

MENTOR

The Michigan High School Athletic Association Newsletter for Coaches and Officials

MHSAA Selected to Participate in Steroid & Drug Prevention Education Program



The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) was chosen in March as one of four state high school athletic/activities associations to receive a grant from *Sports Illustrated* and the Center for Health Promotion Research at the Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) to inform educators about the problem of young athletes, drugs and sports and implement the landmark ATLAS and ATHENA steroid and drug prevention/health promotion programs.

The announcement was made by Art Berke, Vice President of Communications at *Sports Illustrated*, and OHSU's Linn Goldberg, M.D. and Diane Elliot, M.D., co-creators of the programs. The other state recipients are Florida, Oregon and Virginia. The four states were chosen based on their geographic representation, the commitment of their high school associations and their capacity to recruit high schools of varying sizes, locations and diverse student populations.

The associations in each state and the Center for Health Promotion Research will choose four high schools to be part of the model SI Schools initiative. The program was created as a result of OHSU being selected as the recipient of *Sports Illustrated's* first annual SI Champion Award, presented to a non-profit which has done exemplary work in the sports arena. Each SI School will receive program training, including all ATLAS and ATHENA program components for the 2006-07 academic year at no cost to the school and national recognition from *Sports Illustrated*.

Schools from all of Michigan had the opportunity to apply to become an SI School, with the winners to be revealed on Wednesday, May 24. The selected schools and further information can be found on the MHSAA Web site at www.mhsaa.com. The MHSAA will host a special *Sports Illustrated*/ATLAS and ATHENA conference on Thursday, Nov.

Sports Illustrated

OHSU
Where Healing, Teaching and Discovery Come Together

9, at a site to be determined. School officials, athletic directors and coaches are invited to learn more about the problem and the ATLAS and ATHENA programs. Speakers will include experts on drug prevention education, *Sports Illustrated* staff and Drug Enforcement Administration officials.

"I join with *Sports Illustrated* in expressing how excited we are about this opportunity to provide young athletes with the tools to succeed without drugs," said Dr. Goldberg. "The SI Schools initiative will go a long way toward combating a nationwide problem."

"We believe that education is the key to discrediting the drug culture that has infiltrated some levels of sports," said John E. "Jack" Roberts, Executive Director of the Michigan High School Athletic Association. "This partnership with the highly regarded ATLAS and ATHENA programs and *Sports Illustrated* will provide a rare opportunity for athletes at four Michigan high schools to receive in-depth, practical training and to learn about successful alternatives to performance-enhancing drugs."

ATLAS (Athletes Training and Learning to Avoid Steroids), a multi-component program for male high school athletes, first instituted in 1993, is scientifically shown to reduce risk factors and use of anabolic steroids, alcohol and other illicit drugs while promoting healthy nutrition and exercise behaviors. Proven results include: new substance use decreased 50 percent; new anabolic steroid use decreased 50 percent; occurrences of drinking and driving declined 24 percent; a lower index of alcohol and drug use; reduced use of performance-enhancing supplements; and improved nutrition and exercise behaviors.

—continued

Inside: Parents are Not the Enemy

MHSAA Chosen To Receive Grants

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ATHENA (Athletes Targeting Healthy Exercise and Nutrition Alternatives), which began reaching high schools for female athletes in 1997, features the promotion of healthy nutrition and effective exercise training as alternatives to harmful behaviors. The objectives are: reduce young women athletes' disordered eating habits; deter use of body-shaping substances; improve sport performance with guidelines targeting the specific needs of young women. Proven results include: less use of athletic enhancing substances; less use of diet pills; less riding in a car

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). Those programs, now known as ATLAS and ATHENA, have undergone randomized controlled evaluations involving more than 4,000 student-athletes in over 50 high schools and have been disseminated for use in more than 60 schools in 31 states and Puerto Rico. The results of the programs are published in leading medical journals, including the Journal of the American Medical Association and the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine.

ATLAS and ATHENA are housed within the newly-created Center for Health Promotion Research at OHSU and the only programs recommended by the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 2004, recognized as model curricula. Financial support for the center is directed through the OHSU Foundation, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation that funds the center's efforts to bring innovative and effective strategies to public service.

