

2024-25 MHSAA GOLF COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, December 4, 2024, 9:30 a.m. – East Lansing

MEMBERS PRESENT

Greg Beavers, Laingsburg
Gabe Crowner, Ypsilanti
James Dewling, Brighton
Bob Filter, East Lansing
Karyn Furlong, Richland (MIAAA)
Josh Glerum, Zeeland
Mick Kildea, Howell
Mark Posey, Big Rapids
Ann Serra-Lowney, Clarkston
Debbie Williams-Hoak, Saline (MIGCA)

GUEST PRESENT

Kelly Salter, Birmingham (MATS)

MHSAA STAFF

Cole Malatinsky (Recorder)

The 2024-25 MHSAA Golf Committee met in the John E. “Jack” Roberts MHSAA building to review topics involving golf and the tournament series. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision-making process and the charge of the Golf Committee. Agenda items were compiled from correspondence, staff, committee members and the Golf Coaches Association.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

POSTSEASON TOURNAMENT REVIEW

The committee reviewed the changes implemented for 2024-25 school year, beginning with the 2024 LP Girls Golf tournament, including the role of the Golf Site Selection Committee in identifying suitable schools and courses to host MHSAA postseason events. The committee recommended that MHSAA collect additional information to assist in the selection process, such as local rules, practice facility size, restroom availability on the course, and other relevant feedback. It should be noted, that while the goal of the site selection committee should be to identify the hosts and courses that meet the necessary requirements, maintaining flexibility and avoiding overly restrictive criteria is also important.

REGIONAL PAIRINGS PROCEDURE

Last year, the Golf Committee approved the use of team iWanamaker rankings (iWR) to determine team waves for Day 1 pairings at the Finals. Both tournament managers and coaches on the committee agreed that the change was positive and recommended applying the same procedure for Regional pairings. The committee unanimously approved the use of team iWR to generate team waves at the Regional level. MHSAA staff will update the Tournament Managers Manual to reflect this procedural change.

RULES REFEREES

The committee discussed the roles and value of rules referees during MHSAA tournament play. It was recommended that the rules referees assigned to each region should be actively consulted in course setup and writing local rules, and their roles should be emphasized during the tournament managers' Zoom meetings prior to the events.

To further emphasize the importance of rules referees during the postseason tournament, the committee unanimously approved a proposal to the Representative Council recommending that host schools for postseason tournaments receive reimbursement for the expense of two rules referees at MHSAA Regional events.

DISTANCE MEASURING DEVICES

The committee reviewed the current restrictions regarding distance-measuring devices. Under MHSAA rules, such devices are allowed as long as they are used exclusively for measuring distance. During the fall 2024 LP Girls Golf season, the language was updated to clarify multifunctional devices with prohibited features – such as slope measurement, club recommendations, or environmental condition gauges – may be used if the prohibited features are disabled or do not automatically activate and display restricted information during play. The committee recommended one additional change: removing a reference to putting green reading. The committee felt this language could create confusion, as the use of greens books and the GolfLogix feature within the MHSAA Golf app is allowed.

COACH LIMITS & RESTRICTIONS

In 2022-23, the committee approved the addition of a second coach with coaching privileges for teams during MHSAA postseason tournament play. The approved proposal specified that Finals individual qualifiers would be permitted only one coach. However, tournament documents were not updated to include language specifically stating this limitation and individual qualifiers have been allowed two coaches.

The committee unanimously approved that the one-coach limit for individual qualifiers will take effect in the 2025-26 season. Schools with multiple individual qualifiers may be allowed a second coach with coaching privileges, but the maximum number of coaches with coaching privileges will remain two, regardless if there are more than two individual qualifiers. Additionally, for both teams and individual qualifiers, only one school-designated coach may provide instruction to a player at any given time; simultaneous coaching by two coaches for a single player is not permitted.

The committee's discussions centered on concerns about overcoaching and its impact on pace of play. While no additional restrictions were proposed, the committee emphasized that coaches should facilitate pace of play. It was also recommended that the allowance for coaches to rake bunkers, when necessary, be explicitly added to tournament policies.

SCORING PROTOCOL

The committee reviewed tournament scoring protocols and approved the inclusion of language outlining the hole-by-hole scoring procedure, which, while not previously stated, should have been standard practice. The committee affirmed the in-round and post-round scoring protocols, including the use of a designated scoring area for post-round score verification and attestation, should be implemented throughout the regular season. These protocols will be emphasized during the annual coaches' rules meeting.

