

Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc.
FOOTBALL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
January 22, 2020, 9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Steven Baker, Grand Ledge
Brad Bush, Chelsea
Jerrod Dohm, Grand Blanc
Mike Evoy, Detroit
Don Gustafson, St Ignace
Matt Johnson, New Buffalo
Wayne Karsten, Posen
Kevin Langs, Climax
Karen Leinaar, Bear Lake
William McKoy, Romulus
Eric Pierce, West Bloomfield
Andrew Pratley, MHSFCA

Scot Robertson, Grand Haven
Jeremy Rogers, Morrice
Pat Russman, Portland
Renee Sadler, Holt
Jim Sparks, Clawson
Zac Stevenson, Traverse City
Seth Weber, North Adams
Chris Westfall, Ypsilanti
Brian Zdanowski, Greenville

Guest:

L. Richard Kieft, ATC-MATS

Members Absent:

Scott Farley, MHSFCA
Robert Gifford, Waldron
Keith Guy, Muskegon
Courtney Hawkins, Mt Morris
Jonathon Randall, Brethren

MHSAA Staff:

Nate Hampton (Recorder)
Brent Rice
Geoff Kimmerly
Mark Uyl

The committee met for the purpose of reviewing NFHS playing rules, MHSAA regulations and 8-player and 11-player tournament procedures/policies and concerns involving high school football.

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 the 2020 season, the earliest practice date is August 10, and the earliest game date is August 27 allowing for two scheduled contests prior to Labor Day.

Monday, August 10 – First allowable day of 2 days of conditioning (helmets only). Shoulder pads may be added on the third and fourth days. The first date of official practice with full pads is the fifth day.

- Schools may not conduct inter-squad 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.

Tournament Review

The committee was provided 2019 Football Playoff information for both the 11-player format and the 8-player format, with statistical data for all divisions 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 2017, 2018 and 2019, there were 223, 213 and 202 schools, respectively, which qualified automatically based on regular-season records. The thirty-two 8-player schools with the highest playoff point averages qualified for the 8-player tournament. There were forty-eight 11-player and ten 8-player games that were subject to the "Point Differential" procedure.

2019 Enrollment Range by Division

Division 1 3034-1510
Division 2 1486-1158
Division 3 1152-847
Division 4 836-599
Division 5 596-454
Division 6 449-347
Division 7 342-269
Division 8 268-121
8-Player D1 205-160
D2 154-71

2019 Classification by Divisions

Division 1 32 Class A
Division 2 32 Class A
Division 3 29 Class A, 3 Class B
Division 4 32 Class B
Division 5 32 Class B
Division 6 13 Class B, 19 Class C
Division 7 32 Class C
Division 8 25 Class C, 7 Class D
8-Player 2 Class C, 30 Class D

General Discussion

1. 2019 Committee minutes and Representative Council Recommendations
2. Semifinal facilities
3. National Federation Rule changes
4. Enhanced Strength of Schedule 2020
5. 40 Second Clock added 2019
6. Junior High/Middle School Football
7. Finals venue review – Ford Field/Northern Michigan University
8. Health and Safety Issues
9. Pre-season practice limitations
10. Update Meeting Survey Questions #1-6, Relating to Football
11. Tournament Ball - Wilson
12. Preseason Guide – Safety Blitz

Health and Safety

MHSAA staff reported that in 2019 there were 8-indirect deaths and 2 direct deaths nationally.

Football continues to have the highest injury rate in the 22 sports under RIO surveillance.

Video Replay – 2019 Finals

In Michigan, video replay is only allowed during the 11-Player Football Finals at Ford Field. NMU does not operate a video replay system.

Michigan Youth Football Forum

Executive Director, Mark Uyl, discussed the Jan. 19, 2020 Michigan Youth Football Forum event which was supported by the MHSAA, MHFCA and USA Football. Topics Included:

- State of the game – participation numbers
- MHSFCA Initiatives
- Practical knowledge on concussions
- Solutions to evolve the game
- Standards of care
- MHSAA initiatives
- Grass Roots Initiatives
- Youth & High School Football Alliance

Recommendations to MHSAA Staff

Allow / encourage schools to have JV-A & JV-B teams, rather than Freshmen/JV teams.

- JV-A teams could include players from grades 9-11, while JV-B teams should be limited to students in grades 9-10.

RATIONALE: This would enable schools to maintain three levels in their football programs and build participation numbers for the future.

Recommendations to the Representative Council

1. Increase the number of players a school coach can work with in sport specific coaching out-of-season during the school year from 4 to 8.

RATIONALE: This is more proportional to the number of players that participate in a game compared to other sports (ie. 11 players in football vs 5 players in basketball, etc.). (12-7)

2. In the summer, allow schools to have 15 dates of non-mandatory contact with an unlimited number of players (in helmets only). Schools could use these dates as they see fit (ie. practice, 7 on 7, etc.). The allowance for a camp would no longer be necessary.

RATIONALE: Schools would not be forced to run a "camp" to work with players in the summer (consistent with rules for other sports). It is important to note that this is actually a reduction in allowable contact time from the current 17 dates (ten camp days and seven 7 on 7 dates), to 15 dates. This is still more restrictive than the rules for summer contact in other sports and simplifies the current rule. (17-0)

3. QUARTERS AND GAME LIMITATIONS

- 9th-12th grade student is limited to playing:
 - A. A maximum of four quarters in one day.
 - B. A maximum of 5 quarters per week
- Any player who participates in two or more consecutive downs in one quarter shall be charged with one quarter of play. A down in which the offensive team is in a scrimmage kick formation or a free kick occurs does not count in the quarter limitation. A down repeated due to penalty does not count.

RATIONALE: Schools would be better able to maintain lower level programs by allowing "sub-varsity" players to have a role on the varsity, or vice versa. This change would mirror the rule in Ohio. (11-8)

4. When a team leads an opponent by 50 points at any time in the game, the clock will run continuously except for official timeouts for injured players. The current protocol is only in the second half. (17-0)