

MENTOR

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

Vol. XVII No. 1

Striving for Safer Landings

According to "Happy Landings," *Athletic Business*, August 2002, research continues in efforts to determine the safest methods to pole vault. Poles, landing pad size, helmets, padded surfaces around the approach, landing pad and vault box all continue to be explored. The report adds that spotters can be used but care must be exercised to provide protection so spotters are not at risk. *Athletic Business* concludes that "it is essential that administrators place a renewed emphasis on the education of coaches, and that coaches place a corresponding emphasis on teaching athletes proper vaulting techniques."

Coaching Box Recommended

The National Pole Vault Safety Committee is recommending that a coaching box (see diagram below) be painted on the cover of the landing pad that is 8' deep and 10' wide. The box would start 3'6" back from the back edge of the vault box.

a. The purpose of the coaching box is to serve as a guide to help coaches and athletes make good decisions and performance adjustments.

- b. For the safest and most efficient vaulting, the vaulters head and shoulders should land inside the box during all drills and competitive jumps.
- c. If the head and shoulders are landing outside the rear of the box, then the vaulter needs a stiffer pole to slow their pole speed down, this adjustment is approximately 5 pounds.
- d. If the vaulter is landing off to one side or the other with the head and shoulders outside the coaching box, the vaulter needs to lower their grip and learn how to plant and swing in a straight line into the middle of the pad.
- e. If the vaulter is landing with his or her head and shoulders in front of the coaches box, they need to lower their grip and perhaps go to a slightly softer pole.



front edge of the vaulting box to the back of the pad. There must be 16'5" of landing pad behind the vault box.

3. The height (or thickness) of the landing pad to be a minimum of 26".

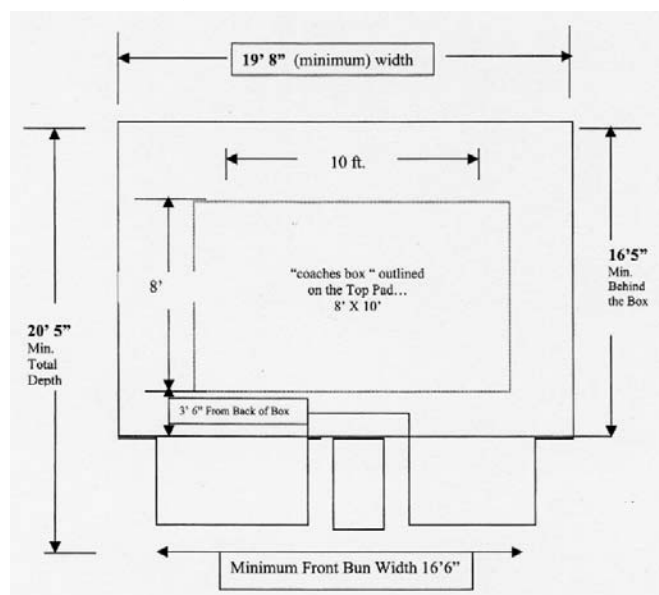
4. A collar be placed around the vault box to help minimize injuries by vaulters falling into the box.

5. Recommended: A coaching box be painted on the cover of the landing pad that is 8' deep and 10' wide. The box would start 3'6" behind the back edge of the vault box.

Upgrades: It is possible to upgrade an existing landing pad. The height of the upgrade must be the same as your existing pad. This upgrade must be connected to the main pad and all seams covered so the vaulter cannot fall through the crack and strike the ground. A common cover must cover entire landing pad.

Major manufacturers are aware of the National Task Force Committees work and will make available a pad large enough to meet the new rule.

The NFHS rules committee has made these minimum dimensions effective for the 2003 season.



Coaching Box Diagram

Pole Vault Landing Pad Requirements

The NFHS rules committee studied the pole vault landing pads in conjunction with a national task force assigned by the American Society for Testing and Measurements (ASTM) and developed the following requirements:

- 1. Minimum Width of the pad to be 19'8"
- 2. Minimum Length of the pad to be 20'5" from the

Going to Bat for Safety

In keeping safety at the forefront of interscholastic athletics, it is important for coaches and administrators to stay current on equipment restrictions. Note the following bat restrictions in baseball and softball for 2003.

