reflective of most every aspect of business, educational, social and health interest in the state – is discussing a mechanism by which MSAE can provide the expertise of its members in helping to solve public policy issues of Michigan. Its focus would be more toward how our state addresses problems than on advancing particular points of view on issues. However, there appears to be consensus that some of the “how” is in revising term limits and reinstating a legislature that has more experience and is more willing to focus on the common good than divisive ideology.

MSAE would assist government leaders by providing the expertise of its member associations on some issues and conducting leadership training events to assist the state’s leaders in working together when addressing any and all problems. MSAE would help to nurture the better informed and functioning government necessary to effectively address the increasingly complex problems of our times.

On the particular issues of the economy and taxation, expertise already exists. For example, Michigan Future, Inc. (MichiganFuture.org) has already done the research and made the general recommendations that, if followed, would rescue Michigan from its free fall from the top ten to the bottom ten of US states by most economic and social measures.

On Feb. 8, Saginaw Valley State University hosted what was billed as “A Great Lakes Bay Regional Sum-

DEFLATING TIMES

A 2009-10 school year survey of 75 school districts in Michigan – located from the state’s southern border to the Upper Peninsula, but including just one urban area (Lansing) – found that the average subsidy from the district’s general fund for interscholastic athletics is 1.7% and the average per pupil subsidy is \$153.

tion of a “white paper” is the next step. Necessary, of course; but very late in coming to address the crisis those stakeholders already find themselves in.

Schools Respond

Unable to wait for permanent solutions, however, school districts are making new reductions in programs, services and staff that they know are bad for students but which have become unavoidable as the State of Michigan has drastically reduced support and makes predictions of even deeper reductions for 2011. No easy, painless cuts remain.

District leaders are cutting transportation services, sometimes entirely, and more frequently for the extracurricular program. Increasingly, districts are lowering their expenses but elevating their exposure to liability for injuries by requiring team members to find their own way to and/or from events. A fatal crash involving high school volleyball players at a mid-Michigan school last year makes this point in tragic terms.

District leaders are reducing subvarsity schedules – the number of contests and/or the distances traveled – even though they know there is every bit as much opportunity for learning at those levels as the varsity level, and perhaps much more.

District leaders are talking about getting out of junior high/middle school athletics altogether, even though they know this is an opportunity for schools to connect with students at a most vulnerable time in youths’ development.

50/50 ON 50/50s

Feelings on 50/50 raffles at MHSAA Tournaments vary from Council member to Council member. Just how effective such drawings would be in terms of added revenue is uncertain based on a variety of factors.



BREAKING THE BANK

Tennis and golf represent the two most expensive MHSAA Tournament operations; they might also cost participants the most school time missed during the regular season.

Many school districts have consolidated additional duties within the athletic director's job description, sometimes at the same time as the athletic director's clerical/secretarial assistance is reduced or eliminated. Some districts have merged the athletic director's duties with an assistant principal, or placed additional schools' athletic programs under one AD. Some districts have made these decisions in the middle of the school year. And in most cases, everybody involved realizes these moves are fraught with dangers: the chances of poorly supervised events, mix-ups over transportation or officials' schedules, and participation by ineligible students resulting in painful, embarrassing forfeits all increase. But still, in many cases, the cuts are being made.

District leaders are raising student fees – or resorting to “pay-for-play” for the first time – knowing it's more symbolic than substantive given how little revenue participation fees raise against the tsunami they face. Fewer districts are able to hold the line, even though they know the fees actually do more harm than good (see page 11 for resources).

Understandably, local school district leaders are looking for cover as they consider making program and service reductions that will raise the ire of constituents and even cause some to move their children to neighboring districts. They are looking for all league members or all districts within an Intermediate School District to take similar actions simultaneously to minimize local fallout.

School Sports Responds

Observing the desperate measures school districts are considering, the Michigan High School Athletic Association Representative Council and its standing committees and staff are examining what the MHSAA can do to help.

Unlike its counterpart associations across the country that assess membership dues, charge tournament entry fees and levy fines, the MHSAA can reduce or eliminate none of those expenses. They are already zero in Michigan.

Instead, the MHSAA's leadership is examining its *Handbook* regulations and tournament policies to see where changes could be made to help schools raise revenue or reduce expenses during their MHSAA tournament participation or regular-season program administration. See page 8 for a sampling of such considerations.

Some of the ideas are anathema to the people proposing them for discussion, and reactions are



mixed toward many ideas.

Raising tournament ticket prices is the quickest route to raising revenue, but one MHSAA Representative Council member expresses this concern: “I have a lukewarm feeling about raising ticket prices. We're already seeing families that are cutting back in this area (not going to away games, for example), and I've always believed that student-athletes are best served when their parents are in the stands and supportive.”

Many school districts conduct 50/50 drawings at contests (sometimes properly licensed, sometimes not). The MHSAA does not permit such drawings at MHSAA tournaments, and there's mixed reaction to changing that policy. Says one Representative Council member: “I have a hard time supporting 50/50 raffles at MHSAA tournaments. I'm not of the opinion that the MHSAA should be in the (game of chance) business. Based on what we see at our home games, the 50/50 rev-

“I have a lukewarm feeling about raising ticket prices. We're already seeing families cutting back in this area (and) student-athletes are best served when their parents are in the stands and supportive.”

enue at a tournament game would likely produce another \$100 to \$200 in revenue. Not enough, in my opinion, to warrant such a change.”

Another Council member has this opinion: “We frequently hold 50/50 drawings and allow the money to go back to the team. The money generated varies greatly by sport/attendance, but I do not see any harm in doing this; it is a no-cost fundraiser.”

Allowing schools to charge admissions to scrimmages could defray some costs, but Council members are not enthusiastic about the idea. Says one: “Scrimmages are just that . . . scrimmages. They aren't games. They're designed to allow student-athletes and coaches to get experience without the risk of losing.”

Says another Council member: “Scrimmages are a practice game, and often the gym and facili-

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Balancing

\$\$ Going Down?

MHSAA HANDBOOK CHANGES THAT COULD REDUCE LOCAL COSTS

1. Allow two basketball games on a Saturday . . .
 - a. at the junior high/middle school level with six-minute quarters.
 - b. at the subvarsity high school level on two (or unlimited) occasions during the season.
2. Allow more multi-team events per season in lacrosse and soccer.
3. Reduce the out-of-state travel limitation from 600 to 300 (or 400) miles round-trip.
4. Prohibit out-of-state travel for practice (e.g., no spring trips).
5. Limit subvarsity schedules to two-thirds (or three-fourths) of the allowed maximums for varsity teams.
6. Reduce or eliminate interscholastic scrimmages.
7. Allow admission to be charged for interscholastic scrimmages.
8. Prohibit direct or indirect (booster club) expenses for out-of-season or summer activities.

MHSAA TOURNAMENT CHANGES THAT COULD REDUCE LOCAL COSTS

1. Reduce the number of officials utilized for some MHSAA tournaments in order to tend to lower the “standard” for regular-season competition in those sports. (For example, basketball, competitive cheer, football, lacrosse.)
2. Return the LP Golf Finals to a one-day final, or select courses that charge half the current greens fees required of member schools.
3. Reformat Individual Wrestling Finals to two-day events at two venues or one-day events at four venues.
4. Return to multi-match days for Volleyball Districts and Regionals.
5. Increase staff flexibility to change MHSAA tournament neutral site hosts to reduce travel distances for both teams in dual competition.
6. Expand “non-traditional” draws, at least to Predistricts of baseball and softball and Districts for volleyball, soccer and basketball.



ties do not offer the high standard for a spectator which we uphold during a sanctioned contest. Often there are three or four teams participating, there are running clocks, the gym is divided by courts running the opposite direction, people are coming and going. It may generate a small amount of revenue, but it would be an unwelcome hassle for our school.”

The Representative Council is discussing many and varied changes in MHSAA policies and procedures that could lower costs of schools’ MHSAA tournament participation and regular season operations. One area of concern is the “unfunded mandates” of national playing rules changes. One Representative Council member observes: “There is a great deal of cost and manpower needed to make many of these rules (national playing rules changes) happen. Replacement of balls, bats, etc., just for color purposes is hard to justify in these difficult times. However, we do understand that part of the appeal of the game is staying current with practices at the upper levels where our athletes will see the colored balls, etc., and want to use them at our level. We favor a phase-in when new equipment is being adopted, allowing schools to (use up) the balls they may have and move to the new equipment as soon as possible.”

Golf and tennis are the MHSAA’s most expensive tournaments to operate; and it may be that if the MHSAA discontinued those sports, local schools might do the same. One MHSAA Council member observes: “If golf and tennis were no longer MHSAA sponsored, we would save the entire program cost: coaching salaries, uniforms, equipment, transportation and other fees. If these sports were no longer offered, there would be a major backlash in our community as we have demonstrated great success in these areas.

“From a principal’s perspective, these sports also have the greatest impact (cost) on a student’s education as they are the sports they typically require missing school, so that is another angle to consider. We may want to just try a new outside-the-box approach to these sports. Is there a way to continue to sponsor them that can lower costs and not require students to miss school?”



Act

Going Up \$\$

NATIONAL RULE CHANGES THAT COULD INCREASE LOCAL COSTS

Changes Effective in 2010-2011

1. Softball: Rule 1-1-2b: Note: Pitching Distance – States must move to 43' for female fast pitch.
2. Volleyball: Rule 3-2-1: All panels of the ball shall be solid white or a minimum combination of three colors (with each panel being a solid color) and of which at least one-third of the panels shall be solid white.

Changes Effective in 2011-2012

3. Baseball: Rule 1-3-2: Effective Jan. 1, 2012, the bat which may be a wood or non-wood product shall be a smooth implement, from the top of the cap to the top of the knob. All non-wood bats shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient or Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark.
4. Girls Gymnastics: Rule 6-1-3: Note: Vaulting – Beginning July 1, 2012, the landing area shall be a minimum of 18 feet by 8 feet.
5. Girls Gymnastics: Rule 8-1-3: Note: Balance Beam – Beginning July 1, 2012, the landing area at each end of the beam shall be at least 12 feet long and 8 feet wide. The working area under the beam is 15 feet wide by 15 ½ feet long.
6. Girls Lacrosse: Shooting String Requirements: All field crosses must be in compliance with the shooting string specification by the 2011 season. Shooting strings may not be rolled, coiled or twisted more than twice between each thong.

Changes Effective 2012-2013

7. Football: Beginning in 2012, new rules will take effect on football jerseys.
8. Girls Lacrosse: Rule 2-13: Uniform Requirements – Beginning in 2013, all shirts shall be of a single, solid color.
9. Ice Hockey: Rule 3-3-2 and 3-3-3: Goalkeeper Equipment – Leg pads will be a maximum 11 inches wide and maximum 38 inches long. Blocker glove padding will be a maximum 8 inches wide and maximum 15 inches long. Catching glove will be a maximum 45-inch perimeter and a maximum 18-inch length across. The wrist cuff will be a maximum 4 inches by a maximum 8 inches.

Appropriate MHSAA committees are considering modification of MHSAA rules to allow multiple basketball games in one day, at least at subvarsity levels. A Council member states: "I fully support increasing the flexibility of MHSAA staff to change tournament sites based on distances to be traveled by the competing schools, and also support the concept of allowing two basketball games on a Saturday at the middle school and subvarsity levels. Doing so, in our case, would reduce costs associated with travel and officials while also increasing attendance."

However, another Council member observes: "Saturday contests are not currently in practice in our district unless a team attends a tournament at the high school level. Our current custodial practices would require us to pay overtime to have Saturday events staffed, so that would be an added expense that would almost make the savings in transportation an equal swap. Because our subvarsity teams travel with the varsity on one bus, this really would not be a savings at the high school level."

Another MHSAA rule modification under consideration would permit more multi-event days in regular season schedules. "We like the option of hosting large events," says a Council member, "bringing in additional revenue through gate and concessions. Lacrosse and soccer are both sports where tournament and multi-team play runs throughout the off season and the athletes would be capable of performing well under these conditions."

Out-of-state travel restrictions could be tightened during these tough times. "I fully support prohibiting out-of-state travel for practice purposes," states one Council member. "My opposition to such trips is long-standing and related, primarily, to my beliefs about the (haves) and (have-nots) in school sports (and public education in general)."

Another Council member says: "A number of our teams do travel out of state to compete and have established traditions which the athletes enjoy. We have no problem allowing this at our school as the team/parents cover all costs. This is where the debate arises: it is a (have) and (have-not) situa-

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tion. Those in less affluent areas where parent/community support cannot fund these types of trips, it seems that it has potential to disadvantage.”

Reductions in the number of contests are being considered at the subvarsity level. Here’s one opinion: “The suggestions to limit subvarsity schedules, reduce (or eliminate) interscholastic scrimmages and reduce the number of officials all have my support and, under the circumstances, make a lot of sense. Reducing the schedules and scrimmages would reduce our expenses associated with the affected sports by approximately 25 percent (assuming coaching salaries could also be impacted by the reductions).”

Another Council member adds this caution: “We are a pay-to-participate district, and a reduction in the number of games would likely result in parents demanding a lower fee. We feel that if we are going to run the sport, the kids deserve to participate in a full schedule.”

Another cost-saving idea is reducing the number of scrimmages; but it receives mixed reactions. For example: “We feel scrimmages are a valuable preseason tool. Coaches can sub at will, stop the contest to talk about a given play, etc. We do not want to see the ability to teach and coach limited as we look for additional revenue.”

Trying to scale back demands on booster clubs and other parent groups may be difficult and, according to one Representative Council member, invokes concerns for competitive equity: “In our own school district we have one sister school with an incredibly strong parent base who have furnished incredible locker rooms, uniforms, equipment, etc., causing us to question the equity for these in-season purchases. The same can be said for out-of-season support from the booster club; some schools are able to send their teams to numerous camps, etc., with support; others will never have this option due to the economics of the area.”

The MHSAA may relax cooperative program enrollment restrictions and application deadlines to help schools sustain opportunities for students during these unprecedented tough times. One Council member’s opinion: “Cooperative program application deadlines should be relaxed, as schools will need greater flexibility than ever before to act quickly on behalf of the students they serve. I’d like to know more about the implications for raising enrollment limits for cooperative programs but, in general, I am supportive of those increases.”



CANCELED TRIPS?

