

Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc.  
FOOTBALL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
January 30, 2014, 9:30 a.m.

**Members Present:**

Tom Barberri, Dexter  
Curt Copeland, Fowlerville  
John Dignan, Warren  
Rick Dorn, Waterford  
Mike Evoy, Detroit  
Morley Fraser, Bay City  
Mark German, Temperance  
Don Gustafson, St Ignace  
Courtney Hawkins, Flint  
Gary Hice, Petoskey  
Tim Jenkins, Tekonsha  
Gerald Kulbertis, Gladstone  
Mike Messner, Constantine  
Tony Petkus, Comstock Park  
Rick Schmidt, Holt

Greg Vaughan, Traverse City  
Pat Watson, West Bloomfield  
John Young, Ann Arbor  
Brian Zdanowski, Greenville

**Guest:**

Andrew Pratley, Holland  
Larry Merx, MHSFCA

**MHSAA Staff:**

Nate Hampton (Recorder)  
Mark Uyl  
Andy Frushour  
Geoff Kimmerly

The committee met for the purpose of reviewing NFHS playing rules, MHSAA Regulations and Tournament procedures/policies concerning High School Football. Following is a review of items discussed by the committee as well as recommendations to MHSAA staff and for possible Representative Council consideration.

**Calendar**

MHSAA staff provided the committee a six-year calendar demonstrating the earliest practice date, the earliest game date and the number of contests prior to Labor Day. For 2014 season, the earliest practice date is August 11, and the earliest game date is August 28 allowing for one scheduled contests prior to Labor Day.

**Tournament Review**

The committee was provided 2013 Football Playoff Tournament information for both the 11-player format and the 8-player format, with statistical data for all levels of tournament competition. The data demonstrated consistency with previous years under the current format when comparing school classification, division enrollment breaks and the numbers of automatic qualifiers.

In 2011, 2012 and 2013, there were 234, 237 and 225 schools, respectively, which qualified automatically based on regular season records. In 2013 there were 44 games that were subject to the "Point Differential" procedure.

**2013 Enrollment for Finalist**

Division 1 2738-2132  
Division 2 1326-1165  
Division 3 942-834  
Division 4 647-596  
Division 5 505-439  
Division 6 399-383  
Division 7 282-262  
Division 8 218-167  
8-Player 171-120

**2013 Classification by Divisions**

Division 1 2737-1488 (32A)  
Division 2 1476-1097 (32A)  
Division 3 1090-823 (16A, 16B)  
Division 4 809-583 (32B)  
Division 5 577-425 (30B, 2C)  
Division 6 424-331 (32C)  
Division 7 326-252 (32C)  
Division 8 248-103 (12C, 20D)  
8-Player 191-68 (16D)

## 2014-2019 FOOTBALL DATES

Year	Earliest Practice	Earliest Game	Labor Day (Games Before)
2014	Aug. 11	August 28	Sept. 1 (1)
2015	Aug. 10	August 27	Sept. 7 (2)
2016	Aug. 8	August 25	Sept. 5 (2)
2017	Aug. 7	August 24	Sept. 4 (2)
2018	Aug. 6	August 23	Sept. 3 (2)
2019	Aug. 5	August 22	Sept. 2 (2)

→whether or not play 1st week

→1st 3 days without pads

→could start later

→ could start later

Monday, August 11 - First allowable day of 3 day of conditioning period (no pads). Subject to change.

Thursday, August 15 - First date of official practice (with pads) (if 3 days of conditioning were completed during the week).

Thursday, August 23 - First varsity game date.

- Schools may not conduct inter school scrimmages until after nine separate days of practice.
- Interscholastic games (all levels) cannot be played until teams have completed 12 separate days of practice over a 3-week period.

### **8-Player Football**

To date there are 29 schools projected to participate in the 8-Player format for 2014.