Baseball

As announced at the 2002 MHSAA Baseball Rules Interpretation Meetings, The National Federation Baseball Rules Committee adopted a Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) performance standard for all non-wood bats in high school baseball competition, effective Jan. 1, 2003. All non-wood bats must have a BESR certification mark (etched) in order to be legal for use in high school competition beginning with the 2003 season. MHSAA member schools and officials are reminded that the BESR certification mark is a requirement at all levels of baseball (grades 7-12) beginning with the 2003 season.

Softball

NFHS Softball Rule 1-3-5 states that, "All bats shall meet the ASA bat performance standard and such bats shall be labeled with the permanent (etched) ASA approved certification mark. Only bats with the permanent ASA approved certification mark will be legal for use at all levels in 2003."

The National Federation recently received communications from the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) regarding the banning of several bat models for failing to meet performance standards when randomly tested. The bats in question were at one time certified, as the specific model met the standard when originally tested. Therefore, since the ASA has determined that these particular models no longer meet the ASA standard, they will no longer be in conformance with NFHS rules. Until further notice, bats of the following models containing an ASA certification mark are no longer allowed for MHSAA member school softball competition.

ASA has also established a "re-certification" process for manufacturers of banned bats. It involves those who have purchased or are in possession of one of the bats sending it back to the manufacturer

(at their cost) to retrofit or rebalance the bat to correct the problem. The manufacturer will then label the bat with the "re-certification" mark.

The most recent information regarding ASA banned bats and the re-certification process is available at the following Web site address: <http://www.asasoftball.com/about/asabannedbats.pdf>

ASA Banned Softball Bats

DeMarini - B-52
DeMarini - Doublewall Classic
DeMarini - Doublewall Distance
DeMarini - Fatboy
Easton - STS4
Louisville Slugger - SB103 (a.k.a. Genesis)
Miken - Velocit-E Ultra (Balanced)
Miken - Velocit-E Ultra (Maxload)
Steele's - Triple XXX
Worth - 3DX
Worth - EST5
Worth - EST23
Worth - ESTL
Worth - PST (a.k.a. PST 137)
Worth - SSEST

It is important that the member school be alert when purchasing the replacement units in order to avoid the "great bargains" which may become associated with a closeout of non-compliant bats. If you are able to share this information with parents it will be appreciated because it will encourage them to purchase only those bats with the "BESR" etching for their children. In the past unsuspecting parents, purchasing a holiday present, have found themselves owners of bats which did not comply with current requirements; bats which could not be used during the high school season.

If your softball or baseball program or players have illegal bats it is necessary to remove them from the inventory used for games. While there is no rule regarding the bats which can be used in practice we



recommend that the school team not per-

Scholar-Athlete Award News

We're pleased to report that Farm Bureau Insurance will again sponsor the MHSAA Scholar-Athlete Award, with 24 students to receive \$1000 college scholarships after final judging.

The application process has been streamlined for 2002-2003. All applications materials and program rules will only be available online via download (click here for forms), or on electronic files on the CD-ROM sent to schools in early September. The only mailing schools will receive will be the master application list and a memo announcing the program.

The due date for receipt of applications is prior to 4 pm, December 7, 2002.

mit illegal equipment to be used. It is a weak practice to permit the use of illegal equipment in one setting when the same equipment is prohibited in another.

MENTOR appears online three times per year by the Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc., 1661 Ramblewood Drive, East Lansing, Michigan 48823 (phone 517-332-5046). Editor: Bill Bupp, Assistant Director

MENTOR welcomes contributions of articles, information or photos which focus on coaching in Michigan.