About SI

SI is a multimedia sports brand that takes the consumer into the heart and soul of sports. The SI franchise is anchored by *Sports Illustrated*, the most respected voice in sports journalism which reaches a weekly audience of more than 20 million adults, and SI.COM, the magazine's 24/7 sports news website that delivers more than 150 original stories to its users each week. The SI franchise also includes *Sports Illustrated For Kids* (sikids.com), a monthly magazine targeted to kids age eight and up; SI PRESENTS, the magazine's specialty publishing division; as well as SI DIGITAL, SI BOOKS, SI PICTURES, SI PRODUCTIONS and SI EVENTS. Founded in 1954, SI is a division of Time Inc., the world's leading magazine publishing company and a subsidiary of Time Warner.



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– MHSAA Executive Director
John E. "Jack" Roberts

with a drinking driver; greater seatbelt use; less new sexual activity; improved nutrition behaviors and reduced long-term use of alcohol, marijuana and tobacco.

About ATLAS and ATHENA

Doctors Linn Goldberg and Diane Elliot began investigating the reasons young athletes used anabolic steroids, alcohol and other drugs and how to prevent their use in 1987. Since that time their research has involved more than 7,500 high school students. After developing potential strategies they applied for and received two independent research grants from the

**It takes strength
to lift this.**



**It takes a
strong person
to lift this.**

**Help Recruit
School Coaches
and Officials.**

OFFICIAL EDUCATOR

As an individual who has been involved in education for almost 30 years, I would like to take this opportunity to bring Mr. Gregg Williams to your attention. On two separate occasions Gregg took the time out of his busy schedule to speak to the parents and athletes here at our school. His straight-forward way of relating the way an MHSAA referee operates has helped athletes and parents step back and look at officials as human beings who are giving back to their communities and the sports that they love in a positive way.

I believe that Gregg has helped raise awareness concerning the difficulties faced by part-time officials, while at the same time emphasizing that this is a service that must be continued if high school sports are to continue to grow. Gregg's commitment to his community and to young people is a real example to all of us. Gregg does not do it for the check but for the love of the game and the athletes who participate.

I would like to see officials who go beyond what is required be recognized for their extra efforts. Gregg is truly an ambassador not only for the sport of basketball but for the MHSAA as well.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the MHSAA for the excellent way you coordinate student athletics. Please feel free to call on me if there is anything I can do to help strengthen student athletics in our state.

– Robert Bada
Superintendent
Concord Community Schools

So many times in today's world our officials receive undue criticism and negative publicity. As an athletic director I may be more sensitive to this than the average fan. My interaction with the officials who do us the honor of working our events allows me

to be more objective than the average spectator.

We in the Concord community have been blessed, I believe, by having one of the best basketball officials in the state. His name is Gregg Williams. Now, I can't really speak about Gregg's performance on the court because Gregg's professionalism will not allow him to officiate here in Concord. Concord High School is his alma mater. However, what I hear from other officials, coaches and A.D.s, is that he does a fantastic job calling games. What I feel makes Gregg an exceptional official is what he does off the court.

Gregg, on two occasions, has taken time out of his day to speak to our parents and players about everything from sportsmanship to clarifying specific rules of the game. The time he spends with our athletic community is invaluable. One of the positive things that I have seen come from these talks is that it humanizes the man inside the stripes. This provides everyone with the added insight I believe is important to good sportsmanship.

I am certain that if we can get more of these parent/player-official interactions around the state, we will be better able to better battle the constant fight against poor sportsmanship. This never-ending job of educating our fans is made easier with the efforts of people like Gregg Williams. I am certain that the time he has spent with us will make school sports here in Concord more enjoyable for everyone involved.

– David O'Dowd
Athletic Director
Concord Community Schools

Please submit your views and opinions to: mentor@mhsaa.com. The MHSAA welcomes viewpoints from member school personnel and contest officials. We thank you for your readership.

NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT SPECIALIZATION

I've learned that specialization is not necessarily a good thing. Because of the fact that most high school athletes will not advance to the college or professional ranks, many of those students that specialize in a single sport will lose out on the opportunity to participate in multiple high school sports. Also, most high schools must rely on the multiple-sport athlete if the school is to be well rounded and successful in their overall sports programming."