One item on the agenda for *MHSAA Handbook* discussion is the prohibition of spring practice trips. Current regulations allow for school-sponsored practices only – no contests – at sites more than 600 highway miles roundtrip from the school’s location.

When the MHSAA Classification Committee met in January, it considered how changes in matters related to classification might affect athletic program expenses at the local level. While some committee members saw the potential for savings, others

cited the potential for increased financial pressures if cooperative programs became easier and local pressures intensified to add new sports through cooperative agreements.

The MHSAA’s leadership will also be looking at its tournament formats, including the number of sports for which tournaments are provided and the number of classifications or divisions. Usually, more sports and expanded classes or divisions, as well as seeding, add costs to member schools. Multi-day formats may be revisited as well, as these comments from Council members suggest:

- “I have always wondered why golf is a two-day event, and we would be in favor of moving it back to a one-day tournament. The students currently miss two days of school (in addition to the numerous other times they have early release or miss during the season) and the cost of hotel/meals is extremely high.”
- “We probably have more of a regional perspective on this as the wrestling two-day event is held at The Palace and does not require overnight accommodations. We are in favor of keeping the event as is largely due to the venue: the athletes and parents really enjoy the big stage at The Palace, it is well run and a highlight for the sport.”
- “Returning to the multi-match format for Volleyball Districts and Regionals is a good idea. Savings are available to participating schools in travel, and fans would benefit economically as well.”
- “We are very much in favor of the multi-match days for Volleyball Districts and Regionals. It is cost-effective with less travel, custodial and supervision costs and it is a style that the athletes are accustomed to due to exhaustive tournament play.”

Seeking input from the leadership of 16 of the state's high school coaches associations on Jan. 25, 2010 in East Lansing, the MHSAA staff received many thoughtful insights, including these:

- Changes in Finals formats will affect fewer schools and therefore accomplish smaller savings than changes made at the District level.
- Allow the natural course of things to drive the schedule of national playing rule changes unrelated to participant safety – for example, grandfather uniform color changes until a school's next purchase; but don't be concerned about delaying rules changes for equipment that wears out quickly, like balls and bats.

What's Next?

MHSAA leadership is taking a growing list of ideas like these to coaches associations, league leadership and MHSAA standing committees. MHSAA committees are being instructed to do no financial harm: make no recommendations for changes that would add expenses to schools, and consider ideas that could lower costs for high school sports locally.

Input will also be sought during the Mid-Winter Conference of the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association in March before the topics return to the MHSAA Representative Council at its next meeting March 26, 2010.

As the MHSAA Classification Committee closed its Jan. 13, 2010 meeting, it became clear that whether it's a *Handbook* regulation or tournament policy, each proposal for change must be examined carefully for unintended consequences. In each case, there needs to be an analysis of the history and rationale of the rule or policy, and a conscious decision must be made that the reason for having the rule or policy is now outweighed by the financial benefits of modifying or eliminating the rule or policy.

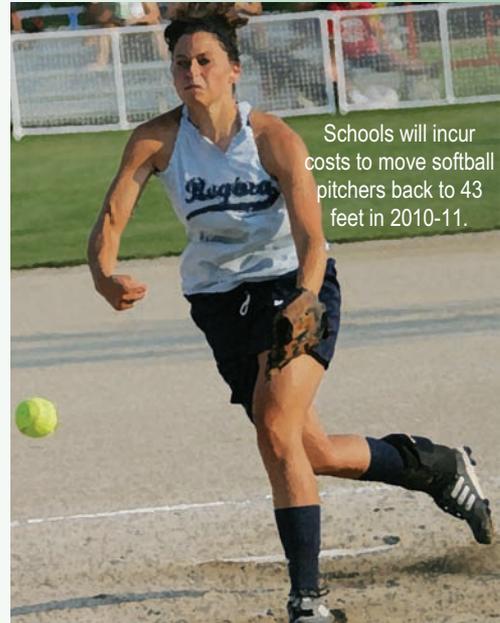
While Michigan dashes to make changes in order to try to secure new education funding through the Federal government's "Race to the Top" program, the MHSAA is moving at a more deliberate pace to try to assure that changes made in school sports during these difficult times do not forever change the essential fabric of educational athletics.

– John E. "Jack" Roberts
MHSAA Executive Director

NATIONAL RULE CHANGES THAT COULD INCREASE LOCAL COSTS

Changes Effective in 2012-2013

– continued from page 9



Schools will incur costs to move softball pitchers back to 43 feet in 2010-11.

10. Soccer: Rule 4-1-1: Shinguards must meet the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) specifications. The NOCSAE seal and the appropriate height range of the player shall appear on the shinguard. Beginning with 2012 fall season, the NOCSAE seal and height range shall be permanently marked on the front of the shinguard.
11. Track & Field: Rules 7-4-6, 7-5-11 New Note: High Jump/Pole Vault - Effective Jan. 1, 2013, the crossbar shall be circular. Square with beveled edges or triangular crossbars shall no longer be legal for competition.

THE FOLLOWING SPORTS HAVE NO CHANGES IN THE AREA OF EQUIPMENT, FACILITIES OR UNIFORMS AT THIS TIME: Boys Gymnastics, Boys Lacrosse, Spirit, Swimming & Diving and Wrestling

THE CHANGES ARE IN SUMMARY FORM. FOR COMPLETE RULES, CONSULT THE RESPECTIVE CURRENT NFHS RULES BOOK.



Participation Fee Information at MHSAA.com

While school sports participation fees continue to hit homes around Michigan, it is a trend the MHSAA believes must be stemmed – and ideally reversed – to achieve the lofty participation number our state once boasted. A Participation Fee Primer and past Survey Results can be found online at MHSAA.com/Schools/Administrators/PaytoPlayResources.aspx. No survey was administered in 2008-09, but the MHSAA will again compile information based on 2009-10.

Financial State is Off-Discussed Blog Topic

One of the popular features of the renovated MHSAA.com is the “From the Director” blog, appearing twice weekly from the home page or from the news page of the site. The blog has received nearly 7,000 page views, with topics ranging from swimsuits to football playoffs.

Several blog topics have centered on funding issues in public education/school sports. Excerpts are reprinted here, and complete blogs are on the archives from the MHSAA.com News page.



The Money Problem

October 9, 2009

A concern for school sports resulting from the underfunding of schools, which began long before our state's current economic recession, is that desperation will drive many schools to do long-term if not permanent damage to interscholastic athletics.

For example, some districts will turn junior high/middle school sports over to community groups. Those districts will find high school sportsmanship decline because the students and their parents' orientation into the philosophies and policies of educational athletics was delayed

Some districts will turn to participation fees, to “pay for play.” These districts will find this reduces participation, especially on the subvarsity levels, and in winter and spring sports, and with the second, third and fourth children in a family. These are really anti-participation fees.

And ironically, these districts will learn that the imposition of anti-participation fees actually worsens school district finances. New families moving into communities will enroll their children where there are not fees.

The loss of state aid for one student costs the district more than the participation fees for 100 athletes. It's a bad business plan.

Failure to Focus

November 10, 2009

If we care about the quality of life in Michigan and wish to be attractive to tourists and businesses elsewhere, it will mean generating revenues that support that quality of life for us and makes our state attractive to people elsewhere. The money we raise from more adequate taxation to compensate for the decline in our manufacturing base will be returned to us many times over if it is spent (1) to make our universities, colleges and community colleges, our K-12 schools and preschool programs the nation's best; (2) to preserve our unique natural resources; and (3) to protect the health and welfare of citizens with appropriate police and fire protection and the nation's best and most accessible health care system. One, two, three . . . and nothing else for now.

More Than a New Year

January 1, 2010

More than a new year, 2010 may be a whole new way of thinking about school sports.

As school districts struggle as a result of Michigan's long and deep recession, compounded by a dysfunctional government and entrenched and inflexible benefits for school personnel, some of those districts will so badly trim school sports that school sponsorship and educational benefits will become almost unrecognizable.

It is hoped that enough people appreciate the important educational benefits of extracurricular programs, including interscholastic athletics, that such draconian measures will not usually be taken.

The MHSAA is examining both *Handbook* regulations and tournament policies to see which might be revised to reduce the local costs of participating in MHSAA postseason tournaments and in administering local regular-season programs.

Council action on the most popular and productive ideas can be anticipated in May for implementation in time for the 2010-11 school year.

Prosperity Follows Education

January 26, 2010

Perhaps there's a lesson to be learned from my son and daughter-in-law's teaching experience at a school for international students in Wuxi, China.

The facilities they work in are as modern as any we would find in the U.S. and include a recently completed gymnasium paid for entirely by the local city government because, my kids tell me, “the local government knows that good schools are necessary to attract new business and industry.”

If we build and maintain an attractive educational system, they will come – business, industries, jobs, people, tax revenues – all that's necessary for economic recovery and long-term growth in Michigan.

SOS Michigan

Save Our Students, Schools and State

A task force has been created to assist public schools in securing equitable and stable funding for the future. "SOS: Save Our Students, Schools and State," is looking to recruit and unite educators for this common pursuit.

SOS was founded by the Michigan Association of School Administrators, Michigan Association of School Boards, Michigan School Business Officials and Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals to "promote the replacement of the current K-12 funding system with one that is more equitable and provides better and more stable funding sources."

Since its inception, the group has grown to include Middle Cities, the Tri-County Alliance, The Michigan Negotiators Association, the Michigan Parent/Teacher/Student Association, The Michigan Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Michigan Association of Intermediate Schools Administrators, and the School Equity Caucus.

The four founding organizations are funding most of this effort, and thus take the lead role in strategizing. Currently, SOS is meeting with organizational partners to begin work on reforms of management and teaching and learning through the development of sub-groups from member organizations.

"Fixing what's wrong with state and school funding is probably more of a marathon than a sprint," said Tom White, Chair of SOS. "We need parents and communities to contact their legislators, and stay in contact over time, in order to reform Michigan's school funding system. We can hope that Lansing will rise above political partisanship and narrow self-interests in order to do the right thing. If Lansing fails to act, educational and extracurricular programs will be devastated over time. We need to tell Lansing to do its job on behalf of our kids and our state."



SOS spearheaded a rally at the Capitol on Nov. 10 to restore school funding.



The Vision of SOS is:

- Helping students, schools and our state create a better future
- Mobilizing members and our communities to achieve a better future
- Promoting needed changes in how students are taught, how schools are funded, and how schools operate

The Mission of SOS is:

1. To promote the replacement of the current K-12 funding system with one that is more equitable and provides better and more stable funding sources. To do this we will grow the grassroots support within our communities, utilize the expertise of knowledgeable people and organizations and become increasingly politically active with a broader base.
2. To assist schools in evaluating and implementing methods to increase efficiency and effectiveness in managing schools and educating students. We will foster thoughtful evaluation of current practices and structures and provide ideas, support and decision tools for this effort. Our goal is to help restrain and reduce costs while increasing the effectiveness of what we do.
3. To provide materials and assistance to help schools understand and explain our school funding crisis to their communities. We will create advocacy materials, materials to assist districts in working with their communities and the media, and training and support for the creation of grass roots efforts.

For more information on SOS, contact Tom White at tomwhite@masb.org, or join the team on the web at sosmichigan.org.

Alabama Blows Away School Funding "Crisis" Smoke

While Michigan's school funding "crisis" rages on, the Alabama Board of Education just came up with a plan to balance the state's education budget in one day.

Unlike Michigan, Alabama's state Board has the tools needed to contain the out-of-control labor costs that generate our public school establishment's perpetual and self-imposed funding debacles. Last week, they came up with two ways to balance the state education budget:

- Implement a modest increase in the amount school employees contribute (6 percent) to the Alabama Teacher Retirement System.
- Freeze the amount of the state's contribution for employee health insurance benefits.

With these two steps Alabama's education funding problems will be solved. If Michigan's state Board of Education had comparable powers, it could similarly resolve our school funding issues with two simple steps:

- Require salaried school employees to contribute 2 percent of their pay to the Michigan Public School Employee Retirement System. This would save school districts approximately \$144 million annually, or about \$90 per pupil, according to data from the Center for Educational Performance and Information.
- Require school employees to contribute 15 percent to the cost of insurance premiums. This would save \$290 million, or \$180 per pupil. (The 2008 average private-sector employee health insurance contribution in Michigan was 22 percent for a family plan premium.)

Of course, if Michigan's state Board of Education had similar powers, there's no reason to imagine it wouldn't be just as much a captive of school employee unions as most local school boards. In the final analysis, the real difference between the two states is the outsized political power of public employee unions here.

Nevertheless, viewing our problems through this lens does clarify them.

– Michael D. Van Beek
 Director of Education Policy
 Mackinac Center for Public Policy
 Blog - Nov. 18, 2009

The Michigan I love - Goodbye

Today the Governor finished the budget process. And, here's what is now certain. The Promise scholarship that principals supported so strongly is gone. Period. As a principal and parent you know how important this was, to so many. I hate to see it go.

Quick fixes to soften the cuts in school funding for 2009-10? Not going to happen. The pain of the Michigan downsize has arrived for us all in the education community. We are left with doing nothing but cut, or, do what we do much more cost effective.

In the last nine years, Michigan has gone from one of the most prosperous states in the USA, to one of the poorest. Period.

So, we have to adjust. Cut costs; adjust revenue, live within our means. Ouch. The way back to prosperity is brainpower – they say. So the ball is handed off to educators.

We can wring our hands on the way to poverty, or we can step up and work to bring us back into prosperity. So far what I've seen of being poor, I don't like.

SOSMichigan.com. Go there. Do something!

– Jim Ballard
 Executive Director
 Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals
 Blog - Oct. 30, 2009



BUY MICHIGAN
 If it's Michigan-made, you know you're getting something special.
 Visit michigan.gov/buymichigan

Bitter Experience Makes Us Better

This is the third of a 2009-10 series dealing with the business of interscholastic athletics in Michigan.

It is not always readily apparent, and sometimes it never appears to be so; but nevertheless, my personal experiences and belief system have convinced me that most of life's negatives can be turned into positives.

We are seeing this result from the 2008 fee judgment assessed to the MHSAA in the sports seasons litigation. As unfair as it was, it is causing us to implement more rapidly a business diversification plan that was conceived in 2007. The result has been to make the MHSAA stronger and sooner able to serve schools and their constituents more fully than has ever been imagined before.