Sanctioning Procedures

The *MHSAA Handbook*, Regulation II, Sections 5 and 6 lists requirements for competitions which are hosted by non-member entities, involve teams or individuals from another state or are held out of the state. Depending on the situation, the following actions should be taken:

1. **No action by MHSAA** – Competition held in Michigan, conducted by member schools, needs no MHSAA approval. All such meets shall use MHSAA registered officials and rules of competition adopted by the MHSAA for that sport.
2. **Approval by the MHSAA** – Any meet or tournament with three or more teams held within Michigan for Michigan schools and sponsored by a non-member school or organization must be approved by the MHSAA prior to the contest.
The non-member school/organization must submit in writing the terms and conditions of the competition. The sponsors must assure that the competition will be conducted in accordance with MHSAA eligibility regulations, using MHSAA registered officials and rules of competition adopted by the MHSAA for that sport.
3. **Sanction by State Association** – Interstate competition, which is sponsored by a member school and involves three or more schools from border states, must be sanctioned by the state association of the host school, as well as the respective association of the state or states of participating schools.

The sanction form is on page 96 of the *Handbook*, and on the NFHS website (www.nfhs.org). The application must be received by the state association at least 30 calendar days before the event.

4. **Sanction by the NFHS** –
 - A. Any interstate competition involving two or more schools which is cosponsored by an organization outside the high school community (e.g. a university, shoe company, etc.), in addition to being sponsored by a member school, shall require sanction by the NFHS office.
 - B. Schools must also receive NFHS sanction and state association sanction when:
 - (1) Eight or more schools, at least one of which is from a state that does not border the host state; or
 - (2) Five or more states, at least one of which does not border the host state.
- * Whenever an event requires NFHS approval, there is a **\$75** fee made payable to the NFHS. This payment must be sent along with the request for sanction to the state association office. The host school or the organization that is hosting the event is required to have the request submitted to the state association office at least **90** days before the event to avoid being charged a late fee.

Out-of-State Practice Guidelines

The practice of taking a team on a "spring trip" is a separate issue from sanctioning procedures. Any school which conducts **practice sessions** out of state at a site more than 600 miles round-trip must submit to the MHSAA office a Travel Form for Out-of-State Practice. **This does not allow schools to compete in a scrimmage, practice or competition with a team from another school.**

The form can be found on page 106 of the *Handbook* or on the MHSAA Web site.



Remember to attend a PACE course!

Click the logo above for a complete 2002-03 schedule and course information

MORE THAN "X's & O's"

Center Grove High School Athletic Director, Jon Zwitt of Greenwood, Ind., as reported in *Athletic Business*, "Pressure Points," June 2002 has addressed burnout with about 40 coaches he supervises.

Zwitt invited sports psychologist Christopher Carr (Methodist Sports Medicine Center) to visit with his coaches. Carr promoted the "importance of focusing not only on X's and O's, but also on the mental aspects of sports-listening and responding to the needs of student-athletes, better managing time and stress, and refocusing efforts to become more effective role models."

Carr suggest the, "Signs that a coach may be experiencing some form of mental anguish include heavy mood swings, frequent illnesses, changes in diet, loss of passion for sports, and the use of drugs or alcohol. A coach also may become increasingly task-oriented, opting to immerse him/her self in busywork to avoid social interaction."

Important NCAA Changes for Prospective Student-Athletes

Please note two important changes that will affect prospective NCAA student-athletes: a change in NCAA initial eligibility requirements and the availability of new Web based enhancements through the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse.

The Division I membership is considering significant changes in the academic eligibility standards for practice, competition and the receipt of athletics scholarships during a student athlete's first year of college. One change is an increase in the core course requirement from 13 to 14. The additional core course may be completed in any of the current academic areas (i.e., English, mathematics, natural/physical science, social science, nondoctrinal religion, philosophy, computer science). Additionally, changes to the test score/grade-point average index have been proposed and are available for your review. You may access the proposed changes through the NCAA Web site at www.ncaa.org. Select the Prospect/Parent page from the pull down menu of Custom

Home Pages. The NCAA invites you to comment on the proposed changes to the Division I initial eligibility standards by contacting us at academics@caa.org.