– Dr. Jim Tenopir
Executive Director
Nebraska School Activities Association

Please don't assume that I'm against specialization or camps or clinics or individual coaching. I'm not. For some kids, that's great. But, as educators, I don't believe our efforts are geared toward some kids. Our programs are intended to support all kids who want to play for their high school teams; who live in and play for their own community; and who want to give their best, regardless of their skill level, to be a part of their school team.

Specialization may work for some people, but multiple experiences through athletics and fine arts will benefit every participant. Help your athletes know the odds of playing sports in college or at the professional level. Teach them to be realistic about their skill level and their potential to truly beat the odds. And, most of all, let them know that academics must come first."

– David Stead
Executive Director
Minnesota State High School League

First-Year Athletic Directors Orientation Program

In March, 2006 the Representative Council determined that new athletic directors in the first year of service at a member school will be required to attend an MHSAA New Athletic Directors Orientation Program sponsored in August and November. Schools which do not send their school athletic director or coordinator face penalties, beginning with the denial of MHSAA tournament hosting privileges and reimbursement. Two dates are offered before school starts in the fall – Aug. 10 or 22, 2006. Consult mhsaa.com or the April, May or August 2006 *Bulletins* for details.

From the Editor

"It's online." Get used to that response. Not that we don't want to hear from our administrators or officials, but with the technological advancements in today's society, you probably can't find that bubble sheet rating form or that tournament entry form in every color of the rainbow on your desk for this simple reason: they no longer exist.

During the last couple of years, the MHSAA has put its best technological foot forward to stay ahead of the curve nationally among state associations to make more efficient use of your time on a daily basis while streamlining communication between your office and ours.

We have listened to our constituents, prioritized projects and offered online services which have proven beneficial for our schools and officials, saving both time and dollars on both ends, particularly in postage expenses.

Like anything else, however, the system is only as effective as its operator. Occasionally, we are still met with resistance from the old guard which still covets a piece of paper in its hand, although this group is dwindling in number. More often than not, the calls we receive are of this nature: "I know it's online, but where is it?"

While the MHSAA Web site underwent a complete overhaul to simplify navigation in January 2005, attempting to organize our entire office and all of its services into one screen on your desk can be a daunting task. And, we understand visiting our e-office and file cabinets can be confusing at times.

With that in mind, follow this simple advice: If the subject matter is interactive in nature (that is, to submit or obtain information from the MHSAA office), simply click the "LOGIN" box in the upper left corner of the home page. You will be prompted to enter your school or official's ID and password, and may proceed from there.

Following are a couple of the many of the features you will find there, which once wasted ink, paper and postage.

SCHOOLS

- **Update School Information** - This is the most critical page schools can update. With the "paperless movement" well underway, it is paramount for schools to keep this page current as soon as changes occur. Changes submitted online simultaneously populate the MHSAA database, thus providing our office and your cohorts with current phone numbers, e-mail addresses, coaching changes, etc. Changes in e-mail addresses are of primary concern because it has become the No. 1 means of communication between the MHSAA and your school.

- **Officials Ratings** - No longer do coaches need to spend valuable time filling out countless bubble dot forms to rate officials on a regular basis. Simply acquire a login and password from the athletic director, fill out the online ratings form, and submit. In its first year of implementation, the online ratings system has generated a dramatic increase in volume and timeliness of officials ratings.

- **Surveys & Schedules** - Important surveys, such as the Sports Participation Survey, are now a mouse click away, and schools also have been asked to submit 2006 football schedules online, further reducing faxes.

