

Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc.
FOOTBALL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
January 31, 2013, 9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Tom Barberri, Dexter
Curt Copeland, Fowlerville
Mike Evoy, Detroit
Mark German, Temperance
Jill Hardway, Waldron
Terry Hessbrook, Ithaca
Gary Hice, Petoskey
Tim Jenkins, Tekonsha
Kurt Johnson, Grand Rapids
Vic Michaels, Detroit
Tony Petkus, Comstock Park
Andrew Pratley, Ogemaw Heights
Al Slamer, Holt
Greg Vaughan, Traverse City

Kevin Murphy, Livonia
Jack Wallace, Okemos
Alvin Ward, Detroit
Kevin Wolma, Hudsonville
John Young, Ann Arbor

MHSAA Staff:

Nate Hampton (Recorder)
Mark Uyl
Andy Frushour

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 Concerns

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 2013, the earliest practice date is August 12, and the earliest game date is August 29 allowing for two scheduled contests prior to Labor Day.

The Junior High/Middle School Committee will recommend to the Representative Council to change the Middle School start date for fall sports to the 14th Monday before Thanksgiving. August 26, 2013.

Football Review

The committee was provided 2012 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 2010, 2011 and 2012, there were 238, 234 and 237 schools respectively qualified automatically based on regular season records. In 2012 there were 44 games that were subject to the "Point Differential" procedure.

2012 Enrollment Ranges for Finalist

Division 1	2060-2200
Division 2	1144-1336
Division 3	926-954
Division 4	660-685
Division 5	503-555
Division 6	371-402

2012 Classification by Divisions for Finalist

Division 1	32 Class A
Division 2	32 Class A
Division 3	15 Class A 17 Class B
Division 4	32 Class B
Division 5	32 Class B
Division 6	2 Class B 30 Class C

Division 7 272-298
 Division 8 213-245
 8-Player 161-194

Division 7 32 Class C
 Division 8 9 Class C 23 Class D
 8-Player 16 Class D

The enrollment range of the 2012 8-Player Football Playoff 16 participating teams was 194-60.

2013-2018 FOOTBALL DATES

Year	Earliest Practice	Earliest Game	Labor Day (Games Before)
2013	Aug. 12	August 29	Sept. 2 (1)
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)

→ whether or not play 1st week

→ 1st 3 days without pads

→ could start later

→ could start later

Monday, August 6 - First allowable day of 3 day of conditioning period (no pads).

Thursday, August 9 - 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 28 schools projected to participate in the 8-Player format for 2013.

General Discussion

1. 2012 Committee minutes and Representative Council Recommendations
2. Semifinal facilities: No grass fields were used in 2012
3. National Federation Rule changes for 2013
4. Finals venue review – Ford Field/Greenville HS
5. Health and Safety Issues; Concussion, Heat and Humidity , Pre-season practice
6. Online Rules Meetings; Approximately 98% of all head coaches and MHSAA registered officials completed the online version of the required rules meeting.
7. Tournament Football: In 2013 only the schools qualifying for post-season tournament participation will receive a complimentary ball.
8. Out of Season Competition - 7 on 7 & All Star Events

9. Film Exchange Issues (Penalty for failure) – No change in current policy expectation
10. Student transferring schools for athletic reasons
11. It was reported that the Model Policy for managing Heat and Humidity will advance for adoption by the Representative Council.
12. Recent legislature actions relating to Sudden Cardiac Deaths – as well as detection and recognition of symptoms related to cardiac illness.

Playoff Proposal from the OK Conference

The committee reviewed the latest proposal for a revised football playoff that was drafted by the OK Conference. Key components of the proposal include:

- Reducing the number of regular season games from 9 to 8.
- Expanding the playoff field from 256 to 512 teams in 8 divisions of 64 by enrollment
- All teams will be scheduled a ninth date, but only the 512 teams with the highest playoff point totals will participate in tournament competition
- All schools would be placed in regions prior to the start of the school year by enrollment and geography

Rationale:

- Reduces the concern for scheduling superior teams and 6 wins to automatically qualify
- Equity in gate receipts allowing for 4.5 home games
- Allows teams with fewer wins to end the season against an opponent with a comparable record

Following a lengthy discussion, the committee made no recommendations.

Football Tournament Format Review

The committee was provided data that demonstrated that the initiation of an 8-player division of Football Playoffs has increased the percentage of Class D schools that achieve a football playoff experience to the highest ever (44%). However, there are concerns that the Class D schools which continue 11-player football now must travel further for regular season games and are matched against larger schools in Division 8 of the MHSAA's 11-Player Football Playoffs and ultimately this makes it more difficult for small schools to sustain the 11-Player game.

Long standing discussions share wide-spread consensus that the Football Playoffs make regular season scheduling difficult and adds stress to league affiliations, but sentiment for revising the 11-Player Tournament has not rallied around a single idea.

Football Format Change Proposal

MHSAA staff member, Andy Frushour, and Andrew Pratley (West Branch) shared with the committee discussions MHSAA staff have had with the leadership of the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association – whose membership has not supported the OK Conference Proposal. An alternative being explored is to revise the playoff point system so schools with mediocre records, but strong schedules, benefit more than schools that simply win 6 games over weaker opponents. There was general agreement for this alternative plan.

Components of the plan being discussed:

- Equal Divisions will be established prior to the start of the season (74-75 teams per Division in 2012)
- In order to be considered for tournament play – must have at minimum 4 wins
- Automatic qualifiers (7 wins)
- Additional qualifier spots filled using teams with highest Playoff Point Average.
- Graduated scale of points for wins

Division 1 - 88 points	Division 5 – 56 points
Division 2 – 80 points	Division 6 – 48 points
Division 3 – 72 points	Division 7 – 40 points
Division 4 – 64 points	Division 8 – 32 points

Bonus points for the opponent's wins and losses. A team will earn bonus points for each of its opponents wins regardless of who won the game between those teams.

Bonus Point Graduated Multiplier:

Division 1 - 12 points

Division 2 – 11 points

Division 3 – 10 points

Division 4 – 9 points

Division 5 – 8 points

Division 6 – 7 points

Division 7 – 6 points

Division 8 – 5 points

Out of State teams will be placed in divisions based on enrollment.

Health & Safety Issues

MHSAA Assistant Director, Mark Uyl reported on the Football Task Force. The committee was presented with information relating to the discussions held during the Football Task Force on January 28, 2013 and facilitated by Jack Roberts, MHSAA Executive Director.

Background information on the MHSAA's current health and safety emphasis and the "Four Thrust, For Four Years"; the MHSAA will undertake. The Task Force will operate in three phases in 2013. During the first quarter, phase one will focus on practice policies. Phase two – on contest rules and Phase three – development of multimedia promoting the value and safety record of school based football.

In Phase one the group will (1) consider modifications of early season practice rules that would promote safer acclimation of students in football, and (2) consider modifications of season-long practice rules that would promote less helmet-to-helmet contact in practice.

Recommendations to Representative Council

1. Advance the proposal for a tournament format that utilizes strength of schedule and enhanced playoff/bonus points and identifies the eight divisions prior to the season start. (14-4)
2. Permit students to participate in events which are called or purport to be All Star, without loss of eligibility. (12-7)