In an effort to simplify and streamline the initial eligibility certification process for prospective student athletes, the NCAA has introduced on line registration for the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse, available beginning August 1. We ask that all prospective student athletes in your state who wish to register with the clearinghouse do so online. Prospective student athletes will complete the clearinghouse application on line, access their information using a PIN protected system and have electronic mail access to the clearinghouse. High school personnel also will have access to the clearinghouse via electronic mail. The clearinghouse Web site may be accessed through the Prospect/Parent custom home page on the NCAA Web site at www.ncaa.org or may be accessed directly at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net

NATIONAL TESTING DATES

ADMINISTRATION - COUNSELORS - COACHES

Please advise students of the 2002-03 test date schedule. Your students should be aware of athletic tournament dates and should attempt to schedule their respective test date away from tournament dates of the sport or sports in which they are interested and participate.

Following are test dates for 2002-03 and possible MHSAA Tournament conflicts:

ACT ASSESSMENT DATES	SPORT CONFLICTS
----------------------	-----------------

Test Dates

October 26, 2002	Soccer Districts, LP Cross Country Regionals
December 14, 2002	None
February 8, 2003	None
April 12, 2003	None
June 14, 2003	Girls Soccer, Baseball, Softball Finals

SAT TESTING DATES	SPORT CONFLICTS
-------------------	-----------------

October 12, 2002	LP Boys Golf, LP Girls Tennis Regionals
November 2, 2002	Football Districts, Boys Soccer Regionals, LP Cross Country Finals
December 7, 2002	Girls Basketball Finals
January 25, 2003	None
April 5, 2003	None
May 3, 2003	None
June 7, 2003	Girls Soccer, Baseball, Softball Regionals

AP EXAM DATES	SPORT CONFLICTS
---------------	-----------------

May 5-16, 2003	Boys Tennis, LP Girls Golf, Track Regionals
----------------	---

(Advanced Placement Exams are administered over a five-day period for each subject)

Player Promotion

Getting the most out of players is a skill that every coach strives to develop because it is clear that commitment and dedication by the athlete, to the goal, can make coaching an individual or a team productive. The following items have been attributed to Steve Spurrier, formerly of the University of Florida who believes these behaviors contribute to successful coach-athlete relationships. Perhaps you will decide as the editor did that the points will serve any relationship well.

- Treat all players fairly. The way they've earned and deserved to be treated.
- After criticizing a player, say something positive to bring him back the next day.
- Team unity can be judged by the behavior of sideline players.
- Coach, coach and coach some more before you criticize your players.
- Stay in control-you cannot lose your temper!
- Be well organized and keep your players moving.
- Practice the FUNdamentals everyday.
- What your players learn is more important than what you know.
- Don't threaten a player unless you mean to back it up. You lose control if you do not back things up.
- Make the game fun for the players.
- Be willing to suspend or remove a star player if he is disruptive to the team.
- Listen to you players-don't do all the talking. Maintain a balance between a friend and the Boss.

MHSAA Works With Meijer, Michigan State Police & Department of Education on Promoting Dangers of Substance Abuse

The Michigan High School Athletic Association has teamed with the Meijer stores of Michigan, the Michigan Department of Education and Michigan State Police to provide schools and their coaches with a poster emphasizing the dangers of taking cold, cough and blood pressure medications in excessive doses for incorrect purposes.

Every MHSAA member school has received a four-color 11x17 poster, distributed by the MHSAA, designed by the Michigan State Police and funded by Meijer.

"We have gotten involved," said MHSAA Executive Director John E. "Jack" Roberts, "because our colleague at the Department of Education, Don Weatherspoon, asked, because we have a good distribution system for information to schools, and because there is evidence that some student-athletes have been misled to believe that this medication can aid athletic performance."

The MHSAA does not promulgate rules that prohibit the use of any substance by student-athletes. Policies regarding tobacco, alcohol, prescription and over-the-counter medications, steroids and other controlled substances, creatine and nutritional supplements, are a matter of local school board determination.

Roberts does not see MHSAA rule changes in the near future.

"We receive an isolated request or two every few years to standardize rules so that school districts everywhere will treat eligibility issues the same after a student has been found to have used a certain substance. However, there is a lack of agreement on what substances should be banned - groups like the International Olympic Committee, the NCAA and various professional sports leagues can't agree and can't keep up with new drugs and supplements developing every week. There's also lack of agreement among school districts regarding penalties - there's wide divergence of opinion. And there's the fundamental issue that this is the job of elected school boards, not a private organization like the MHSAA."