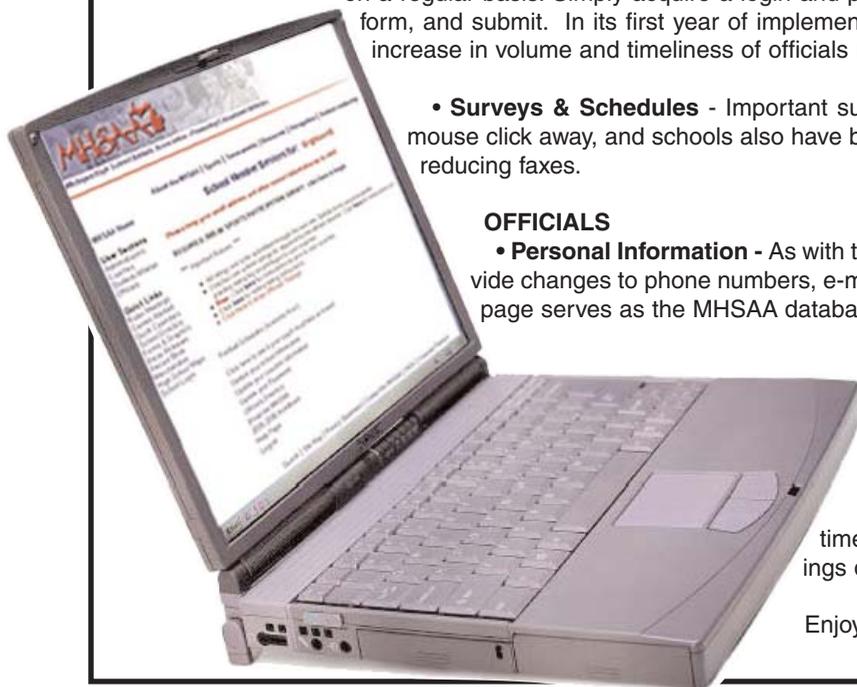
OFFICIALS

- **Personal Information** - As with the case for schools, it is equally important for officials to provide changes to phone numbers, e-mail addresses, home addresses as they occur, as the online page serves as the MHSAA database used to contact you.

Registration - Beginning and renewing officials are encouraged to register online, receiving a discounted registration fee. The online method eliminates forms, and the possibility of mail arriving at the MHSAA past the deadline.

View Ratings - Officials receive their ratings in a more timely manner, and can even view which schools submitted ratings during a given season for each sport worked.

Enjoy the summer. See you on your laptop.



2005-06 Scholar-Athlete Award Winners Honored

In ceremonies at halftime of the 2006 MHSAA Boys Basketball Tournament Class C Final on March 25 at the Breslin Center in East Lansing, 32 students were honored as the 2005-06 recipients of the Association's Scholar-Athlete Award, sponsored by Farm Bureau Insurance. Following the game, the group enjoyed a reception with their families, friends and MHSAA staff in recognition of their achievement.

In its 17th year of sponsoring the award, Farm Bureau Insurance gives a \$1,000 college scholarship to these 32 individuals, to be used at the college, university or trade school of their choice during the 2006-07 school year.

Each of the 2,145 applicants for the award are presented with a certificate, and each of the 120 finalists received a commemorative medallion. Certificates for all applicants were to be mailed in mid-April.

2006 BY THE NUMBERS: 1,244 of the 2,145 applicants (58.0%) were females. There were 874 Class A applicants from 140 Class A schools, 674 Class B applicants from 142 Class B schools, 460 Class C applicants from 129 Class C schools, and 137 Class D applicants from 58 Class D schools. The 2,145 applicants played a total of 4,291 sports, or 2.00 sports per applicant. The 120 finalists averaged 2.46 sports played, and 67 of the finalists participated in at least three sports.

Applications for the 2007 Scholar-Athlete Award will be available on the MHSAA Web site in the fall.

2005-06 Scholar-Athletes – Front Row (L to R): Asli Bashir, Ann Arbor Huron; Bryan Berger, Marshall; Sarah Brewer, Wayland Union; Christine Brynaert, Romeo; Kelsey Caverly, East Detroit; Joseph Davis, Potterville; Shannon Dibble, Charlevoix; MacKenzie Donohue, Fulton-Middleton. **Second Row:** Timothy Erdmann, Auburn Hills Oakland Christian; Jessica Frankowski, Roscommon; Nathan Gonzalez, Springport; Marissa Ingle, Delton Kellogg; Nicholas Josey, Flint Powers Catholic; Kristen Lazaroff, Jackson Lumen Christi; Peter Loy, Warren DeLaSalle; Christopher Michaud, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern. **Third Row:** Katelyn Mitchell, Marion; Alex Mihelick, Plymouth; Christopher Momont, Iron Mountain; Rick Storm, Niles; Ben Thayer, Kalamazoo Hackett; John Waynick, Troy Athens; Eric Zhao, Novi. **Not Pictured:** Alexandria Boyd, Saginaw Nouvel; David Fuller, Temperance Bedford; Megan Hooper, Traverse City St. Francis; Anna Leutheuser, Hillsdale Academy; Margaret Scholtes, Grosse Pointe South; Dana Schweitzer, Grosse Pointe South; Jacob Stewart, Chesaning; Elizabeth Tepe, Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook-Kingswood; Callie Youngman, Cadillac.