For most of its history, the MHSAA has been unique in the country to the degree that it does not burden its member schools financially. There are no membership dues, no tournament entry fees and no fines assessed to schools or coaches.

As a result, an unusually high percentage of MHSAA revenue has been derived from ticket sales at MHSAA sponsored tournaments. Approximately 90 percent of MHSAA revenue has been derived from those gate receipts, and all other sources have combined for just ten percent of the association's total revenue.

During 2007 the MHSAA's staff conducted a study over several months and prepared a lengthy written report to the Representative Council that made one point above all others: that in order to meet the demands for service from member schools and their diverse constituents, as well as officials and the general public, the MHSAA would have to maintain tournament revenues at current levels and develop a variety of new revenue sources to the point where they contribute 50 percent of the total revenue. In other words, nearly double MHSAA revenue through a business diversification plan.

In November of 2007, the Representative Council was presented a Mission Action Plan (MAP) for 2008; so when the adverse fee judgment came from the Federal court in late March of 2008, the MHSAA already had the road map for recovery. The journey just had to get started sooner, and the travel needed to be at a quicker pace.

Forced to make faster the changes that had previously been screened through the filter of sound educational policy, the MHSAA has been moving in new directions at unprecedented speed. The result has been a proactive list of activities that reduced operational expenses by more than ten percent and produced nearly \$650,000 more revenue during the 2008-09 fiscal year compared to 2007-08.

Much of the effort has been focused on electronic media including e-commerce on

MHSAA.com and video streaming on MHSAA.tv. Both have the potential of revenue sharing with MHSAA member schools.

The two key components of the business diversification plan are these:



Events such as March Magic Hoopfest helped to bolster MHSAA Tournament revenues in 2008-09.

1. Maintain tournament revenues at current levels through enhanced promotional efforts, not increased ticket prices. Keep school sports the best family entertainment bargain available, especially during the tough times projected for Michigan's economy.
2. Develop electronic media – provide through MHSAA.com and MHSAA.tv all that athletic administrators need and, within reason, all that fans of high school sports want to see about high school sports in Michigan – and produce alternative revenues through these vehicles.

Supplementing these primary thrusts are efforts to attract more event and program sponsors and to create more revenue-producing programs and services that lighten the burden on tournament ticket sales.

We are now more than half through the second year of implementing the business diversification plan; but there is no deadline for completion. Things will keep changing in society and schools, and the MHSAA business plan will evolve as it must.

Note: MHSAA Executive Director John E. "Jack" Roberts was requested to submit a guest column for the February 2010 issue of *The School Administrator*, official publication of the American Association of School Administrators. It's entitled "Maddening Mandates on the Playing Field," and examines unfunded mandates that sometimes occur, and are sometimes avoidable, in school sports. Visit aasa.org.

Never Say Die!



The 1999 Baseball/Softball Finals Yielded High Drama, With Five Titles Decided in the Last Inning

Yogi Berra would have been proud. The king of malapropisms' famed refrain, "It ain't over 'til it's over," never rang more true than it did at the 1999 MHSAA Baseball and Softball Finals at Battle Creek's Bailey Park.

Five of the eight championship games ended in the winners' final at-bat, making for one of the most dramatic weekend's in the history of the Finals.

The absence of a clock has long been the game's most endearing quality. Each team gets the same number of chances; the same number of outs, regardless of time. Five teams took advantage of their last chance, while five others are still looking for that last out.

In baseball, Detroit Catholic Central (Division 1), Sturgis (Division 2) and Saginaw Nouvel (Division 3) enjoyed home plate celebrations, while Okemos (Division 1) and Kalamazoo Christian (Division 3) recorded walk-off wins in softball.

The day's other winners were Wyoming Rogers (Division 2) and Bay City All Saints (Division 4) in softball, and Decatur (Division 4) in baseball.

In softball, the Comets of Kalamazoo Christian recorded their fourth consecutive MHSAA crown,

while All Saints added another championship to its 1991 Class D trophy. It was the first MHSAA softball championship for Okemos and Rogers.

On the boys side, Sturgis and Decatur were first-time winners, while Detroit CC and Saginaw Nouvel each captured their third crowns, with the Shamrocks last winning in 1987 and the Panthers in 1997.

The first two games of the day gave fans a taste of what was to follow. **Sturgis and Pinconning** were locked in a tight Division 2 baseball game at C.O. Brown Stadium, while softball powers **Okemos and Jenison** were entrenched in their Division 1 championship battle at the softball venue.

Adding drama to the softball stage was the fact that Jenison Coach Jerry Hoag was ending his 19-year career at the helm, seeking his seventh MHSAA title as a going-away present.

The Wildcats duelled Okemos and star Chieftain pitcher Jessica Beech for eight innings before a wild pitch scored courtesy runner Amy Pelch with two outs in the bottom of the eighth to give Okemos its first MHSAA softball crown.

The Chieftains, who wound up 42-3, grabbed a 1-0 lead in the third when shortstop Emily El-

wood reached on a one-out single and later scored on a Jenison throwing error.

That was it for the scoring until the seventh inning, as Beech and Amanda Potter alternately threw blanks at the other lineup. Beech, who finished the year 32-0 on the mound, cruised into the seventh with a 1-0 lead, which seemingly would be enough.

Senior Nicole Nader led off the seventh with a single, but it seemed as she might be stranded there as the next two Wildcats were retired. Then, first baseman Colleen Corey delayed any Okemos celebrations with a triple down the right field line, and it looked like Jenison might have one last title for its veteran coach.

"I told the girls when Jenison had two outs in the seventh not to celebrate prematurely," Okemos skipper Dan Stolz said. "I knew what that team was capable of doing, and I wondered if Jerry would dip into his bag of tricks.



Beech, however, made the next hitter her 12th strikeout victim, and it was on to extra innings.

In the Okemos half of the eighth, catcher Katie King drew a one-out walk and Pelch was inserted as a courtesy runner. A sacrifice and an error put Pelch at third with two outs, setting up the finish.

"When I saw the ball tip off the catcher's glove, Coach (Stolz) yelled for me to go," Pelch said of the most famous run in Okemos history.

Back on the baseball diamond, Sturgis and Pinconning also were enjoying great seasons – and a great game – but luck was going to have to run out for one side or the other.

A game that featured timely defense and solid pitching saw Pinconning clinging to a 2-1 lead entering the bottom of the seventh. The Spartans had dodged bullets throughout the contest, as Sturgis stranded eight runners to that point, including a bases loaded situation in the fourth frame.

Sturgis began to stir again in the seventh with a leadoff walk to center fielder Bryan Keim and a single by first baseman Tim Kozlow. Kozlow's hit signaled the end for starting Pinconning hurler Adam Pashak, as he gave way to reliever Jeff Hudson. Following a sacrifice bunt, Pinconning intentionally walked Sturgis catcher Ricky Hart, who was 3-for-3 on the day.

Hudson fanned the next batter, and now only designated hitter Nate Lung stood between Pinconning (34-7) and a title. This time, however, the runners would not be stranded. Lung lofted a 2-1 pitch to deep center field, landing over Jeremy Foco for a game-winning two-run double to give the Trojans the title in breathtaking style.

"I was looking for a fastball and got it," said Lung, hitless in three previous trips. "I didn't think it was deep enough when I first hit it."

Neither did Trojan coach Bill Whitely.

"When I first saw it hit, I thought it was going to be caught. When I saw it hit the ground, I thought state championship," Whitely said.

There was good reason to think the ball might be caught. Foco made two stellar catches earlier, once doubling up a Sturgis runner to end a threat.

"Give him credit," Whitely said. "He made the catch in the alley and doubled our kid up, then made that diving catch in the sixth. He kept them in the ball game."

Sturgis' Bryan Vercler went the distance for the win, scattering six hits.

COMETS TALE

Kalamazoo Christian's Comets would have a story for the ages after their last-inning triumph in the Division 3 Final. The crown was Christian's fourth in a row, this one a 3-2 victory over Richmond.

Division 3 Softball Kalamazoo Christian 3, Richmond 2

How does a team top three straight MHSAA softball championships? With a fourth, especially one that comes in the last inning.

Kalamazoo Christian third baseman Leslee Szekely single home the winning run with two outs in the bottom of the seventh to give Kalamazoo Christian an unprecedented fourth consecutive MHSAA softball title, 3-2 over Richmond in a rematch of the 1998 championship game.

Christian, which downed Richmond 2-1 a year ago, forged out to a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the second on a two-run single to center by shortstop Renae Huyser.

Richmond tied the game with a run in the fourth on an RBI single by third baseman Meredith Schmidt, and an unearned run in the sixth, when Szekely committed a throwing error.

"I really wanted a chance to get up and redeem myself," Szekely said. "When I got the chance, I just wanted to hit it hard."

Comets coach Marty DeJong knew who he wanted up in that situation.

"When the game is on the line, Leslee is the one I want up there," he said. "She made the most of her opportunity."

Huyser and Szekely each had three hits for the winners, while Richmond center fielder Karla Frammolino was 3-for-3 for the Blue Devils.

Division 1 Baseball

Detroit Catholic Central 6, Troy 5

The late-inning madness continued in the see-saw Division 1 Final.

Detroit Catholic Central center fielder Bob Malek doubled in the bottom of the seventh and later scored on a wild pitch to give the Shamrocks the MHSAA Division 1 baseball crown, 6-5 over Troy, which was making its first trip to the finals.

Malek's one-out, ground-rule double positioned runners at second and third with one out. Following an intentional walk, Casey Rogowski grounded into a fielder's choice, forcing an out at the plate while sending Malek to third and setting up the dramatic finish.

Detroit CC got off to a 3-0 lead in the bottom of the first, sparked by RBI singles off the bats of starting pitcher Anthony Tomez and catcher Chris Woodruff. However, Troy chased Tomez off the mound in a five-run second, keyed by a two-run single from pitcher Matt Lestan.

The Shamrocks tied things up in the bottom of the third on a two-run homer by shortstop Dave Lusky. From there, the game stayed tied until Malek crossed the plate to end the game.

Detroit CC's Charlie Haeger went the final 5 1/3 for the win, while Lestan went the distance in a losing effort.

Division 3 Baseball

Saginaw Nouvel 6, Blissfield 4

The 1999 Finals ended the same way they began—with a walk-off victory for the home team in the bottom of the seventh.

Saginaw first baseman John Sullivan blasted a two-run homer with one out in the bottom of the seventh to cap a come-from-behind 6-4 victory over Blissfield for the Division 3 baseball championship. It was the second time in three years that Nouvel won the title, and the second time in three years it did so in its final at bat. The Panthers defeated DeWitt, 3-2, in the 1997 championship game.

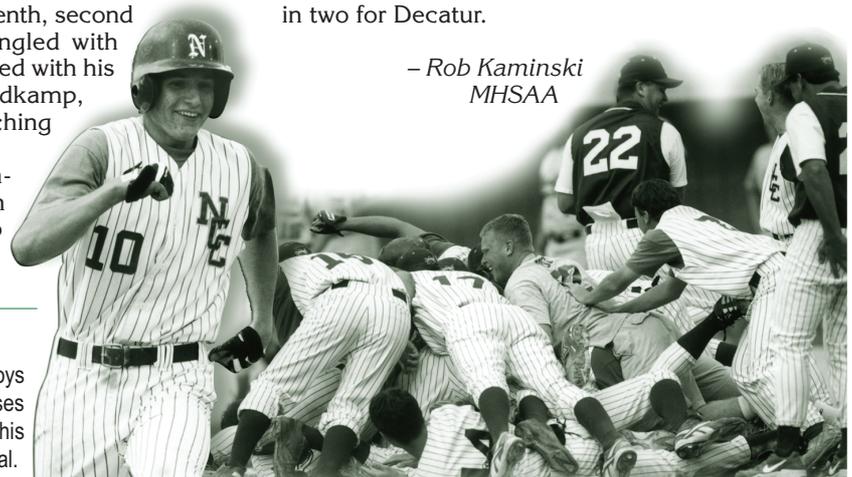
The stage was set when Blissfield's Derek Feldkamp homered to break a 3-3 tie in the top of the sixth, and Nouvel third baseman David Link answered with a solo shot in the bottom of the inning to knot the game at four.

In the bottom of the seventh, second baseman Ramiro Torrez singled with one out, then Sullivan followed with his game-winning homer off Feldkamp, who took the loss after pitching the final 4 1/3 innings.

Nouvel used three pitchers in the game, with Ryan McGraw going the final two for the win.

SULLIVAN'S SWEET SWAT

Saginaw Nouvel's John Sullivan enjoys the solitude of a trip around the bases before being mobbed following his walk-off homer in the Division 3 Final.



— Rob Kaminski
MHSAA

Division 2 Softball

Wyoming Rogers 3, Chelsea 1

Wyoming Rogers broke a 1-1 tie with two runs in the bottom of the sixth to claim its first MHSAA softball crown, 3-1 over Chelsea in Division 2.

Second baseman Emily Butkus led off the inning with a double, and scored on an RBI single by pitcher Tonya Coates. Heather Gamble then served as a courtesy runner for Coates, and scored on an RBI single by Dana Peuler to finish the scoring.

Coates went the distance for the winners with a two-hit, seven strikeout effort. Peuler was the big hitter for Rogers, going 2-for-3 with an RBI and a run scored.

Division 4 Softball

Bay City All Saints 4, Maple City Glen Lake 0

Bay City All Saints' Lacey Rousseau threw a four-hit shutout and catcher Kelly Martin provided the offense with a two-run homer to lead All Saints to a 4-0 win over Maple City Glen Lake for the MHSAA Division 4 softball championship, All Saints' third softball crown.

The Cougars jumped to a 1-0 lead in the top of the first when Martin led off the game with a single, and her courtesy runner, Jacquie Carpathe, scored on an RBI single by first baseman Sara Erndt. Martin made it 3-0 with her homer in the third, and the Cougars tacked on an insurance run in the sixth.

Rousseau fanned nine batters in the victory.

Division 4 Baseball

Decatur 8, Bay City All Saints 0

Decatur used the pitching combination of Bryan Gale and Nicholas Athey to shut out Bay City All Saints, 8-0, en route to its first-ever MHSAA baseball championship in the Division 4 final. Gale pitched a total of five innings, striking out 8 and allowing just one hit, while Athey limited the Cougars to just two hits in two innings. Gale also pitched five no-hit innings in the semifinal win over Posen on Friday.