However, Roberts does not believe the MHSAA should have no role and no opinions.

"We need to be involved in education of athletic administrators, coaches, athletes and their parents, for at least two very compelling reasons.

"First, there's the matter of student-athletes' health. People involved must be aware of health risks of most of these drugs and supplements.

"Second, there's the issue of fairness. As one of the guardians of a fair and equitable playing field in educational athletics, the MHSAA must not equivocate on the message that use of performance-enhancing drugs is cheating."

At the MHSAA Representative Council's May 5-7, 2002 meetings, the Council conceded that it was impossible to keep a list of banned drugs current but that it was possible to point out the dangers of drug abuse. The Council voted that the MHSAA include educational components in various MHSAA in-service programs and mailings and to encourage schools to adopt policies locally.

The MHSAA was a major contributor to the preparation of two statements that have been distributed by the National Federation of State High School Associations, one addressing anabolic steroid use, the other on food supplements.

Michigan Public Law 187 prohibits the promotion/distribution of performance-enhancing supplements by Michigan public school employees and volunteers. The law covers androstenedione, creatine and any compound labeled as performance enhancing.

The MHSAA publishes a model policy that it recommends school districts adopt so that the discipline applied by one school district to an athlete, including penalties for drug use, follow the student to another school district should he/she transfer.

OFFICIAL MHSAA TOURNAMENT BALLS

The MHSAA has several tournament ball adoptions in place. In girls and boys basketball, Rawlings has been renewed as the "Game Ball" of the MHSAA Semifinals and Finals through the 2004-2005 school year.

In baseball, Rawlings has been renewed as "Official Ball" of the MHSAA Tournament through 2004-2005 for use at all tournament levels. In softball, Wilson has been renewed through 2004-2005 as "Official Ball" of the MHSAA tournament for use at all tournament levels. In girls volleyball, Spalding will be the "Game Ball" of the MHSAA Finals through 2004-2005. A new three year agreement with has been signed with Brine to remain the "Game Ball" of the MHSAA Boys and Girls Soccer Finals through 2005-2006. And in boys and girls tennis, Wilson is the "Official Ball" for use at all tournament levels.

The MHSAA receives royalties and complimentary product from these manufacturers and encourages member schools to give them consideration in local purchasing decisions.



IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ICE HOCKEY COACHES AND ADMINISTRATORS

Hockey Rink Netting – At its May, 2002 meeting, the MHSAA Representative Council approved a requirement for all MHSAA Tournament Hockey sites to have protective netting behind the goal areas, or restrict seating in such areas if netting is not available. Schools that sponsor hockey should check with local rink managers about this requirement. Hockey officials may wish include "netting inspection" in the pregame inspection simply to reinforce the new MHSAA policy.

Have You Attended a Rules Meeting?

[Click Here](#)



Coaches and administrators of MHSAA member schools are beginning to understand that rating an official is part of the contract obligation a member school has when an official is hired to work a contest. The payday is not complete unless the official receives a rating from each school for which he/she works during the season.

In 2001-02, only 272 schools were cited for failing to rate officials in one sport. This number is down from the 364 who failed to rate official in 2000-01.

The low for the last 10 years was 82 violations in 1990-91.

The data accumulated from the ratings contributed by schools is important because it assists selection committees when they issue invitations to officials to work MHSAA tournament events.

The number of ratings and the rating average are important details which assist the committees in their work. In fact some quality officials are denied an opportunity to officiate tournament events when their numbers don't meet the published minimums. This is especially discouraging to the official when he/she has recorded sufficient contests from which to draw the necessary ratings and those ratings are not filed.

We recommend the athletic director copy the rating scan sheets when they arrive to give to each coach involved in the rating event. Based on a deadline the athletic director determines, collect the ratings and prepare the official document for submission to the MHSAA. Once the coach has returned the Rating Form copy to the AD, we suggest the AD review the ratings and transfer the desirable number to the official form. Such practice allows the athletic director to monitor the specific ratings for each official, record that coaches complete the rating responsibility and to assure that the official documents can be copied for the school file and submitted to the MHSAA before the deadline.