John Johnson, Okemos

Mini-Grants Make a Difference at the Local Level

The Michigan High School Athletic Association provides financial grants to its member schools and their leagues to assist in local efforts to encourage and equip people to provide appropriate leadership and support for educational athletics in Michigan.

The theory is that in a state as large and diverse as Michigan, neither statewide nor even regional meetings can be made convenient or effective for the entire membership; and financial grants can help provide a breadth of reach and depth of experience that MHSAA-conducted meetings may not accomplish.

Sportsmanship – During 2005-06, the MHSAA distributed \$7,073 in grants for local and league sportsmanship events. During 2006-07, the MHSAA will conduct four regional sportsmanship meetings: Oct. 30 in Grand Rapids; Nov. 1 in Gaylord; Nov. 6 in Lansing; Nov. 8 in Warren.

Up to \$10,000 in mini-grants will be available in 2007-08. Randy Allen is the MHSAA staff contact for the mini-grants; Andy Frushour administers the regional meetings.

Women in Sports Leadership – On Feb. 12 and 13, 2006, the MHSAA provided its strongest program since it first began conducting a statewide Women in Sports Leadership Conference in Lansing 17 years ago. In 2006-07, up to \$10,000 is available in mini-grants to assist in the delivery of similar programming to more local venues across the state.

Kathy Westdorp is the MHSAA staff contact for both the conference and the grants.

Student Leadership – Each year, the MHSAA has available up to \$20,000 for leadership training events conducted for student-athletes. Some is used for events conducted by the association, such as the two Captains Clinics conducted in February 2006; some is provided to member schools and their leagues to provide leadership events locally for student-athletes.

During the 2006-07 school year, in addition to supporting an increased schedule of MHSAA/MASSP Captains Clinics and local leadership events, these funds will support the Nov. 9 conference which is part of the MHSAA's partnership with Sports Illustrated and the Oregon Health & Science University addressing successful alternatives to performance-enhancing drugs.

The staff contact for the mini-grants, Captains Clinics and Nov. 9 conference is Andy Frushour.

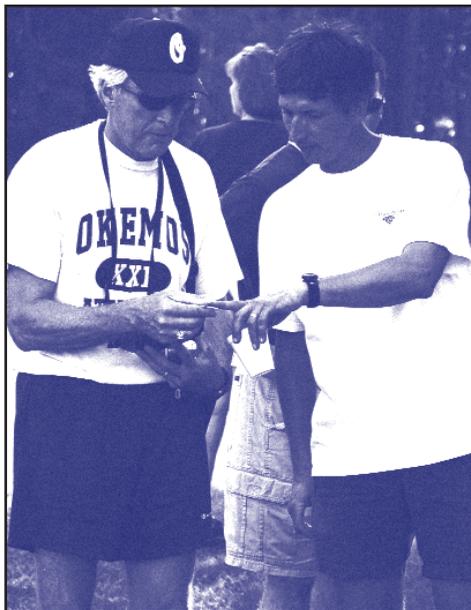
Parents Are Not the Enemy

One of the hottest issues facing today's high school coaches is what to do with over-involved parents. These parents often place undue pressure on their children to win, achieve results and get college scholarships (even if that is unrealistic), yell disparaging remarks from the stands, question every move a coach makes, politic for playing time, and/or go behind before talking to the coach go behind his or her back to complain to higher authorities. Educational athletics is not their focus – winning and promoting the competitive needs of both themselves and their child are paramount.

Focus groups that our staff here at the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports (ISYS) has conducted with coaches, principals, athletic directors, student athletes and parents from MHSAA schools have validated that problems with parents are an increasing concern and something that needs to be addressed. In fact, CAP Level 3 has a module solely devoted to this topic and the MHSAA is encouraging schools and leagues to develop well thought out policies and procedures for both educating parents and effectively dealing with any inappropriate behaviors that arise.

