

## **BASEBALL / SOFTBALL COMMITTEE**

January 17, 2012

### **Members Present:**

Eric Albright, Midland  
Brad Antcliff, Beal City  
Paul Bushong, Howell  
Tom Calnen, Troy (MHSSCA)  
Tony DeMare, Dearborn  
Wes Gall, Manchester  
Paul Gaudard, Flint  
Dallas Lintner, Owosso  
Ted Manning, Schoolcraft  
Casei Marlan, Mason  
Rick Noorman, Grand Rapids

Tim Penfield, Middleville  
Dave Pinkowski, Southgate (MIAAA)  
Aaron Setlak, Warren  
Scott Theisen, Saline (MHSBCA)  
Ron Van Sloten, Rudyard

### **Guests:**

Gary Evans, Michigan ASA  
Jerry Hanson, Michigan ASA

### **Staff:**

Randy Allen  
Mark Uyl (Recorder)

The 2011-12 MHSAA Baseball / Softball Committee met in the MHSAA office building to review topics involving the MHSAA tournament series in baseball / softball.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**2011 Update Meeting Opinion Poll Questions:** The committee discussed two of the opinion poll questions from the fall Update meetings that dealt with student health and safety online meetings for coaches and required levels of regular season competition against other MHSAA member schools. The committee provided a great deal of input on the potential health and safety meetings, providing several ideas for effective online meetings.

**National Federation Topics:** Discussion took place regarding National Federation playing rules and equipment. Most of the conversation dealt with bats and bat standards in both sports. Baseball has made the transition to BBCOR certified bats for the 2012 season and softball continues to encounter issues surrounding altered bats. Additional discussion centered on softball pitching distances, softball defensive face protection, the 2012 NF rule changes and MHSAA concussion protocols.

### **Michigan ASA Presentation:**

The conversation started by reminding all committee members that the NF playing rules follow the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) bat specifications and testing. Concerns have been expressed that the growing use of altered bats presents a significant safety issue for all players. Jerry Hanson and Gary Evans of the Michigan ASA then provided information on softball bats and the various testing methods that are available to detect bats that have been altered. Some altering methods include bat shaving, bat rolling and intentionally breaking down the fibers of composite bats. The Michigan ASA representatives demonstrated two different testing techniques that can be performed at a game site, and shared that these testing methods have been a deterrent for illegal bats at various ASA events where bat testing took place. The committee was able to ask several questions for clarification, and a number of legal and illegal bats were passed around the room as examples of these testing methods. A proposal was made and approved to test bats at the MHSAA Softball Semifinals and Finals.

**Tournament Procedures:** Conversation took place regarding the current tournament schedule and issues it creates with the Regional, Quarterfinal, Semifinal and Final games being played within seven calendar days. MHSAA staff will develop various models of altered Regional and Quarterfinal schedules and will provide this information to both coaches associations for further discussion. Information was also provided on cost containment, Friday District option, site expectations and the Semifinal and Final time schedule. In addition, discussion took place on the current Finals venue in Battle Creek and a review of the Semifinal time schedule also took place.

**Rules Meetings:** The rules meeting schedule was reviewed, and committee members had the opportunity to identify any additional points of emphasis. Data was shared with the committee on the numbers of coaches and umpires that completed an online meeting vs. face-to-face meetings in 2011.

**Out-of-Season Update:** Members of the committee reviewed the out-of-season coaching issues, specifically the allowance of four players in some situations when coaches are working with students exclusively within their school district.

**Additional Items:** Committee members shared information regarding baseline concussion testing that took place in the Midland and Beal City school districts in selected sports. Committee members Albright and Antcliff spoke very favorably of this pre-testing program to assist school personnel in identifying potential concussions. One other suggestion included consideration for an “EH” (extra hitter) at the sub-varsity level in baseball. Currently, leagues and conferences can ask for such a rules deviation.

**Regional and Semifinal Draws:** At the Regional tournament, the pairings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Highest District Number vs. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lowest District Number and Highest District Number vs. Lowest District Number . Semifinal pairings are as follows:

Division 1	QF #4 vs. QF #2	QF #1 vs. QF #3
Division 2	QF #7 vs. QF #5	QF #8 vs. QF #6
Division 3	QF #10 vs. QF #11	QF #9 vs. QF #12
Division 4	QF #16 vs. QF #13	QF #14 vs. QF #15

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

1. At the MHSAA Softball Semifinals and Finals, MHSAA staff and umpires will test all bats that will be used during competition. These tests will include the traditional inspection completed by umpires along with a bat compression machine that will be used by tournament staff (16-0).