Often, when athletic directors hand over the official ratings forms to a coach the forms are lost or damaged and there is a greater incidence of failure to file the ratings or failure to file in a timely manner. Acting as the conduit through which the ratings obligation flows provides an important check and balance in the effort of rating all officials.

As long as ratings are important to the tournament selection process rating officials will be an important part of the contract schools make with officials hired. Making the effort to "pay" the official by providing a rating is paying the full fee agreed upon and serves the needs of everyone.

In-Services, Mentor Programs Provide Valuable Services For Administrators

The MHSAA offers several in-service and training programs beneficial to school administrators and coaches throughout the year, such as the AD In-Service tailored to new athletic directors which took place at the MHSAA Office in East Lansing on Aug. 20.

A new component to this year's in-service was the Athletic Director Mentor Program, developed by the MHSAA and the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA). The mentor group, chaired by former MHSAA Associate Director Jerry Cvengros, includes 20 former athletic administrators from across Michigan who will lend advice and expertise to new administrator in the field.

Representatives from 42 schools attended the New AD In-Service in East Lansing, while 14 of the 20 mentors met that same day to discuss their roles. Each mentor was assigned two or three athletic directors for the 2002-03 school year, offering to serve as a consultant to the new administrators while arranging regular meeting times. Mid-year reports and additional meetings of mentors and administrators will take place at the MIAAA's annual March conference in Traverse City.

It is the MHSAA and MIAAA's hope that numbers will continue to grow in the program, on both the administrator and mentor sides.



Above, 14 former athletic administrators met at the MHSAA in August to serve as mentors to first-year ADs, who (below) attended an in-service during the day. MHSAA Assistant Director Gina Mazzolini discusses the 3-player regulation.



Heard, But Not Seen: The Public Address Announcer

At many athletic contests, there are a number of behind-the-scenes elements which contribute to the atmosphere for the event. One of these elements is a person infrequently seen, but always heard – the public address announcer.

Sometimes, the job at our local schools is given last-minute attention, in terms of selecting the person for the job or preparing that person for the responsibility. Other schools have, like in coaching, a veteran in that position who provides stability and professionalism.

Selecting your announcer is as important as selecting someone to keep statistics, tape ankles, run the clock, etc. The person you select should have some public speaking experience, knowledge of the game to be announced, the ability to follow instructions and the wisdom to know when to speak, and more importantly, when not to speak and how to speak.

It doesn't matter if you're announcing a game at a field or a gymnasium where you have 170 people, or an arena with 17,000 fans looking on. This unseen voice is important.

One thing I personally find distasteful at high school athletic events is the announcer who literally tries to entertain from behind the microphone. No knock on those who do public address work for professional athletic teams, where entertainment is the goal, but remember that this is an educational event that is taking place in a classroom. Spectators will work themselves up on their own. They don't need a public address announcer to do it for them.

With that tone set, here are some tidbits I have found useful in selecting public address announcers and some guidelines for them to follow when working games:

ON SELECTING ANNOUNCERS

- **Voice quality** - Select a person with voice qualities that projects at a pitch where all can understand what is being said. This is generally someone with a low-pitched voice. A person with a high-pitched voice is often harder to understand. The latter person may be well intentioned and mechanically sound, but if you don't have the pipes, you don't have the pipes – regardless of gender (*I've heard many, many more male than female announcers at the college and high school level with this problem*).

- **Game knowledge** - A good public address announcer should know the game to be announced. This includes knowing officials' signals, and the appropriate times to be on the microphone (*i.e., being silent once a free-throw shooter in basketball has the ball and is ready to shoot*).

- **Emotionally neutral** - Yes, you want a person who can be enthusiastic, but you do not want a "homer." Your public address announcer should handle all calls with equal vigor and delivery, even if the opponent just made the game-winning score.

- **Follows directions** - The best public address announcers work from scripts. You need someone who can deliver the announcements you want, when you want them.