The Raiders got all the offense they would need with an unearned run in the first, then broke open a 2-0 game with four runs in the sixth and two in the seventh. Center fielder Matthew Overley had three RBIs and third baseman Brendon Ross drove in two for Decatur.

WISL Conference Attracts Record Numbers

The 2010 Women in Sports Leadership Conference was a resounding success, attracting a record number 600-plus attendees to the event Feb. 7-8 in Lansing.

Kathy DeBoer, Executive Director of the American Volleyball Coaches Association, delivered the keynote address, "Got Leadership?" and student-athletes from around the state got to choose from 30 tracks and activities during the conference.

Topics ranged from nutrition and health, to captains' panels, to interactive sessions such as water aerobics and kickboxing.

The WISL Conference is the first, largest and longest-running conference of its type in the country. The conference is designed for those interested in becoming a high school coach, administrator or official, and is held in Lansing every other year, next taking place in 2012.



Students showed up in record numbers for the 2010 WISL conference for a two-day schedule filled with dynamic speakers and interactive tracks including pilates & core strength; yoga; jump training for injury prevention, and teamwork-building sessions.



Photos by John Johnson, Okemos

Scholar-Athlete Class of 2010 Honored



The Michigan High School Athletic Association/Farm Bureau Insurance Scholar-Athlete Award has been recognizing the top student-athletes for 21 years. Applicants for the Scholar-Athlete Award must meet the following criteria: A minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale; and must have previously won a varsity letter. Applicants also show involvement in other school and community activities; submit two letters of recommendation and a 500-word essay on the importance of sportsmanship in educational athletics.

Recipients of the 2009-10 Scholar-Athlete Award receive a \$1,000 college scholarship to be used at the college, university, or trade school of their choice during the 2010-11 school year. This year, 1,835 applicants from 432 schools were received for the 32 scholarships. Class A students were guaranteed 12 winners, Class B eight winners, Class C six winners and Class D four winners. Two at-large winners were also selected.

All scholarship recipients will be honored in ceremonies at halftime of the Class C Boys Basketball Final at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing on March 27.



32 student-athletes from around the state are honored during the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals each year for academic excellence.

2010 Scholar-Athlete Award Winners

Meredith Leigh Aja, Traverse City Central, Class A
 Alexandra Annese, Whitehall, Class B
 Elizabeth Brady, Hillsdale Academy, Class D
 Natalia Collins, Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard, Class B
 Kelly Mikaye David, Beal City, Class D
 Ariel Dempsey, Jenison, Class A
 Nathaniel Ellsworth, Saginaw Heritage, Class A
 Kelly Hahn, Plymouth, Class A
 Daniel Hartsig, Three Rivers, Class B
 Rikki Jarvis, Oxford, Class A
 Stephanie N. Johnson, Kalamazoo Hackett, Class C
 Andrew Kangas, Norway, Class C
 Abbey Kelto, Munising, Class C
 Frank Liesman, Lansing Catholic, Class B
 Christopher Luoma, Okemos, Class A
 Jordan Macocha, Oxford, Class A

Ji-Hoon Min, Gwinn, Class C
 Calley Murphy, Birmingham Seaholm, Class A
 Kari Paine, Manistee, Class B
 Katherine Pavelich, Flint Kearsley, Class A
 Erin Elizabeth Riley, Battle Creek Lakeview, Class A
 Jonathan Roberts, Grosse Pointe South, Class A
 Tyler Steven Root, Brimley, Class D
 Steven Saliga, Romeo, Class A
 Andrew Sauser, Caro, Class B
 Benjamin J. Schell, Traverse City St Francis, Class C
 Jacob Smitley, Athens, Class D
 Kayley Sopel, Ithaca, Class C
 Emily Tjapkes, Shelby, Class B
 Alex Van Tiem, Detroit U-D Jesuit, Class A
 Matthew VanZyvteld, Grand Haven, Class A
 Joseph Robert White II, Jackson Lumen Christi, Class B

SAC Members Developing Sportsmanship Initiatives

In its fourth year, the MHSAA Student Advisory Council continues to search for ways to make the high school sports experience better for student-athletes.

Earlier this fall, the group of 16 juniors and seniors published a book for high school team leaders called “Captains 101”. The 24-page book covers topics including the roles and responsibilities of a team captain and the relationship of a captain with coaches and teammates, while also listing dozens of simple to-dos for captains to accomplish. 18 months in the making, the book was delivered to all MHSAA member schools this fall. Plenty of books are still available at the MHSAA office for just \$3 each.

Following the success of Captains 101, the Student Advisory Council is in the middle of its next big projects. In October 2010, the



A SAC subcommittee meets to develop content for the Sportsmanship Summits series. The seniors presented the topic in 2008, and are helping the junior class prepare for the summits in October 2010.

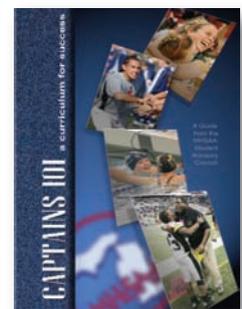
students will be developing and leading a breakout session at each of the four regional Sportsmanship Summits. Their interactive student-only session will cover those gray areas in sportsmanship – specifically as it pertains to the behavior of student cheering sections. Exact dates and locations are not yet set for the 2010 summit series. The MHSAA will send registration information to schools later this spring.

SAC members are also focusing on the role parents play in the student’s school sports experience. The students are working on a series of 30-second commercials that deal with both the highlights and low-lights of parental involvement. While the student videos may focus on poor sportsmanship in the stands and a-bit-too-high athletic expectations at the home, they also plan to say thank you for the sacrifices made and encouragement given by parents during their sports “careers.”

In May, the MHSAA will be choosing the next eight members of the council from the Class of 2012. Applications can be found on MHSAA.com and are due April 21, 2010.



SAC members test different group icebreakers for prospective Sportsmanship Summit activities. This one, called “Gigolo,” requires students to mimic dance moves of one of the other students



Captains 101, published by MHSAA SAC members, remains on sale at the MHSAA office for \$3. The book is a perfect supplement to any coach’s team-building strategies.

MHSAA.tv Pilot Flying High

Video has become a staple of the Internet. From local news features to full-length television shows and movies, an increasing amount of information we once watched exclusively on our television sets is available on our laptop, desktop or handheld computer.

Of course, we think of websites like YouTube and Hulu as go-to places for online video content, but the sports world is getting more involved in this game at all levels, including high school sports.

The MHSAA, which began streaming video of selected championship events a couple years ago on its MHSAA.tv website after streaming audio for the past decade, has begun expanding that platform so member schools can jump on board with their own productions.

This year, a pilot video streaming program was implemented primarily involving schools from the Capital Area Activities Conference in mid-Michigan, plus a group of schools in other locations around the state – Carsonville-Port Sanilac, Fenton, Gibraltar Carlson, Hartland, Montrose and Temperance Bedford.

The schools voluntarily participating in the pilot are provided at no cost the equipment necessary to create video of their regular-season events in any sport they choose, at any level, and stream it to the MHSAA.tv website. A number of schools have already produced so many games they have their own portal page for fans to access directly. The only participation requirement is to stream all indoor MHSAA tournament games they host.

When We Were Young Productions, which powers the MHSAA Network, and its technical partner, PlayON! Sports, are providing the equipment and the robust streaming platform. As of the end of January, participating schools have posted over 400 events online, in addition to the over 200 games produced by the MHSAA Network, which can also be seen on Comcast Channel 900.

Based on the progress of the pilot, the MHSAA plans to expand the streaming program to include additional schools beginning in 2010-11.

“The proliferation of streaming video on the web has schools excited about the possibilities to bring recognition to their programs and stay in contact with their alumni, communities and fans,” said John E. “Jack” Roberts, executive director of the MHSAA. “It also has schools contacting our office to seek guidance about putting their games on the Web, and that conversation usually ends with the callers asking ‘why doesn’t the MHSAA just do it?’

“With the vision of When We Were Young Productions and PlayON! Sports, we’re pleased that we can provide schools with a safe place where they can stream their athletic events; give students some hands-on experience in a growing field; and provide our schools with a revenue-generating opportunity for their programs through advertising spots on their portal pages and during games.”



Schools producing enough content are receiving distinct portal pages on MHSAA.tv, and realizing potential monetary benefits.

Help Expand MHSAA Network Programming

Since its launch in the fall of 2008 the MHSAA Network has created over 1,000 hours of original programming of regular-season and MHSAA tournament contests, enjoyed in over one million homes in the Lower Peninsula served by Comcast Channel 900.

The MHSAA and When We Were Young Productions continue to work at securing additional cable clearances with other providers in non-Comcast service areas – another 600,000-plus homes. It’s one thing for those outlets to hear from us that fans want to see high school games on their cable systems – it’s a much more powerful request when it comes from their customers.

If you live outside Comcast’s service areas, we encourage you to contact your cable provider to request MHSAA Network programming in your community.

Such providers are:

- Charter Communications: 88-438-2427
- Bighthouse Networks:
734-422-3200 or 248-553-7300
- Broadstripe Cable: 800-444-6997

Hoopfest Offers Wide Range of Activities

After a successful inaugural event in 2009, the March Magic Hoopfest will continue and expand for 2010. After attracting an estimated 12,000 visitors to Michigan State University's Jenison Field House last March in conjunction with the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals, the event will take place during two weekends this spring.

Hoopfest 2010 tips off with the MHSAA Girls Basketball Finals weekend, March 18-20, and will resume the weekend of the Boys Finals, March 25-27.

Following are some of the activities slated for this year.

2010 Center Court Attractions

The 2010 March Magic Hoopfest will feature two full sized center courts which will host a number of activities. The center courts are the centerpiece of March Magic Hoopfest.

JumpBall Jamboree — The Farm Bureau Insurance and Greater Lansing Sports Authority Center Courts will play host to the JumpBall Jamboree. Students who are enrolled in 5th through 8th grade, both boys and girls, may register their team online for the opportunity to place on one of the Center Courts of March Magic Hoopfest. There will be as many as 15 exhibitions each weekend and volunteer referees from the Greater Lansing area will officiate the exhibitions.

Wheelchair Basketball Tournament — Come see one of the most fascinating sporting events on wheels as the Farm Bureau Insurance and Greater Lansing Sports Authority Center Courts will host some of the top wheelchair basketball teams throughout the state.

Learning From The Legends Youth Clinic — A free basketball clinic for boys and girls grades 4th through 8th will be held Saturday, March 20 and Saturday, March 27, in conjunction with the March



Magic Hoopfest. Many of the legendary members of the Basketball Coaches Association (BCAM) will be the clinicians. All facets of basketball offensive and defensive skills will be taught at the clinic.

Additional March Magic Hoopfest Activities

- The Dean Trailways 3-Point Challenge
- Rainbow Shot
- Free Throw Challenge
- Driveway Knockout
- Around the World
- U.S. Army Climbing Wall
- Slam Dunk
- Kidz Zone Games

Admission to Hoopfest is free with a valid 2010 MHSAA Basketball Tournament Ticket. All others are admitted for \$2.

The event is sponsored by the Greater Lansing Sports Authority and Farm Bureau Insurance. Be sure to bring the family to relive fond memories and create new ones.

Visit marchmagichoopfest.com for further information and registration forms for JumpBall Jamboree and Learning from the Legends.

Basketball Experience Aims to Reach Higher in 2010

Now in its second year, BCAM and the MHSAA have united to bring the perfect venue for underclass basketball players to "showcase" their talents and maybe reach a higher level after high school.

The Reaching Higher Experience is the "Advanced Placement Course" in high school basketball. This NCAA-approved event will provide each student-athlete an understanding of what it takes to succeed academically, athletically and socially at the college level.

Player invitations for the 2010 events have now been sent to schools.

The Girls event is slated for April 18, 2010, and the Boys event takes place July 31, both at South Lyon High School.

Visit MHSAA.com and BCAM.org for updated information.



Mazzolini Receives WISL Award

A standout as a high school and college student-athlete in two sports and an accomplished athletic administrator – Gina Mazzolini of Lansing, assistant director at the Michigan High School Athletic Association – has been named the recipient of the 2009-10 Women In Sports Leadership Award by the Representative Council of the MHSAA.

Each year the Representative Council considers the achievements of women coaches, officials and athletic administrators affiliated with the MHSAA who show exemplary leadership capabilities and positive contributions to athletics. The award was presented during a banquet at the 19th Women In Sports Leadership Conference in Lansing on Feb. 7.

A 1974 graduate of St. Johns High School, where she received the first ever Female Athletic of the Year at the school, Mazzolini was a basketball and volleyball standout; moving on to Central Michigan University, where she also played both sports for four years. In basketball, she led the Chippewas in scoring and rebounding three straight seasons – averaging in double figures in both categories. She ranks eighth on CMU’s all-time career field goal percentage list at .496, and her 880 career rebounds is tied for fourth on that list. Mazzolini’s 24 rebounds against Wayne State in 1975 is still a school single-game mark. She was inducted into the CMU Athletic Hall of Fame in 1992.

After her 1978 graduation from CMU with a degree in Physical Education, Mazzolini spent a year at Ovid-Elsie High School as a teacher and coach in two sports. She then taught courses and served as an assistant volleyball coach at Michigan State University for two years while earning a Master’s Degree in Physical Education; followed by a year at the University of Texas at Austin where she also taught, was an assistant volleyball coach and interim women’s Sports Information Director. She has completed her course work towards a doctorate degree from the University of Texas.

In 1982, Mazzolini became an activities director with the University Interscholastic League, which is the service organization to high school activities in Texas. She became an assistant athletic director with the UIL in 1988, before returning to Michigan in 1993 to become an assistant director at the MHSAA.

At the MHSAA, Mazzolini is an administrator for skiing, swimming and diving, tennis and girls volleyball; handles the sanctioning of out-of-state competitions; and is the point person on foreign exchange student issues for the Association. She has served on the board of directors for the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel, which identifies, promotes and supports international youth exchange programs.

Mazzolini has also served on National Federation of State High School Associations rules committees in soccer, swimming and diving, and volleyball; and was the chair of the Volleyball Rules Committee from 2004 to 2008. She has also been a member of the NFHS advisory committees for athletic directors and sports medicine.

