

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
Competitive Cheer Committee Meeting
East Lansing, January 27, 2016
9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Greg Brynaert, Romeo
David Chrisinske, Middleville
Patti Glenn, CCCAM
Maureen Klocke, Yale
Sonya Latz, Elsie
Ken Mohney, MIAAA
Carrie Seymour, Flint

Stacy Smith, Caledonia
Christina Swansey, Grand Ledge

Members Absent:

Janet Wilson, Webberville

Staff:

Kathy Vrugink Westdorp (Recorder)

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer Committee reviewed its responsibilities as a standing sports committee and the process of making recommendations to MHSAA staff and the MHSAA Representative Council. In addition, the Competitive Cheer Committee reviewed the charge of the Competitive Cheer Sub-Committee which met on January 13, 2016. This Sub-Committee studied the technical aspects of Competitive Cheer and made recommendations which were submitted to the Competitive Cheer Committee.

A draw for the order of competition at the MHSAA Competitive Cheer Finals was done by Committee members, and the Girls Competitive Cheer Tournament Manager's Materials and Participating School Information were also reviewed. In addition, the minutes from last year's Competitive Cheer Committee and the 2016 Competitive Cheer Sub-Committee were perused. District and Regional sites were reviewed and members of the Committee also received 2015-16 Competitive Cheer clarifications and interpretations.

COACHING REQUIREMENTS

Committee members reviewed information regarding coaching requirements for 2015-16 and future years. New with fall sports in 2015, the athletic director or principal of each school had to attest that all high school coaches (sub varsity or assistant coaches, paid or volunteer) completed an MHSAA rules/risk management meeting in their sport or, in the alternative, one of several health and safety courses designated on mhsaa.com. Effective with the 2015-16 school year, high school administrators must attest that all varsity head coaches have a valid current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certificate. Effective with the 2016-17 school year, each head coach of a varsity high school team, hired for the first time at any MHSAA member high school after July 31, 2016 shall have completed either Level 1 or Level 2 of the MHSAA Coaches Advancement Program (CAP). Committee members heard the high percentage of compliance that occurred with MHSAA member schools in attesting to the information.

BALANCED/MULTI-SPORT EXPERIENCE

The Committee received information on an upcoming task force designed to review some of the high risks and limited rewards of early and intense focus on a single sport as well as ideas that already may be occurring from schools who promote a balanced sport experience. Competitive Cheer committee members described several initiatives that they already had in place in promoting a multi-sport experience. One school provided a chevron for each sport that a student participated in throughout the year. On the fourth year of multi-sport participation, students who participated in three sports throughout their high school experience received an "Iron Man or Iron Woman" plaque. Another school had a system with multi-sport athletes receiving a bronze medal as a freshman, silver as a sophomore, gold as a junior and a plaque as a senior. This committee felt that the more rural and smaller the school, the more multi-sport participation occurred. Others felt that sideline cheer and marching band could also be qualifiers as "multi-participation" individuals.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL ACTION

A summary of Representative Council action which included Handbook changes and sports changes was provided. Included within the information were the Representative Council changes for 2014-15 and online health and safety meeting information embedded into online rules meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COMPETITIVE CHEER SUB-COMMITTEE

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer Sub-Committee met with the purpose of annually reviewing current competition and safety rules and to propose changes and additions to the Competitive Cheer Manual. The Committee focuses on the technical aspects of competitive cheer and advises the full Committee and ultimately the Representative Council of the rules that may need review, revision or update. Review of the recommendations that come from the Competitive Cheer Coaches Association of Michigan also occurs. The recommendations from the MHSAA Sub-Committee are as follows.

- Allow middle schools competitive cheer teams to perform a double-braced hitch or double braced liberty to liberty (tic-toc) at the extension level with a front and back spot. (7-0)
- Require that middle school teams list the first skill on the Round 3 description sheet as their required jump. (7-0)

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMPETITIVE CHEER COMMITTEE

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer Committee continues to discuss whether the sport should evolve into a sport with the requirement of the same number of athletes required in each Division and rounds of competition. Several members expressed that it would be good for the sport to require that there be 12 in each round which would still allow 36 individuals to compete in total (12 in each round of competition). Additional conversation evolved around whether the changes for the middle school and sub-varsity (who now follow the same rules as the varsity teams in terms of mandated numbers) resulted in any changes in competitive cheer opportunities. A few members felt that several teams were coming in to competition with a ten point penalty because of low participation. However, additional conversation included that several sports cannot participate at all without the necessary numbers and competitive cheer teams may still participate in all rounds of competitive cheer (with penalty) without the required numbers.

Further discussion included whether there should be additional changes with the mandated number and whether in the other two rounds it should be required that you have the same number or higher than your mandated number. This committee encourages that all coaches make a commitment to participation for all athletes on their teams and make ethical choices to increase participation in all rounds of competitive cheer.

Additional discussion included some of other proposals that came from CCCAM and sub-committee discussion including aerial skills included within the choreography chart and music as a choreography bonus. Further discussion centered on attire as well as additional bow and uniform requirements.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

A continuance of the practice of having a spring/summer editing group of coaches and judges review the Competitive Cheer Manual and further update the Manual was recommended. This practice would include a review of non-safety and safety related violations, and lend further clarity and parameters to existing rules. The inclusion of additional information on recommendations approved by the MHSAA Representative Council would also be a responsibility of this editing group.

2015-16 COMPETITIVE CHEER TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

The 2015-16 Competitive Cheer Tournament will hold Districts on Friday and Saturday, February 19 and 20, 2016. There will be six Districts in four Divisions which will each have four teams progress to eight Regionals the following week on Saturday, February 27, 2016. Four teams from each of the eight Regionals will move to the Finals at the DeltaPlex in Grand Rapids on Friday, March 5 and Saturday, March 6, 2016. This will include four separate sessions of competitive cheer. The Competitive Cheer Committee reviewed the 2016 plan for assigned seating at the DeltaPlex which includes tickets specified for school seating and spectator seating. The Competitive Cheer Committee continues to enthusiastically embrace the concept for assigned school and spectator seating to assist with the large crowds at the DeltaPlex.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Technical Recommendations:

- a. Allow middle schools competitive cheer teams to perform a double-braced hitch or double braced liberty to liberty (tic-toc) at the extension level with a front and back spot. (9-0)

- b. Require that middle school teams list the first skill on the Round 3 description sheet as their required jump. (7-2)
2. Adhere to the same language for hair bows as currently in the manual regarding briefs which is as follows: Hair bows must be one solid color and not include any adornments. (7-2)
3. Require that additional requirements are in place beginning July 1, 2018, in which all competitive cheer uniforms are free from any cut-outs or adornments (including sequins, rhinestones, studs, glitter, etc.) (9-0)

Rationale: To make the uniform of competitive cheer more consistent for all schools and other sports as well as remove any risk factors.