### **General Discussion**

1. 2013 Committee minutes and Representative Council Recommendations
2. Semifinal facilities
3. National Federation Rule changes for 2014
4. Finals venue review – Ford Field/Greenville HS
5. Health and Safety Issues; Concussion, Heat and Humidity , Pre-season practice
6. Online Rules Meetings - In 2014 all assistant and sub-varsity coaches at the high school level must complete annually the same rules and risk management meeting requirement as varsity head coaches or, in the alternative, must complete one of the free online health and safety courses designated on MHSAA.com for this purpose.
7. Tournament Football – In 2014 only those schools to qualify for post season will receive a complimentary Wilson ball. Wilson will become the MHSAA approved tournament ball.
8. Out of Season 7 on 7 Competition – Schools must comply with MHSAA out of state and travel regulations.
9. 8-Player Finals Site – The committee discussed the two sites used for the 8-Player Finals, NMU and Greenville High School.
10. Sub-varsity Contest – Length of games

## Health & Safety Issues

The committee was presented with information and discussed the recommendations made by the Football Task Force and was in agreement with the proposals being advanced to the Representative Council.

The proposals are as follows:

1. During the first week of practice of the season, only helmets are allowed the first two days, only shoulder pads may be added on the third and fourth days, and full pads may not be worn until the fifth day of team practice.
2. Before the first regular season game, schools may not schedule more than one "collision" practice in a day.
  - A "collision" practice is one in which there is live, game-speed, player-vs.-player contact in pads (not walk-throughs) involving any number of players. This includes practices with scrimmages, drills and simulations where action is live, game-speed, player-vs.-player.
  - If any part of a drill or scrimmage involves live game-speed player-vs.-player contact in pads, it is a collision practice even if players do not execute full tackles at a competitive pace that takes players to the ground.
  - During any additional practice sessions that day, players may wear helmets and other pads (neither is mandatory). Blocking and tackling technique may be taught and practiced. However, full-speed contact is limited to players vs. pads, shields, sleds or dummies.
3. After the first regular season game, teams may conduct no more than two collision practice days in any week, Monday through Sunday. During other days of practice, players may wear helmets and other protective pads (neither is mandatory). Blocking and tackling technique may be taught and practiced. However, full-speed contact is limited to players vs. pads, shields, sleds or dummies.
4. No single practice may exceed three hours, and the total practice time for days with multiple practice sessions may not exceed five hours.
  - Warm-up, stretching, speed and agility drills and cool down are all considered part of practice. Neither strength/weight training activities nor video/classroom sessions are considered practice for the purposes of the three- or five-hour limits.

The committee also reviewed the latest printing of the Football Preseason Guide which will be updated prior to the fall season and will contain the following:

1. Risk Minimization and Football conditioning
2. Suggestions to Principals and Coaches
3. Summer Coaching Regulations
4. Football Helmet Checklist
5. Reducing Brain and Spinal Injuries in Football
6. MHSAA Protocol for Concussions
7. MHSAA Return to Competition Form
8. MHSAA Model Policy for Managing Heat and Humidity
9. Heat Index FAQ's

### **Junior High/Middle School**

1. The committee supports the current season limits for football contest.
2. The committee supports the overall governance of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students by the MHSAA but not allowing 6<sup>th</sup> grade to participate with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in football.

### **Recommendations to Representative Council**

1. Approve the recommendation by the Junior High/Middle School Committees recommendation to increase the length of quarters from 8 minutes to a maximum of 10 minutes.
2. Sub-varsity contest – given the extended length today's contest the committee recommends for changing the timing of 9<sup>th</sup> grade/junior varsity contest so that following a change of possession the clock will start on the ready for play signal, rather than on the snap. (19-0 in favor)
3. Starting with the 2014 Football Playoffs assign 7-person officiating crews for all Semifinal and Final contests. This would add two "deep" positions of the field judge and side judge to our current crews (Referee, Linesman, Line Judge, and Back Judge). (19-0 in favor)
4. Approve the proposal for a tournament format that utilizes the strength of schedule with enhanced playoff and bonus points which identifies eight division prior to the start of the season and (new) does not include an automatic qualifier component (seven wins). Teams would qualify based strictly on points. This proposal is different from the previous in that the automatic qualifier component (7 wins) is removed. (11-3 in favor)