WORKING THE GAME

- **Be familiar with the teams** - Most public address announcers develop spotting charts to use while announcing. These charts provide the basic information in a larger type format than a game program generally does.

Also, get a rundown on proper pronunciations before the game starts. Either arrive at the game 30 to 45 minutes early so you can talk with the coach or administrator from the visiting school to get pronunciations right, or call the visiting school a day or two before the game to review difficult names. There's nothing

more embarrassing for a youngster, parents and friends, for an announcer to butcher a name or be inconsistent in announcing it during a contest.

- **Consider a spotter** - This is needed primarily in football. A spotter is one who assists the public address announcer in identifying the key operatives on each play.

- **Develop a script** - Rather than doing everything off the top of your head each time, scripts can be developed for player introductions, welcomes, sportsmanship messages, announcements about upcoming events at the school, messages thanking people for attending the game, etc. (*Scripts are also available from the MHSAA Web site for certain announcements*). Writing a script and rehearsing it several times before working the game will make each announcement sound smooth and professional.

It is important to note that announcements welcoming the visiting team to the event and promoting good sportsmanship are vital at high school athletic events. They set the proper tone for the game.

- **Keep the focus on the game** - As stated above, the public address announcer should be enthusiastic, but emotionally neutral. When you talk too much, you draw attention away from the purpose of the event.

- **Don't be a homer** - Maintain the same delivery pitch for announcements involving the visiting team as well as your own. A "homer" literally creates at times an advantage for one team by unnerving the other, and sometimes disturbs the home team as well. Don't cheer-lead on the public address system, and never make editorial comments about officiating.

- **Make basic comments on plays** - In football, wait until the ball is blown dead before describing the play, noting the ball carriers, tacklers, gain or loss on the play, the upcoming down and distance and the spot of the ball. In basketball, make the call on who made the basket, possibly the assist; who the foul was on, the shooter and how many shots are awarded. Stay away from mentioning the score or the time (*that's why the scoreboard is in the arena*), except at the end of periods. Above all, try to restrict your remarks to the time immediately following plays.

- **Pace yourself** - Remember that the announcements you are making are coming

out of a speaker system usually positioned at one end of the facility, which sometimes have some distance to travel or have some ceilings and walls to reverberate off before reaching the ears of the spectators. Note that I didn't say the spectator hears the announcement. If you are talking too fast, you may create a garbled message than no one can understand. In some activities, the public address announcer is in a booth and cannot get the proper perspective on how things sound outside. A good idea is to put a person in the stands and read through some scripts before the game so you can receive some feedback as to how you sound in the seating area.

- **Don't try to talk above the crowd** - If the crowd is too loud, your announcement will get lost, no matter how hard you try. Wait for the crowd to settle down before making the announcement.

In short, the good public address announcer is an individual who sets the proper atmosphere for the event by doing advance preparation for the game, having the proper voice qualities, knowing the game, knowing when to speak and maintaining a professional approach to the game at all times. The unseen, but heard, voice is an important part of the administration and the enjoyment of interscholastic athletic events.

— John Johnson, MHSAA Communications Director



Keys to a Good Team Photo? It's a Snap

Every year, the MHSAA encounters situations where a school has difficulties providing a team photograph of printable quality for an MHSAA Tournament Finals program or the *Book of Champions*. Because such publications provide memorable keepsakes, it is important that your school is portrayed in a professional manner with a well organized, quality team photograph. We offer the following tips for producing such a picture:

- **A good photo is planned for.** Take your team photographs at the beginning of the season, and make sure there are prints or high resolution digital files of the photo available for all parties needing it during the regular season and postseason tournament. Taking your photo early in the season also allows you plenty of time for a retake should that become necessary.

- **A good original photo reproduces well in the program.** You can't take a fuzzy, out-of-focus photo and make it reproduce clearly in the program. Be sure the photo you submit is in focus, and if submitting a print of a team photograph, make sure it is not a photocopy or something clipped out of another publication (like a program or newspaper). And, by all means, do not submit a faxed copy.

- **A good photo shows all of the faces of the team members and uniform numbers (when applicable).** Make sure you use a contrasting background when taking your team picture so the faces of the players can easily be seen.