“This award provides long overdue recognition for Gina, whose career as a player and administrator in Michigan and her contributions at the national level are unmatched,” said John E. “Jack” Roberts, Executive Director of the MHSAA.

The honoring of Mazzolini brings to 24 the number of Women In Sports Leadership Award recipients. Past recipients are:

- 1990 – Carol Seavoy, L’Anse
- 1991 – Diane Laffey, Harper Woods
- 1992 – Patricia Ashby, Scotts
- 1993 – Jo Lake, Grosse Pointe
- 1994 – Brenda Gatlin, Detroit
- 1995 – Jane Bennett, Ann Arbor
- 1996 – Cheryl Amos-Helmicki, Huntington Woods
- 1997 – Delores L. Elswick, Detroit
- 1998 – Karen S. Leinaar, Delton
- 1999 – Kathy McGee, Flint
- 2000 – Pat Richardson, Grass Lake
- 2001 – Suzanne Martin, East Lansing
- 2002 – Susan Barthold, Kentwood
- 2003 – Nancy Clark, Flint
- 2004 – Kathy Vrugink Westdorp, Grand Rapids
- 2005 – Barbara Redding, Capac
- 2006 – Melanie Miller, Lansing
- 2007 – Jan Sander, Warren Woods
- 2008 – Jane Bos, Grand Rapids
- 2009 – Gail Ganakas, Flint; Deb VanKuiken, Holly



Mazzolini

Godefroidt, Boyd Named 2010 Forsythe Winners

A pair of athletic administrators who are giants in their respective sports are the 2010 recipients of the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Charles E. Forsythe Award. Rudy Godefroidt, superintendent of Hemlock Public Schools, and Mike Boyd, athletic director and coach at Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes, share the prestigious honor.

The annual award is in its 33rd year of existence and is named after former MHSAA Executive Director Charles E. Forsythe, the Association's first full time and longest-serving chief executive. Forsythe Award recipients are selected each year by the MHSAA Representative Council, based on an individual's outstanding contribution to the interscholastic athletics community.

"This year's Forsythe Award winners represent the best in school sports leaders with two men who excel at 'teaching' in the athletic forum," said MHSAA Executive Director John E. "Jack" Roberts. "The number of students – both boys and girls – influenced by Rudy and Mike during their exemplary careers is staggering. The success they've enjoyed, whether as coach, official, teacher or administrator, is a testimony to their dedication to student-athletes spanning decades. They are most deserving recipients of this year's Forsythe Award."

Godefroidt, elected to the MHSAA Representative Council in 2008, is in his fourth year as superintendent at Hemlock. His lifelong service to the sports of cross country and track & field is where he's made his most pronounced contributions.



Godefroidt

Now is his 34th year as a MHSAA registered official in those sports, Godefroidt also coached the sports for more than a decade at Breckenridge Community Schools, and had a two-year stint as head cross country coach at his alma mater, Alma College, where he earned his bachelor's degree in 1973. A 1969 graduate of Detroit Finney High School, Godefroidt would later earn his

master's degree from Central Michigan University in 1978 as his career began to blossom. Godefroidt, a member of the Michigan Interscholastic Track Coaches Association since 1975, earned MITCA's Cross Country Coach of the Year honors once and was nominated two other times.

In officiating circles, few have given back to their sports as Godefroidt has in his three-plus decades of service. He has earned numerous service awards from the Association of Track Officials of Michigan, including ATOM's most coveted honor, the Bob Bloomer Award. A two-time past president

of ATOM, he also received the President's Leadership Award from the association, which he joined in 1988 and is still active today.

Administratively, Godefroidt has earned the North Central Accreditation Award, and has been a member of the Michigan and National Association of School Administrators since 2005. Prior to his current status as Hemlock's superintendent, he was the high school principal for eight years, preceded by three years in that position at Breckenridge High School.

Boyd's name is synonymous with Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes, a school to which he's given 43 years of service as athletic director, parish manager and coach. The Saginaw SS Peter and Paul



Boyd

(now Saginaw Nouvel) product launched his legendary football coaching career in 1965 and shows no signs of slowing down.

His 339 career wins rank just ahead of his cousin, Leo "Smokey" Boyd (308) for third place on the MHSAA's all-time football coaching list. A 9-3 record in 2009 brings Mike Boyd's career mark to 339-102-1, a winning percentage of .767. Boyd's Lakers won

the 2002 MHSAA Division 8 football championship, and finished runner-up twice in Class DD, while making the playoffs 21 times.

In today's era of specialization, Boyd is a throwback whose coaching techniques continue to yield success not only in multiple sports, but with both genders. As the school's softball coach since 1982, Boyd's teams have compiled nearly 800 wins. The Lakers won back-to-back MHSAA Division 4 softball titles in 2003-04, the most recent of eight championships with Boyd at the helm.

Boyd is a member of the Detroit Catholic League, Michigan Football, Basketball and Softball halls of fame, as well as the Michigan Coaches Hall of Fame. His success netted numerous Coach of the Year honors throughout his career, including national and regional softball accolades.

A longtime member of the National Football Coaches Association and National Softball Coaches Association, Boyd received his bachelor's and master's degrees at Michigan State University and served as a teacher and principal at WOLL prior to his current positions. Boyd served terms on the board of directors for the Michigan Football Coaches Association and is a past vice president for the Michigan Softball Coaches Association. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and Clarkston Chamber of Commerce.

What If?

The easiest shot to take in high school sports – or all levels of sports for that matter – is one that attempts to show up the game officials. Whether it's coaches, or players or spectators; everyone has an opinion about every call, and they're all increasingly becoming less inhibited about showing it.

The people with the poorest view of the play physically, certainly the poorest view of the play from a perspective standpoint, and generally with the least knowledge of the rules and their application; are the quickest to loudly bellyache, gesture, and just flat out act out poorly when they don't like a call.

The non-verbal communication alone – the mimicking of the throwing of a flag or an official's signal, first by coaches, then by players (and not always in that order) – catches the wave and feeds the fans in the stands like fresh meat being given to a pack of piranhas.

And it doesn't stop there, the whining finds its way online after the game, sometimes even during the game, where know-it-alls brave enough to spew their venom, but so cowardly they hide behind a screen name (even those participants who claim to be game officials) turn a holding, or a yellow card, or a lift, or a pick off, or a block-charge call into a matter of life-or-death.

OK, it's a well-known fact that criticism of an official's call goes with the territory. When you put on the stripes, you know it's coming, and you need to have the backbone to deal with it.

But let's turn the tables for just a minute. A game of what if. A game of man bites dog.

What if the official got in the face of a 14-to-17-year-old football player and mocked him for not doing what he thought he should have done on that play, gesturing wildly to show him what he thought was the error of his ways?

What if the official ran over to the bench, or the dugout, stood next to the coach and looked out over the field and told the coach – “you know what coach? Even though we're 30 to 40 yards away, you really can see better over here.”

And what if an official went up to the top row of the bleachers to grab that loud, obnoxious fan; es-



Positive communication between coach and official can go a long way in influencing the behavior of players and spectators.

cort that person down to the playing surface, place that person in the spot the official was occupying and handed them the whistle?

Of course, there would be an even larger outcry of outrage. Officials can't do that!

But what if the officials treated others they way others treat them. What if the man bites the dog back? I think there would be a little less, maybe even a lot less, of the abuse these people have heaped upon them.

The real answer to this is rooted in the principles of sportsmanship. At least at the school level, administrators can describe and demand the behavior they want of their coaches, players and spectators. Coaches need to deliver and model good sporting behavior, and in turn, the players will follow. If these first two groups would stop showing up the officials, the fans would be less likely to be outwardly critical as well. And our games would be better off for it.

— John Johnson
MHSAA Communications Director

This commentary first aired on the radio program MHSAA Perspective, broadcast on over 40 radio stations across the state, and can be heard on-demand on the MHSAA Internet Broadcast Network – mhsaanetwork.com.

MHSAA Basketball Officials Camp Provides Training

The second annual MHSAA Basketball Officials Camp is set to tip off June 25-26 on the Michigan State University campus.

The event is held in conjunction with the MSU Women's Basketball Shootout and offers high school-level officials on-court experience with feedback and instruction from trained observers.

Campers will receive a t-shirt, Fox 40 whistle, meals, and resource packets. The event includes classroom/video instruction, NF rules discussions, guest speakers and a written observation report following the camp.

The event is a tremendous opportunity for officials seeking to progress in the high school ranks to display their skills for MHSAA staff and officiating leaders across the state.

Enrollment is limited to 75 officials. The fee is \$125 on or before May 1; \$150 after May 1. Please visit the Officials page of MHSAA.com and look for "Officials Clinics" for further details and a registration form.



John Johnson, Okemos

Officials for Kids Benefits Children's Miracle Network

In December of 2009, the MHSAA once again distributed donations to the four Michigan Children's Miracle Network Hospitals on behalf of Officials for Kids. Each year, officials across the state donate money to Officials for Kids via their annual registration. The MHSAA then allocates those funds (by county on a quarterly basis) to the appropriate CMN facility, and routes contributions to hospital leadership to provide new programs, established services, and medical equipment to kids in need.

Officials donations in the fall of 2009 garnered the following amounts for our four beneficiaries:

Beaumont Hospital (Royal Oak)	\$687.53
Helen DeVos Children's Hospital (Grand Rapids)	\$810.88
Sparrow Hospital (Lansing)	\$840.71
Hurley Medical Center (Flint)	\$541.29

The MHSAA is proud to accept donations from registering officials, and will continue to promote Officials for Kids to its membership. For more information, please visit the Officials for Kids page of MHSAA.com, or contact Andi Osters (aosters@mhsaa.com).



Don't Miss the 31st Annual Officials Banquet

The Annual MHSAA Officials Awards and Alumni Banquet will take place Saturday, May 1, at the Radisson Hotel Lansing beginning at 7 p.m. A registration form appears on the Officials page of MHSAA.com. The cost is \$20 per person and the order deadline is April 15, 2010. Ticket orders will be filled on a first-come basis; however, priority will be given to those officials receiving awards. Officials, friends and relatives are also encouraged to attend. Tickets will not be sold at the door.

Rules of the Games

Sharpen your skills with the following rules questions for Baseball, Softball, Soccer, Boys Lacrosse and Girls Lacrosse officials. Answers and rule references appear at the bottom of page 29.

Baseball

- The count is 2-2 and B1 is trying to get out of the way of an inside fastball. As he tries to avoid the pitch, the ball hits his hands on the bat and the ball rolls toward the pitcher in fair territory. The correct call is....
 - Fair ball; the ball remains in play.
 - Foul ball; batter remains at bat with 2-2 count.
 - Hit by pitch; send the batter to first base.
 - Dead ball; batter is charged with a strike, and since the count was 2-2, he is declared out.
- B1 hits a line drive back at the pitcher. Without touching anyone, the ball hits the pitching rubber and deflects directly into the 1st base dugout. The correct call is...
 - Foul ball.
 - Ground rule double; put B1 on 2nd base.
 - Ball is dead; award B1 first base.
- R1 is on 1st and R2 is on 3rd with one out. B3 hits a fly ball to right field and B1 takes off immediately on contact. The right fielder makes the catch for the second out while B2 legally tags up and scores. After R2 has scored, the ball is thrown to first base for the third out, easily putting out R1 who did not legally tag up. How many runs score on this play?
 - No runs score since R1 was forced out.
 - One run scores as R2 scored before R1 was put out (time play).
- Count is 0-2 with R3 on third base with two outs. The batter swings and misses on a pitch in the dirt that gets past the catcher to the backstop. The batter-runner takes off for first as R3 advances home and scores before the catcher releases his throw toward first base. The throw to first base just beats the batter-runner and he is properly called out. How many runs score on this play?
 - No runs score since BR was retired before he reached first base.
 - One run scores as R3 scored before BR was put out (time play).
- R2 on second base with a 2-2 count with two outs. A curve ball in the dirt is swung at by B1 and missed for strike three and the catcher



blocks the low pitch as the ball rolls out in front of home plate. As the BR heads toward first, the catcher decides to throw to 3rd base to retire R2 who was stealing on the pitch. The throw to third retires R2 for the third out. What is the correct call?

- Since B1 was never retired, he leads off the next inning.
- Since B1's time at bat ended, the player following B1 on the line-up leads off the next inning.
- The offensive coach gets option of having B1, or the player following him on the line-up, to lead off the next inning.

Softball

- T or F: Lineup cards are required to have player number, last name and first initial of each player.
- T or F: The pitching distance for MHSAA fast-pitch softball will be 40 feet for the 2010 season and change to 43 feet beginning in 2011.
- T or F: If a team uses the DP/FLEX Option it must be made known to the umpire prior to the start of the game and listed properly on the lineup card given to the umpire at the pregame conference.

Soccer

- T or F: Clock was stopped to allow Referee to check on injured player. Because clock was stopped, player must leave game.
- Team A goalkeeper has the ball in their hands when the Referee stops play to check on an injured player. The correct restart is?
 - Team A keeper throws ball out of bounds
 - Direct Free Kick for A where keeper had ball when play was stopped
 - Indirect Free Kick for A where keeper had ball when play stopped
 - Drop ball where team A keeper was standing
 - Drop ball where injured player was
- If a player is unconscious or deemed unconscious by the officials, whose authorization is needed to allow that player to return to compete that day?
 - Any official working the game
 - A certified athletic trainer assigned to the game
 - Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner
 - Any physician
 - Answer b) or c)
 - Answer c) or d)
 - All of the above after examining the athlete
- T or F: Officials' jersey colors need only contrast with the field players of both teams NOT those of the goalkeeper.

Rules of the Games

Sharpen your skills with the following rules questions for Baseball, Softball, Soccer, Boys Lacrosse and Girls Lacrosse officials. Answers and rule references appear at the bottom of this page.

5. T or F: The team roster must now include the names of all personnel who are going to be in the team box, such as players, coaches, trainers, managers, etc. and any team member may give roster to Referee.

Girls Lacrosse

1. The umpire has the two centers in position for the draw. As the umpire is backing out and blowing the whistle to start, one of the centers fails to draw up and away. The umpire blows the whistle and indicates:
- Illegal draw and awards a free position to the non-fouling center.
 - Legal draw and awards a free position to the fouling center.
 - All players return to their original positions.
2. The goalkeeper has moved outside her goal circle to play the ball when offside is called on the defense. The free position is being awarded at the top of the 1m fan. The goalkeeper is allowed:
- To not return to the goal circle.
 - To move back to the goal circle.
3. Players may enter the game using the following procedures:
- A substitute may go on the field at any time as long as someone is getting ready to replace them.
 - The player entering the field has the right of way.
 - The player must enter the game through the substitution area and not enter this area until her substitution is imminent.