FINALS GREENS FEES & CARTS FEES

Given the rising costs of course maintenance, supplies, and labor, the committee reviewed the current greens and cart fees for MHSAA Finals venues. After discussion, the committee unanimously approved a \$10 increase in cart rental fees, effective starting the 2025-26 school year.

GOLF COURSE EMERGENCY ACTION PLANNING

A representative from the Michigan Athletic Trainers Society (MATS) provided an overview of upcoming state legislation that will likely require AEDs at all youth sporting events. The discussion focused on the implications of this legislation for schools, and the challenges this requirement may present in sports like golf, which mostly are conducted off school grounds, and potentially do not have an AED on site currently.

The committee reviewed best practices for developing venue-specific Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) for high school golfers. While cardiac incidents were the primary focus, it was emphasized that EAPs should be flexible to address a wide range of emergencies. Key components of the plan include:

All players should save the phone numbers for their coach and the clubhouse in their phones.

1. In the event of an emergency, the first step is to call 9-1-1.
2. The second step is to notify either the clubhouse or the coach, depending on the AED's location, to ensure the AED is mobilized to the site of the emergency on the course.
3. If the clubhouse has not been notified, it should be called to prepare for EMS arrival and provide directions as needed.
4. After mobilizing EMS and the on-site response team, CPR/first aid should be initiated until the coach and/or EMS arrives.

Additionally, the Golf Coaches Association and MHSAA staff will collaborate with iWanamaker to explore the feasibility of incorporating a standardized EAP template into the MHSAA Golf app. This template would automatically populate under EVENT INFORMATION, tailored to the personnel and course involved in each event.

FINALS SCHEDULE

The committee reviewed the current Finals schedule, specifically considering the feasibility of an 11 AM start for the LP Girls Golf Finals in the fall to account for potential frost delays. Additionally, the committee discussed the potential benefits and drawbacks of shifting to a Monday/Tuesday schedule.

No action was taken, but both options will be discussed and considered by future committees.

POSTSEASON TOURNAMENT CONCEPTS

State Finals qualification remains a key topic of discussion among the Golf Coaches Association. The primary concern centers on top-ranked teams failing to advance from Regionals under the current format, where only the top three teams from each geographic region qualify. Challenges to the fairness and competitive balance of the tournament arise in cases where some geographic Regionals feature multiple "top ten" ranked teams while others have only one or two. The committee discussed two potential concepts designed to address this perceived issue.

The first concept involves Regional balancing based on team iWanamaker rankings (iWR). Under this approach, geographic Regionals would initially be set using the current process. At a designated date several weeks prior to the Regional tournaments, in any Region with more than three top ten ranked teams (as determined by iWR), the top ten ranked teams would be allowed the option to move to a different Region. Teams opting to relocate would be placed in the Region with the fewest top ten ranked teams. Teams could also choose to remain in their originally assigned Region. During discussion, the committee was informed that this approach would represent a significant departure from current tournament assignment protocols used in nearly all MHSAA sports. As a result, advancing the concept would present considerable challenges.

The second concept proposes the addition of a Semifinal round to the tournament. Under this format, the tournament would retain six geographic regions in each division. Regional tournaments would be held one week earlier than their current scheduled dates. The top six teams and the top six individuals not on a qualifying team from each Regional would advance to a Semifinal tournament. In each division, three Semifinals would be created by pairing two

geographically adjacent Regionals. From each Semifinal, the top five teams and the top five individual qualifiers not on a qualifying team would advance to the Finals.

While no action was taken, the committee expressed interest in the Semifinal concept and its potential to address concerns by increasing advancement opportunities for teams in some Regions while preserving the geographical structure of the tournament series and maintaining performance-based qualification for each round of the postseason. The Golf Coaches Association will continue to discuss this concept and other ideas with its membership.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MHSAA STAFF

1. Use team iWR to generate team waves at Regional tournament. (9-0)
2. Allow individual qualifiers at the State Finals one school-designated coach. Only schools with multiple individual qualifiers will be allowed a second school-designated coach. The maximum number of coaches with coaching privileges from any school will be two. (9-0)
3. Only one school-designated coach may provide instruction to a player at any given time; simultaneous coaching by two coaches for a single player is not permitted. (9-0)
4. Update MHSAA documents to reflect current in-round and post-round scoring protocols, including the use of the MHSAA Golf app for scoring. Emphasize these protocols during the annual coaches' rules meeting to ensure consistent application during both regular season and postseason tournament play. (9-0)
5. Collaboration with iWanamaker to explore the feasibility of incorporating a standardized EAP template into the MHSAA Golf app. (9-0)
6. Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, increase coach cart rental fees to \$30 per day. (9-0)

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, Regional tournament host schools receive reimbursement for the expense of two rules referees. (9-0)