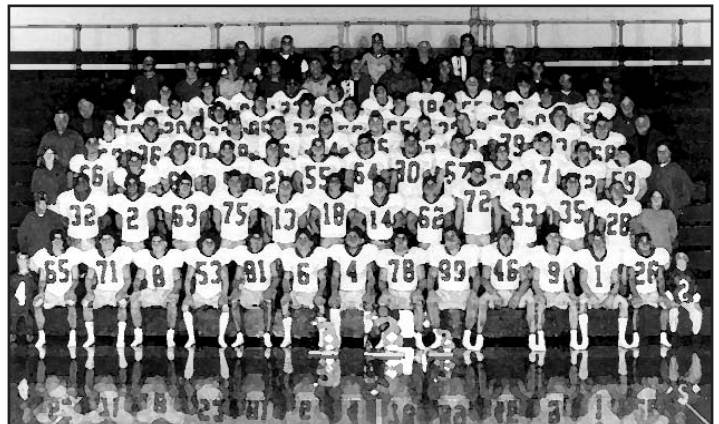
- **A good photo for program publication is not an "artistic" photo.** Sometimes, a team photo is taken with the team members in some kind of formation or set up around some kind of a prop (a scoreboard, a car, a tank, a plane, a train, etc.). These photos are great keepsakes, and look good blown up and framed, but don't reproduce well in programs because the focal point of the photo becomes the formation or the prop, and you are unable to see faces of the team members. Take your "artistic" photo – they're great for the scrapbooks – but also take a team photo in a standard formation that maximizes the opportunity for the faces of all the team members to be seen in the program.



Part of the problem with "artistic" photos, is that they don't fit the standard print shape used for souvenir programs. To "fit the hole" the photo above must be enlarged to the extent that much of the bottom row is cut off. This particular formation also does not provide organized rows for easy identification in the cutline.

- **A good photo is accompanied by proper identification.** For some publications, it is requested that identification (also known as a cutline) of the players be provided. The easiest way to get the names is by keeping everyone in place after the photo is taken and passing a clipboard down each row. You should always

go left to right as you look at the group. It is best to type the cutline and submit it by e-mail to the MHSAA, so there is no doubt that the way an individual's name appears in print is the way you provided it. It's disappointing to student-athletes and parents to have their name misspelled or omitted from a program, and even more embarrassing for someone at the MHSAA office to have to tell that individual, "That's how the school sent it to us." Be sure the names of the players match up with the spellings on your roster when you type the cutline.



No matter how large the squad, a quality team photo is possible with the proper planning. This photo was well organized, fills the frame and allows the audience to see faces with clarity.

- **A good photo of large teams can be achieved by thinking vertically and filling the fram.** For large teams, add more rows to your picture instead of making one or two or three long rows. Think in terms of looking through the camera viewfinder and filling it up with the team, instead of having a lot of dead space above and below the team. Additional rows enables the photographer to come in for a closer shot of the group. The closer the group, the clearer the faces.

- **A good photo is sent digitally to the MHSAA office via e-mail in the proper format and resolution.** In this age of digital cameras and electronic transmission, the easiest way to submit your photo to the MHSAA is via e-mail. Whether the picture is digital or scanned from a print, we need a resolution of 200 DPI or higher. The default of 72 DPI on most digital cameras and scanners yields photos that appear fine on your computer monitor, but are unsuitable for print. The size of the photo should also be approximately 3 inches high by 5 inches wide for most publications. Finally, the photo must be sent to the MHSAA as a JPEG or TIFF file.

- **Finally, a good photo arrives at the MHSAA office via e-mail along with the other Finals program materials by the requested deadline.** Consult the program information kits available on the MHSAA Web site or on the annual CD-ROM for deadlines. Sending your information to the MHSAA so that it is received by the deadline assures its publication in the Finals program. It is embarrassing for our staff to inform a displeased fan that their team is not properly represented because the school dropped the ball on submitting information and photographs.

Your cooperation will help us provide souvenir programs that are as complete as possible and great keepsakes of a school's participation in an MHSAA Final.