4. A crosse may be checked, in a direction toward the body as long as:
- The check/tackle is controlled and the crosse or ball does not go into the sphere.
 - The check/tackle goes directly to the sphere.
 - The crosse is used to hit or cause the opponent's crosse to hit the body.
5. A mouthpiece is legal if (check all that apply):
- It is clear.
 - It is a readily visible color other than clear or white.
 - It is cut down so it does not cover the teeth.

Boys Lacrosse

1. Mark all that applies for a legal face off:
- Each player shall have both hands and the fingers wrapped around the handle of his own crosse
 - A player may have his thumb around the handle of the crosse and his finger tips resting on the ground.
 - The hands shall be touching the ground but not touching any strings of the crosse.
 - A player is permitted to step on an opponent's crosse if it is unintentional.
2. A goal shall be disallowed when (mark all that apply):
- A scorer's cross is found to be illegal.
 - A scorer adjusts his strings before the official requests it.
 - A scorer adjusts the crosse in any way after the official requests it.
 - A scorer makes contacts with a goalkeeper who is not in the crease.
3. Mark all that apply to an illegal body check (personal foul):
- A player in possession of the ball or within five yards of a loose ball is checked by an opponent.
 - A player checks an opponent from the rear or at or below the waste.
 - A player makes contact with an opponent above the shoulders.
 - Body checking an opponent who has any part of his body, other than his feet on the ground.

Baseball Answers: 1– c. (2-39, 5-1-1[a]); 2– a. (2-16-1); 3– b. (8-2-4, 8-2-5, 9-1-1); 4– a. (9-1-1 Exception); 5– b. (8-1-1[b])

Softball Answers: 1– T (3-1-3); 2– T (1-1, 2b.); 3– T (3-3-6)

Soccer Answers: 1– F (3-3-2-b[2] and Play Ruling 3.3.2 Situation D); 2– c. (13-2-3-[b]); 3– d. (3-3-2-b[3]); 4– T (5-1-3-A); 5– T (3-1-3)

Girls Lacrosse Answers: 1– a. (5-1); 2– b. (7-4); 3– c. (5-22); 4– a. (6-1); 5– b. (2-8)

Boys Lacrosse Answers: 1– a. and c. (4-3-4); 2– a., b. and c. (4-9-2); 3– b. and c. (5-3-2)

Getting to the Core of the Matter

The core is where the human body's center of gravity is located. The core musculature provides the foundation for all movement. Trunk, pelvic and shoulder girdle muscles make up the core. The larger core muscles include the back muscles, abdominals, and hip muscles (gluteals). Smaller core muscles include those between the vertebrae of the spine, the rotator cuff, and hip rotators.



Why are strong core muscles important?

Strong core muscles help provide the athlete with shock absorption (deceleration), balance (stabilization), and force production (acceleration). Maximizing performance of these muscles can improve the athlete's ability to generate more power, improve speed, balance, and agility, and to react to game situations quickly. Strong core muscles also assist in preventing injuries due to collisions, year round training, and help protect athletes who compete in a single sport.

How does the core work to help the athlete?

Large and small core muscles help hold the spine in the position of power. This allows for transfer of forces between the arms and the ground. For a baseball pitcher, this allows them to transfer force from the ground into his arm and generate velocity while throwing. Strong core muscles enable an athlete's arms and legs to work independently and efficiently. Inefficient movement leads to predictable patterns of injury, i.e., hamstring strain in track athletes, and groin strain in hockey players. A weak core with strong arms and/or legs does not allow maximum force to be developed during sporting activities.

Which sports require the athlete to have strong core muscles?

Any athlete will benefit from core strengthening exercises. An athlete's core can never be too strong.

How can you tell if an athlete may need to work on core-strengthening exercises?

The athlete has a nagging injury that will not resolve:

- Recurrent injuries of a similar type
- If, during the course of competition, the athlete fatigues, and loses proper form

- Pain that is present during their sport but not during regular daily activities. (This may progress to the point of being present during daily activities.)
- Inability to perform an abdominal curl up
- Inability to perform 10 push-ups with a "neutral" spine
- Inability to perform a single leg squat and maintain an upright posture:
 - Knee over the toe
 - Level pelvis
 - No loss of balance
 - Minimal use of arms for balance

When would an athlete benefit from a medical professional assisting them with a core strengthening program?

An athlete will benefit from a medical consultation if they have a nagging injury that will not resolve, a recurrent injury of the same or related areas, or multiple areas of injury. They may benefit from a core strengthening program or a performance enhancement program if fatigue affects the athlete's ability to carry out their sport with proper form, if the athlete is unable to perform a push up, a curl up, or a single leg squat as described above, or if the athlete has generalized low back pain.

Henry Ford Health System's Center for Athletic Medicine offers a comprehensive approach to sports medicine, including surgical and non-surgical care, sports rehabilitation, injury prevention, and performance enhancement programs. The HFHS treatment team includes sports medicine fellowship trained orthopedic surgeons, sports medicine fellowship trained primary care physicians, as well as certified athletic trainers and physical therapists.

For further information on this article or for priority appointments for sport injuries please contact Henry Ford Center for Athletic Medicine at 313-972-4216.

NFHS Statement on Medical Appliances

Although still relatively rare, the use of insulin pumps by athletes with diabetes has become more commonplace over the past few years. With the wider use of insulin pumps, as well as other medical devices such as heart monitoring equipment, concerns have been raised regarding the safety of the athlete wearing the device, teammates, opponents, and the device itself. The NFHS SMAC has discussed these issues and come to the following conclusion:

When it is necessary for an athlete to wear a medical appliance (such as an insulin pump) during athletic competitions, the device shall be



Insulin pumps have become more common among athletic participants.

It shall be padded and securely attached to the player's body underneath the uniform. Devices attached to the head (such as hearing aids and cochlear implants) do not need to be padded, but shall be firmly secured to the body. No medical appliance should pose a risk of injury to others. It is recommended that the athlete notify the official of the presence of the medical appliance prior to a contest.

Stretch

Stretching is a fundamental way to improve overall health and fitness. Incorporating a regular flexibility program into your exercise routine will:

- improve circulation
- improve range of motion
- improve posture
- decrease joint stiffness
- decrease muscle tension
- improve your ability to relax

A complete stretching routine can take as little as 10 minutes. The best time to stretch is after you have warmed up and the muscles are warm. Focus on stretching the muscles you use the most during your specific exercise or sport.

Proper Stretching Technique

- *Perform balanced stretching.* Always stretch the muscles on both sides of your body evenly. Don't stretch one side more than the other side.
- *Avoid over-stretching.* Never stretch to the point of pain or discomfort. You will feel slight tension or a pull on the muscle at the peak of the stretch.
- *Go slow!* Always stretch slowly and evenly. Hold the stretch for about fifteen seconds and release slowly as well.
- *Never bounce or jerk while stretching.* This can cause injury as a muscle is pushed beyond it's ability. All stretches should be smooth, and slow.
- *Don't forget to breathe.* Flexibility exercises should be relaxing. Deep easy, even breathing is key to relaxation. Never hold your breath while you stretch.

– About.com Sports Medicine

2010-11 Sports Rules Books Address Concussion Management

The following language will appear in all NFHS Rules Books in 2010-11, as passed by the NF Directors October 2009:

"Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional."

The MHSAA Representative Council will determine in March or May **who** will decide and **when** athletes may be cleared for return to play. Updates will be available on MHSAA.com.



We Shoot, We Tweet, We Score!

Getting I.T. offers helpful hints and instructions pertaining to information technology as it relates to the MHSAA and school sports in general.

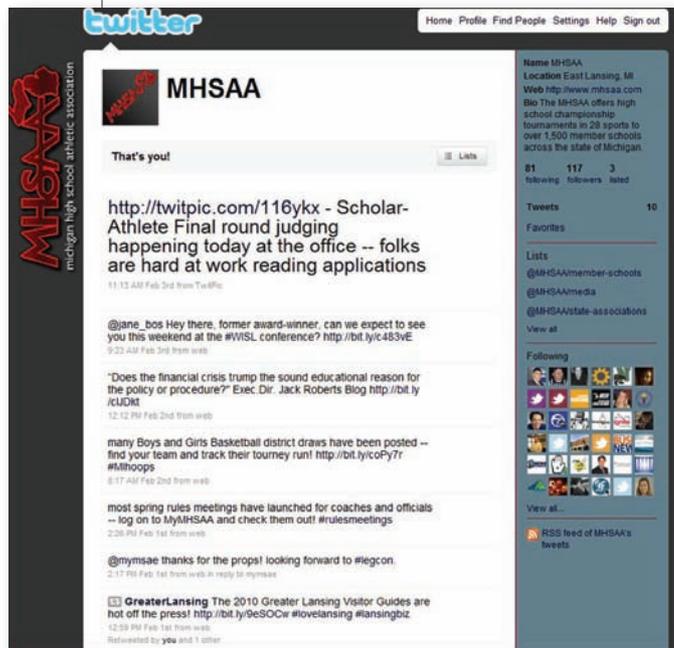
You may have noticed, in recent weeks, that the MHSAA has been popping up in a few places you didn't expect us. That's no accident; in fact, it's by design. Part of the new MHSAA.com makeover includes efforts to engage in social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. On February 1, we tweeted for the very first time to our 100-plus followers. We've been tweeting ever since on everything from rules meetings to tournament draws and Captain's Clinics – and we're just getting started. In this edition of "Getting I.T." we will dive into social media and explore its potential benefits for our association membership and fan base.

Over the past year, the exponential growth of mobile technology and devices has fueled a paradigm shift in the way organizations communicate and exchange information with their constituents and customers. Smartphones (Blackberrys, iPhones, Droids) seem to be on everyone's hip, and email is no longer something many of us have to be in front of a stationary computer to check. Millions of people have the ability to capture an in-game photo from their handheld device and immediately post it on the Internet. More and more, the ability to create instant content is becoming a priority, for both personal and professional uses. That said, the MHSAA remains committed to advances in this field – and will actively participate in the conversation.

The first steps we're taking are, as mentioned, on Twitter. Twitter, by definition, is a free social networking and microblogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on a user's profile page and delivered to that user's subscribers who are known as followers. The primary objective of a user on Twitter is to tell everyone else "What's happening?" Twitter users can access the site using a computer, cell phone, or internet-enabled mobile device.

Our primary objective with all social media is to provide timely and valuable content to our followers: school administrators, coaches, student-athletes, officials, parents and fans. We plan to highlight three distinct areas in tweets to followers:

1. **Announcements:** Updates on MHSAA clinics, meetings, trainings, events and news
2. **Outside Contributions:** Recommendations to followers for non-MHSAA created content (such as links to newspaper articles, sports columns and leadership events)
3. **Live Event Updates:** Up-to-the-minute tournament information, including scores and stats, from on-site MHSAA staff



These topical categories will increase our ability to engage our audience while interacting through a variety of very transparent and open mediums. We'll seek to spark dialogue and discussion on current issues in high school sports by utilizing Twitter first, with other sites to follow.

While Twitter is steadily gaining in popular knowledge, perhaps more familiar to the masses is Facebook. The MHSAA Facebook Fan Page has been launched and as of Feb. 3 had attracted nearly 300 fans – without any promotion of it being an active page! Eventually, this fan page will be populated by posts of schedules, scores and events. The MHSAA will also eventually incorporate video to its social network strategy, by utilizing YouTube as an arm of MHSAA.tv. The MHSAA YouTube Channel will serve as a place for Michigan

The MHSAA joined the social media community in February, launching Twitter and Facebook pages. The Association will add a video presence to its social networking lineup with a YouTube channel on MHSAA.tv during the 2010-11 school year.



high school sports viral videos and clips to be posted, linked to and embedded in all of your other social networking sites.

We're hoping that you'll join us as we move forward into new territory for high school athletic associations across the nation. Our continual strive to be at the forefront of educational athletics has

encouraged us to engage in a new, exciting and informal arena – one in which we are growing more comfortable with each additional follower and fan.

– Andi Osters
MHSAA Program and Development Assistant

Connecting with the MHSAA: Social Networking FAQs

Q: I've never done any of this stuff before. How do I get involved?

A: Well, first and foremost, you're going to need Internet access. The easiest way to sign up for these sites is by visiting their Home Pages and clicking "Join" or "Sign Up." In both cases, the sites give you step-by-step instructions for obtaining your own personal username and account.

Q: I'm already on both Twitter and Facebook – how do I find the MHSAA?

A: Each of these sites has a nifty Search function that will allow you to get to our pages quickly and easily. Simply type "MHSAA" into the Search field to find our logo and page. Another easy way to find us is from **MHSAA.com**. On our home page, you'll notice the Twitter and Facebook logos. Click on your desired site, and the link will take you directly to our page.

Q: Do I have to have a fancy phone to use these sites?

A: Absolutely not. Of course (for frequent users) it's extremely handy and fun to have it at your fingertips, but it's not required. In fact, prior to mobile applications, these sites were hosted and browsed exclusively on desktops and laptop computers. Posting and viewing from the Web is just as acceptable as doing so while on-the-go.

Q: Who's actually running these MHSAA accounts?

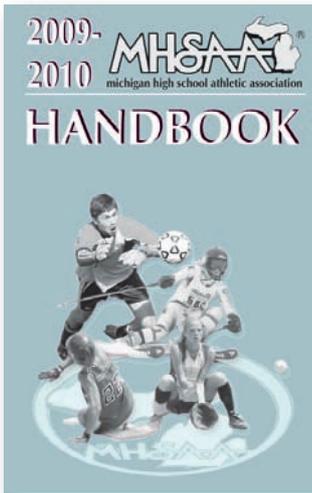
A: Good question. We've developed a small team of staff that will update these sites as needed. Typically, posting will come from our East Lansing office. Sometimes, multiple staff will tweet or post from multiple tournament sites and events. If you're looking for a specific MHSAA staff person, the best way to contact them is still by calling our office, or via email.

Making Exceptions, Making Changes

In the fall issue of benchmarks, "Why Do You Have All Those Stupid Rules?" was the topic of this section. In this issue, the process of changing and making exceptions to regulations is explored.

"OK, I agree with the need for the rule; but it doesn't fit the current circumstances. It shouldn't apply here."

Often, after administrators have outlined a solid case for a need for the rule, the challenge changes. The challenger will agree the rule is necessary but should not be applied to their child, or to their child's team.



In cases where this statement is made, MHSAA member school administrators may request that the MHSAA Executive Committee review the application of the rule. The MHSAA Constitution authorizes the Executive Committee to waive all rules except the maximum age limitation if, in the judgment of the Executive Committee, the rule fails to

serve the purpose for which it is intended or works an undue hardship on the party involved.

As school administrators who have devoted their lives to students, Executive Committee members are predisposed to favor an exception being made for each student. However, the Executive Committee has the responsibility to not only protect as much as possible the individual; the committee must also protect the program, its values and standards, so it can continue to provide benefits to other students.

It is not merely participation in sports that benefits students. The value is in the standards which students must meet for the privilege of participation. As we raise standards of eligibility and conduct, we tend to raise the value of participation. As we make exceptions to rules, we run the real risk of diminishing the benefits of participation in interscholastic athletics.

Therefore, the Executive Committee will attempt to avoid establishing precedent that will undercut the ability of the rule(s) to be applied in similar circumstances in the future, and devalue the athletic program. Member schools come to depend on consistent application of the rules to provide consistency and competitive equity.

"I still don't like it. How do I get that rule changed?"

Sometimes after our best efforts to explain the rule are not successful and the request to waive the rule is not approved, someone will want to change the rule for the future. Administrators of school sports should then be ready with a description of the process, and cautions for proceeding too quickly.

. . .one thing that is certain from a look at the history of rules for interscholastic athletics in Michigan is this: there will continue to be proposals for change.

Whenever we consider why we have a rule, we should also consider carefully: "What would happen if we did away with the rule?"

- What problems might emerge or re-emerge?
- What problems were our predecessors trying to solve by this rule and would they return if we were without this rule?

Nevertheless, one thing that is certain from a look at the history of rules for interscholastic athletics in Michigan is this: there will continue to be proposals for change.

Proposals come from the boards of education and/or administration of member schools, from their local leagues, from associations of coaches and administrators. They usually are directed through one of the association's committees (e.g., a proposal regarding football would be referred to the Football Committee, which consists of football coaches, school administrators and contest officials). If the committee recommends adoption of the proposal, that is reported to the 19-member MHSAA Representative Council. If the Council adopts the recommendation, it becomes a part of the General Information Bulletin for that sport's tournament or a part of the *Handbook* which each school district receives with the MHSAA Membership Resolution. When the local school board approves the Membership Resolution, it adopts the change and agrees to its application locally.

The Only Official Interpretations are Those Received in Writing



No. 1 on the list in the MHSAA's stated mission? To increase and promote the educational value of interscholastic programs throughout the state.

If the subject matter of the proposal is to make a change in the MHSAA Constitution, then all member schools vote and a 2/3 majority of those voting must affirm the change for it to become effective.

In many cases, MHSAA staff will conduct surveys regarding some of the topics either before or after the idea has been made into a formal proposal. Many proposals will be discussed at MHSAA Update Meetings in October and at a meeting for league and conference leadership in February, and at any meetings where staff is invited to lead discussion of the topic (e.g., meetings of athletic directors, principals, superintendents, boards of education, officials and coaches).

Speaking to the NCAA Presidents Commission National Forum in 1988, Ivy Group Executive Director Jeffrey H. Orleans outlined four evaluative criteria which he believes would help produce fewer rules but rules which focus on fundamental values of the institutions sponsoring athletics.

- The first criterion would be how well the proposals foster an attitude of self-discipline within the schools. "Change begins at home," he says. (The immense size of the NCAA Manual and the gradually increasing length of the *MHSAA Handbook* are direct reflections of the absence of this attitude and the resulting lack of "institutional control.")
- The second criterion would be how well the proposals serve a positive value on behalf of students, rather than simply a negative one in terms of institutional competition.

- The third criterion would be how well the proposals are supported by the membership. "We should try to assure legislation commands substantial allegiance among a broad spectrum of the membership, not simply majority votes on behalf of particular viewpoints at particular times." This too helps to foster the level of "institutional control" necessary for a voluntary organization to effectively execute a regulatory function or arbiter's role.
- Fourth, proposals should provide wide opportunity for membership input and debate. "Each institution must have a clear voice in formulating legislation and adequate information to use that voice."

Beyond Mr. Orleans' excellent guidance, those advancing proposals for change within the MHSAA should pay particular attention to the MHSAA's stated mission:

- "1. Increase and promote the educational value of interscholastic athletic programs throughout the state.
- "2. Assist member institutions in their regulation of interscholastic athletic eligibility and competition.
- "3. Promote uniformity, predictability and competitive equity in the application of eligibility rules for athletic contests.
- "4. Promote the physical welfare of participating students."

Annual Contract

In Michigan, schools make the rules for themselves. The rules cover hundreds of policies and procedures for administration of the local programs.

In addition, schools have the option to adopt rules of qualification into the postseason tournaments conducted by the MHSAA. MHSAA rules – prepared by the elected representatives of member schools (Representative Council) – are not to govern regular season competition, but to determine the qualifying standards for MHSAA sponsored and conducted postseason tournaments.

An ancillary but still important benefit is that by adopting these tournament qualifying rules, schools gain a greater degree of standardization – a more level playing field – for their regular season competition.

For MHSAA member schools, these and other agreements are published in the MHSAA Handbook; and each year the local governing boards of member schools sign a Membership Resolution, a contract really, that they will enforce those rules locally, while the MHSAA agrees that the rules will not be changed during that year.

The expectations of member schools include:

- Educating student-athletes, staff and other involved personnel about MHSAA rules and procedures.
- Monitoring compliance year-around.
- Investigating possible violations and reporting findings.
- Administering penalties.

Schools do so to keep the program fair. They do so to keep the program healthy for the people involved. They do so to keep the program consistent with the mission of the sponsors: namely, education of students by schools.

Rules do not exist for their own sake, but to address known problems, to attempt to solve those problems, in order to strive to provide the elusive product of a state high school association's work: competitive equity.

The Foreword to the Handbook of the Michigan High School Athletic Association has for many years included these two paragraphs:

“The MHSAA’s primary purpose in promulgation of rules for eligibility minimums and competition maximums is to establish conditions by which students and schools may qualify for MHSAA postseason tournaments - in other words, to promote a level playing field for MHSAA-sponsored tournaments.

“Because entry into the MHSAA’s tournaments requires season-long, sometimes school-year long and even year-round adherence to basic rules, member schools reap an important byproduct: they have some standardized rules for their regular season competition – in other words, a more level playing field for the rest of their interscholastic experience.”

The *MHSAA Handbook* has for many years stated the four "Purposes of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc." Included is this:

“3. Promote uniformity, predictability and competitive equity in the application of eligibility rules for athletic contests.”

Similarly, promotion of competitive equity is in the stated or implied purpose for or value of the sponsoring organizations of school sports nationwide.

The 2010-11 MHSAA Membership Resolution will be sent in May to all school superintendents to be included on the agenda for board of education action prior to Aug. 1. Coverage under the MHSAA-purchased catastrophic accident medical insurance policy and access to MHSAA due process is unavailable to a school for the 2010-11 school year until its Membership Resolution is received.



Schedule Membership Resolution for Board of Education Meetings

When the Representative Council meets each May, the rules are finalized for the coming school year, and meeting minutes are mailed to each member school. Every member school Board of Education or governing body of a nonpublic school wishing to join the MHSAA for the coming school year must vote to do so and adopt the rules as its own. The MHSAA Membership Resolution must be signed by the Board of Education and returned to the MHSAA. When membership lapses insurance coverage, among other matters, is jeopardized.

Administrators: Please be sure to schedule the MHSAA Membership Resolution for your upcoming Board of Education Meeting – Membership Resolution Forms will be mailed to the Superintendent and Athletic Director the week of May 10, 2010.

The Limitations of Rules

What follows are excerpts from How: Why How We Do Anything Means Everything . . . in Business (and in Life) by Dov Seidman (John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2007)

To pursue our endeavors and achieve our desired success, we need certainty, consistency and predictability, a hard floor from which to take a leap. Basketball players can jump higher than beach volleyball players can because they play on a hard wooden floor. It is much more difficult to leap high with the sand shifting beneath your feet.

In democratic societies, we look to rules – in the form of laws – to provide the certainty, consistency and predictability we require . . . but as the century came to a close, we began to sense that rules were letting us down.

There are good reasons for this. For one, the way we write rules often makes them inefficient when governing human conduct. Rules, of course, don't come out of thin air. Legislatures and organizations adopt them usually to proscribe unwanted behaviors but typically in reaction to events. They lower speed limits after automobile accidents become too frequent, regulate pit bulls after a series of dog bites, or institute new expense-tracking procedures after someone is caught trying to get reimbursed for their new iPod. Rules have been established for a reason, but most people are out of touch with the rationale and spirit of why. They don't read legislative histories and so have a thin, superficial relationship to the rules. This, given the proper set of circumstances, leads people to explore ways around them, to find loopholes.

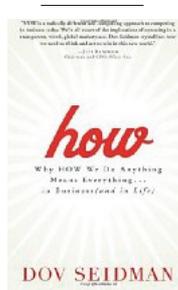
Rules fail because you cannot write a rule to contain every possible behavior in the vast spectrum of human conduct. There will always be gray areas, and therefore, given the right circumstances, opportunities or outside pressures, some people might be motivated to circumvent them. When they

do, our typical response is to just make more. Rules, then, become part of the problem.

Rules achieve good floors, minimum standards of behavior, and they prevent bad things from happening – if people follow them. But people transgress, so we write rules to prevent further transgression, yet because rules are inherently limited, people find a way to transgress again. People who feel overregulated in turn feel distrusted.

This creates a downward spiral of rule making which causes lasting detriment to the trust we need to sustain society. With each successive failure of rules, our faith in the very ability of rules to govern human conduct decreases. Rules, the principal arm of the way we govern ourselves, lose their power, destroying our trust in both those who make them and the institutions that they govern.

There is something in the nature of rules and laws that reduces their effectiveness in certain realms of human behavior. How do you legislate fairness? What enforceable language can we use to enshrine into law a powerful value like that? You can (and we do) write long lists proscribing a number of behaviors you think are unfair, but it is impossible to write them all without creating hopeless contradictions, inequities and loopholes. In business, for example, how do you write a contract that obligates you to delight a customer? To exceed expectations, or even surprise customers? You can't. You can set minimum deliverables, optimum schedules and basic compensation, but you can't construct language that will mandate that extra measure of performance that builds long-term, successful relationships. By setting floors of behavior, rules unintentionally also set ceilings.



The following pages include business news from the MHSAA, including some items formerly found in the *Bulletin*.

Following is a guide to the information previously in fall *Bulletins* now solely on MHSAA.com. As you'll note, most information has moved to the "Administrators" page under "Schools."

- **Representative Council, Executive Committee and UP Athletic Committee Minutes:** "Administrators"
- **Sport Committee Minutes:** on corresponding "Sport" page
- **Officials Committees:** "Officials"
- **All other Committees:** "Administrators"
- **Cooperative Program Listings:** "Administrators"
- **Opt-Ups and Classification:** "Administrators"
- **Regulations Violations:** under "Administrators"
- **MHSAA Committee Members:** "Administrators"
- **Non-Faculty Coaches:** "Coaches" & "Administrators" pages

IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATIVE DATES

April 1	Winter Official Ratings Deadline
April 1	Spring Rules Meeting Last Date
April 23	Upper Peninsula AD In-Service (Bark River)
May 2- 3	Representative Council Meeting
Aug. 1	MHSAA Membership Resolution
Aug. 5 or 17	New AD Orientation at MHSAA
Oct. 6	Kalamazoo Update & AD In-service
Oct. 11	Comstock Park Update & In-service
Oct. 15	Frankenmuth Update & In-service
Oct. 18	Gaylord Update & AD In-service
Oct. 20	Lansing Update & AD In-service
Oct. 27	Warren Update & Charter School AD In-service
Oct. 29	Marquette Update Meeting

Efficiency is Effective...

The MHSAA is always willing to assist with issues concerning Association regulations. Please remember, however, the most efficient method of communication with the MHSAA on eligibility questions is through the athletic director or principal. Athletic directors should gather all information necessary on a question and then call or write the MHSAA. Coaches or parents calling the MHSAA on eligibility matters can create confusion and delay. ADs or principals are encouraged to contact the MHSAA office directly. Please follow this efficient path of communication.

MHSAA Representative Council

Daveda Colbert*

Area Superintendent
Detroit Public Schools
City of Detroit

James Derocher**, President

Superintendent
Negaunee Public Schools
Class C-D — Upper Peninsula

Ken Dietz*

Athletic Director
Watervliet High School
Class C-D — Southwestern Michigan

Dan Flynn*

Faculty Member/Coach
Escanaba High School
Class A-B — Upper Peninsula

Kyle Guerrant (ex-officio)

Director
Coordinated School, Health & Safety Programs Unit, Michigan Dept. of Education, Lansing
Designee

Rudy Godefroidt*

Superintendent
Hemlock Public Schools
Junior High/Middle Schools

Scott Grimes**, Vice President

Principal
Grand Haven High School
Statewide At-Large

Robert A. Hansen**

Superintendent
East Jordan Public Schools
Class C-D — Northern Lower Peninsula

Kris Isom*

Athletic Director
Adrian Madison High School
Class C-D — Southeastern Michigan

Karen Leinaar*

Athletic Director
Benzie Central High School
Statewide At-Large

Vic Michaels**, Secretary-Treasurer

Director of Physical Education & Athletics
Archdiocese of Detroit
Private and Parochial Schools

Steve Newkirk**

Principal
Clare Middle School
Junior High/Middle Schools

Peter C. Ryan**

Athletic Director
Saginaw Township Community Schools
Class A-B — Northern Lower Peninsula

Fred Smith**

Athletic Director
Buchanan High School
Class A-B — Southwestern Michigan

Paula Steele*

Principal
East Lansing High School
Appointee

Arnetta Thompson*

Dean of Students
Grand Rapids Union High School
Appointee

John Thompson**

Athletic Director
Brighton High School
Class A-B — Southeastern Michigan

Mark Woodson**

Director of Student Development and Athletics
Romulus High School
Appointee

Wendy Zdeb**

Principal
Rochester High School
Appointee

*Term Expires December 2011

**Term Expires December 2010

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL & UPPER PENINSULA ATHLETIC COMMITTEE NOMINATION PROCEDURES FOR 2010-11

The Representative Council has established procedures for indicating the intention to run for elected positions on the MHSAA Representative Council.

1. Any individual who is a representative of a member school (administrator, faculty member or board of education member) may submit his or her name to the MHSAA office by March 15.
 - A. Candidates must have superintendent or principal approval in writing.
 - B. It is essential that candidates be qualified for the position they seek.
 - 1) If the position is for a representative of a certain area of the state, they must represent a school of the appropriate class (A and B or C and D) in that geographic area.
 - 2) If they seek the position of a statewide at large representative, they must be a faculty or board of education member of an MHSAA member school. This includes administrators but not non-faculty coaches.
 - 3) If they seek the position of statewide representative of junior high/middle schools or private and parochial high schools, they must be faculty (teacher or administrator) or board members for such schools.

2. Names submitted will be published on **MHSAA.com** in May, in the fall issue of benchmarks in August, and on the ballot mailed to member schools in September.

Elections will be held in the fall for the following positions:

Class A and B Schools — 3 openings
 Northern Lower Peninsula
 Southwestern Section
 Southeastern Section

Class C and D Schools—2 openings
 Upper Peninsula
 Northern Lower Peninsula

Statewide At-Large —1 opening
Jr. High/Middle Schools —1 opening
Private and Parochial —1 opening

The procedures established for indicating the intention to run for elected positions are the same for the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee as those stated above for the Representative Council.

Elections will be held in the fall for the following:

Class D U.P. School—1 opening
Athletic Coach—1 opening

NOTE: Candidates will first appear on the Administrators page of **MHSAA.com** in May.

ANALYSIS OF MHSAA MEMBERSHIP January 1, 2010

768 Total High Schools

- 657 (86%) Total Public Schools
 - 52 (7%) Charter (Public School Academies)
 - 605 (79%) Traditional Schools
- 111 (15%) Total Nonpublic Schools
 - 100 (13%) Religious
 - 11 (1%) Secular Non-Public

803 Total Junior High/Middle Schools

- 724 (90%) Total Public Schools
 - 30 (4%) Charter (Public School Academies)
 - 694 (86%) Traditional Schools
- 79 (10%) Total Nonpublic Schools
 - 72 (9%) Religious
 - 7 (0.9%) Secular

Just What the Doctor Ordered

“War stories” and clichés so often dominate sports literature and the conventions for athletic administrators that they rarely offer meaningful opportunities for personal reflection and professional improvement. If one is intent upon improving performance in the field of school sports administration, it’s often more productive to look to other professions for challenge and inspiration.

Both are found in Dr. Atul Gawande’s extraordinarily readable *Better – A Surgeon’s Notes on Performance* (Picador, 2007).

With medicine as the field of expertise – “or any endeavor that involves risk and responsibility” – the author examines three core requirements for success: (1) giving sufficient attention to detail (“diligence”); (2) doing right; and (3) new thinking (“ingenuity”); and the book provides catchy statistics and compelling true stories to develop those themes.

On **diligence**, Dr. Gawande writes:

- Success requires making a hundred small steps go right.
- Lack of success is not a problem of ignorance; it’s a problem of compliance.
- Diligent attention to detail coupled with great ambition yields unexpected results.
- Success comes through a commitment to making a science of performance.

Regarding **doing right**, Dr. Gawande states:

- Always fight. Always look for what more you could do.

Read any good books lately? News articles? We’d love to know. Submit recommendations to benchmarks@mhsaa.com.



“ . . . better is possible. It does not take genius. It takes diligence. It takes moral clarity. It takes ingenuity. And, above all, it takes a willingness to try.” – Dr. Atul Gawande

- But the fight is not always to do more; it is to do right. And regarding **ingenuity**:
- Openness drives improvement.
- Focus, aggressiveness and inventiveness lead to the extraordinary.
- What is troubling is not just being average, but settling for it. In whatever we do, writes Dr. Gawande, the best hope lies not in expanding research but in raising performance. “It requires will, attention to detail and creativity,” and “it is possible anywhere and by anyone.

“ . . . better is possible. It does not take genius. It takes diligence. It takes moral clarity. It takes ingenuity. And above all, it takes a willingness to try.”

Dr. Gawande concludes with five suggestions for becoming a “positive deviant” in whatever our chosen field:

1. Ask an unscripted question.
2. Don’t complain.
3. Count something (“If you count something you find interesting, you will learn something interesting.”)
4. Write something.
5. Change (“ . . . make yourself an early adapter. Look for the opportunity to change.”).

For more from Dr. Gawande, visit gawande.com.

What Are You Saying

It is certainly true that what we do is more important than what we say; but what we say is far from insignificant, and probably more important than we imagine. Two books offer good advice.

Words That Work – It’s Not What You Say, It’s What People Hear (Hyperion, 2007) by Dr. Frank Luntz is self-promoting, but putting that aside, quite helpful. And you can find more at luntz.com.

Even better is the best seller *Made To Stick – Why Some Ideas Survive*



And Others Die (Random House, 2007) by Chip and Dan Heath. They help us prepare mission statements that

will make people **care**, which is one of the key characteristics of “stickiness.” See madetostick.com for more.

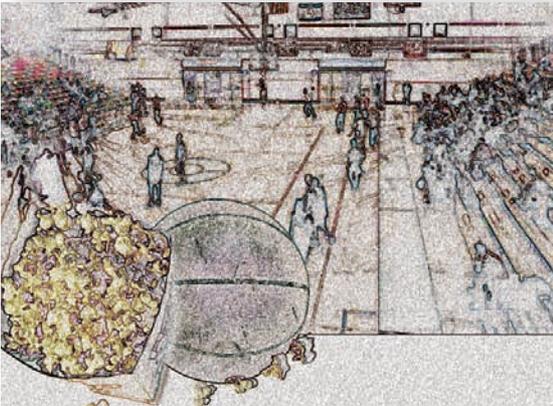
Dr. Luntz is most helpful for oral communication; the Heath brothers resonate for the written word.

Poetry on the Hardwood

Losing Season (Cavan Kerry Press, 2009) by Michigan's own Jack Ridl is the 2009 Sports Education Book of the Year of the Institute for International Sport News.

The author is a professor emeritus of English at Hope College and the son of basketball coach C. G. "Buzz" Ridl who coached at Westminster College and the University of Pittsburgh in the 1950s and 1960s.

Losing Season is a book of poetry that captures the feeling of a small town high school basketball



season from the perspective of players, coaches, family and fans.

Selections have been featured twice on Garrison Keillor's "The Writer's Almanac," and also on NPR's "The Story" in conjunction with the 50th anniversary celebration of the 1959 Westminster College basketball team.

Especially powerful is "First Cut," ending with "The others went back to look for something else to do, wished they'd never tried . . ."

And capturing the all-consuming 24/7 preoccupation of the coach's mind is, "Coach Sits in Church Drawing a New Offense on the Front of the Sunday Bulletin."

If poetry is your cup of tea – and even if it's not – this collection will resonate with those who have been through the high school sports experience.

Readers can feel themselves sitting inside a rural gym on a cold winter's night and empathizing with the roster of characters in *Losing Season*, a compilation of poetry depicting the "Coach" who might well have been your own.

Bulletin Board Material

"Education is a social process. Education is growth. Education is, not a preparation for life; education is life itself." – Philosopher John Dewey

"You find that you have peace of mind and can enjoy yourself, get more sleep, and rest when you know that it was a one hundred percent effort that you gave - win or lose." – Hockey Hall of Famer Gordie Howe

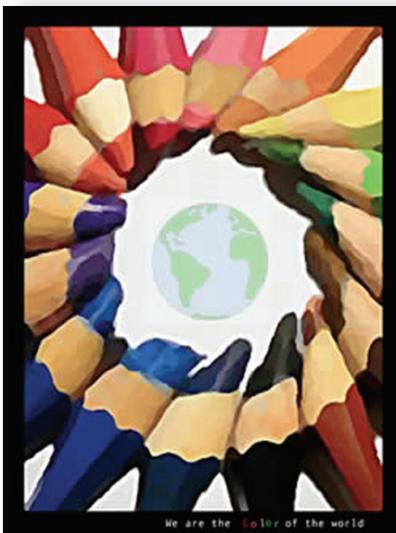
"A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him." – Journalist David Brinkley

"Friendship ... is not something you learn in school. But if you haven't learned the meaning of friendship, you really haven't learned anything." – Muhammad Ali

History and Purpose of Youth Exchange

The concept of youth exchange programs began more than a half a century ago and has seen transformation throughout the years. The nature of exchange has been shaped by the political environment of the country and the world.

The first generation of exchange started in the 1940's – post World War II. The Fulbright-Hays Act (aimed to increase mutual understanding between the peoples of the US and other countries, through the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills) was enacted, and high ranking government officials have supported exchange ever since. The notion was to “exchange” young people from countries formerly at war, establishing a legacy of hope for future generations.



“We are the color of the world,” pronounces this year’s CSIET manual.

government became more involved and placed an emphasis on partnerships for learning and cultural bridges. There were new priorities: develop mutual understanding and respect, reach out to emerging societies (with programs such as YES, NSLI-Y, FLEX, A-SMYLE), increase funding for government exchange programs, mandate closer control and alignment with foreign policy and re-emphasize content over volume.

At that time, the US Department of State reasserted its authority over youth exchange with a required evaluation sent directly to them. CSIET would receive the results of the evaluation but would no longer administer the evaluation process. CSIET, in a slightly different role, enhanced its outreach and advocacy efforts. In addition to publishing the Approved List and monitoring complaints, CSIET now assists in state legislative matters, research and promotion of youth exchange.

After the last decade of wars and conflicts, exchange programs are vital in today’s interconnected world to build bridges of understanding. Youth exchange is particularly critical as it allows young people the opportunity to gain exposure to American families, culture and values at a time in their lives when they form deep impressions. The exchange students take home an understanding and often an appreciation for American people, society and values.

During 2008-09, Michigan had 2011 students attending MHSAA member schools through CSIET approved programs, second most in the nation.

The process for a foreign exchange student to be eligible for interscholastic athletics in MHSAA member schools has not changed in years, but it is sometimes misunderstood. To be eligible, a foreign exchange student must be in a CSIET Approved program, placed in a host family residing in a public school district or school service area in which the student enrolls. The student must be otherwise eligible and have a current physical form on file with the school and a satisfactory previous and current semester record as well as undergraduate standing (has not received a diploma or completed the courses to graduate from a secondary school in another country).

The student is eligible for a maximum of the first two consecutive semesters or three consecutive trimesters. No other exceptions to the Transfer Regulation may be applied.

– Gina Mazzolini
MHSAA Assistant Director

After the last decade of wars and conflicts, exchange programs are vital in today’s interconnected world to build bridges of understanding.

The second generation of exchange was in the 1980’s during the Cold War era when the country was aggressive to outspend and defeat communism. Then President Reagan launched the Youth Exchange Initiative and encouraged schools and communities to host international high school exchange students. Interest in youth exchange was on the rise.

With the increase in student exchange, there was a need for an organization to create standards to ensure a quality exchange program. The US Information Agency convened an Ad Hoc committee to decide how to structure and organize an association that represented a true partnership for those interested in international educational travel. The organization would become Council on Standards for International Educational Travel.

The purpose of the organization would be to “raise the standard of international educational travel on behalf of schools, communities and educational groups.” The initial task of the organization was to set standards, evaluate programs and publish an approved list of such programs and develop activities for the purpose of raising standards of these programs. Today, CSIET (celebrating its 25th year) still has the strong support from exchange organizations, schools and educational associations and the athletic/activity associations.

Early in the 2000’s (post 9-11) brought about the third generation of youth exchange. The federal

Tennis Study Circle Addresses Spirit of Competition

The MHSAA staff convened a Tennis Study Circle recently to discuss recurring issues in the sport. The Study Circle was a new way to identify, discuss and resolve issues pertaining to equitable competition. The group was facilitated by an individual from outside the organization who had no preconceived notions of what would fix the problem. The purpose of the meeting(s) was to “strengthen the spirit of tennis.” The desired outcomes were: 1) to discuss the picture of tennis today both strength and struggles; 2) to brainstorm fortifying strategies of current policies, procedures and penalties; 3) to choose next steps for piloting the best ideas.

The overarching issues were: Why is it important to follow the MHSAA rules and what rules are most often violated? What emerged was a general theme on lineup issues: stacking, substitution and challenge matches.

After much discussion, but not unanimous agreement, the Tennis Study Circle determined five proposals to send to the MHSAA Tennis Committee.

The following Spirit Agreement is the result of the two days of meetings.

A SPIRIT AGREEMENT OF MHSAA TENNIS COACHES

Eliminating Stacking

“Stacking” is having players *not* in ranked order as defined by the MHSAA rules. Any lineup changes must be verified by current challenge matches.

Proposal A

- For MHSAA Regional Tournaments, a direct substitution shall be used.
- For conference meets, conference rules apply; if no conference rule, the MHSAA rule applies.
- For non-conference meets, direct substitution shall be used.
- For illness or injury likely to last more than two weeks, a direct substitution is not allowed. The lineup must be moved to rank order.
- For injury or illness within two weeks of the MHSAA Regional tournament, a direct substitution shall be used.

Proposal B

- A team’s lineup in rank order must be set and posted on MHSAA website not later than three weeks before the MHSAA Regional tournament entry deadline.
- A player must play 51 percent of the individual matches in the flight where he or she will play at the Regional tournament.

Proposal C

- Allow the four interscholastic scrimmages to happen any time during the season.

Proposal D

- A coach must have written verification to explain his/her lineup, demonstrating a consistent format throughout the year for that team.

Proposal E

- The Michigan High School Tennis Coaches Association shall appoint an Ethics Committee to serve as an advisory committee to support MHSAA regulations and serve as a resource for dealing with local issues and grievances as needed.



“Stacking” tennis lineups has become prevalent in recent years, breaching the spirit of school competition and creating the need for a focus group to search for remedies.



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- Doug Chickering
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