Recognizing that there are certainly problems with sport parents today, our staff here at ISYS has a growing concern that many coaches and athletic directors are starting to view parents as the enemy. When we mention parents at CAP clinics, we immediately see many of the participating coaches roll their eyes and make remarks like, 'This job would be great without them,' or 'why can't I have a team of orphans.'

What concerns us is that because of the inappropriate actions of a few "bad apple" parents it is assumed that all parents are bad; people to avoid and have as little contact with as possible. Nothing could be further from the truth.



John Johnson, Okemos



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The bulk of the parents we have talked with buy into the educational athletics philosophy and want to support their coach and athletes in positive ways. In fact, research shows that parents are absolutely essential for helping young athletes develop. For example, if parents are inactive it is unlikely that their child will adopt

an active athletic life style. Parents are certainly critical in the early years of their children's athletic involvement by finding programs in which their children can be involved and transporting them to practices and games. Most importantly, they help create a climate that will influence their child's achievement tendencies, goals, sportsmanship, and respect for the coach, opponents, and the game.

The parent can also be a tremendous resource for the coach and athletic director. For example, some are in sales and might be extremely helpful in fundraising

efforts; others have excellent organizational and communication skills, and still others can provide the needed helping hand in providing halftime drinks or pregame meals. Most importantly, all have known their child much longer than you, and can provide critical information that will help coaches more effectively coach the team and their child.

Interestingly, we studied a group of highly successful high school football coaches several years ago and while they recognized growing problems with parents, they focused most of their efforts on setting up ways to facilitate two-way communication between them and their players' parents, means of educating parents, and ways for parents to have a voice in their programs. While these coaches said such efforts to connect with parents took some time, they also indicated that the time was well spent as doing so prevented problems and facilitated program goals, on and off the field. It also made the high school coaching process more productive and enjoyable.

So what can a coach and athletic directors do to improve relationships with their players' parents? The first thing a coach should do is to register for CAP 3 if they have not already done so (you will need to have completed Level 2). Administrators can also request that a CAP 3 be held at their school, thus providing this training to all of their coaches. From this training, coaches can learn how to effectively interact and work with their players' parents.

There are many other things coaches and athletic directors can do as well. Specific strategies coaches have found to be successful for fostering positive relationships with players' parents include the following.

1. Send a letter home congratulating parents for having their child make the team while simultaneously informing them of team rules, expectations of the athletes, and when and where the coach can be contacted.
2. Conduct a parent orientation meeting where the coach is able to meet the parents, discuss his or her philosophy of coaching, organize them to help with any logistical tasks (providing pregame meals or postgame snacks, rules about transporting athletes), overview team rules, and, most importantly ask any

questions. Also, the coach informs parent about how they can help both the coach and their child.

3. Some leagues, schools and/or teams have players, coaches and parents sign behavioral contracts outlining appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. Signing a contract is not enough unless the coach is the example of what educational athletics are about. Coaches must "walk the talk" and model appropriate behavior.
4. Have the athletic director or other school officials catch parents exhibiting positive behaviors by simply going up to them and shaking their hands and thanking them for acting in a manner that is consistent with the highest ideals of educational athletics. Don't spend all your time with the few problem parents in your program. Reward desirable behaviors by catching parents doing things right. Doing so will increase the occurrence of desirable actions.

The bulk of the parents we have talked with buy into the educational athletics philosophy and want to support their coach and athletes in positive ways. In fact, research shows that parents are absolutely essential for helping young athletes develop.

5. Hold a player-parent social where everyone can meet in a non-athletic setting. For example, one highly successful football coach had a pregame dinner the night before each game and had the players organize it for their parents and themselves. Everyone enjoyed it and it had the added benefit of enhancing team cohesion and increasing player responsibility.
6. Ask for feedback. At the end of the season have parents (players too) complete an anonymous evaluation of the

program where they provide feedback of what they thought went well and where things could be improved.

7. Know school rules about inappropriate behavior on the part of parents and develop a plan for dealing with inappropriate parental actions in the event they occur. Be prepared!
8. Spend some time getting to know players' parents. They can teach coaches about their children and the vast majority are great people who are enjoyable to be around.

In summary, it is a grave mistake to knowingly or unknowingly disengage with the parents. They can be an extremely valuable resource and should be involved in and ask questions about you and your program as it is their role to ensure that their child receives the best education possible. Great coaches have found ways to positively engage them. They don't view parents as the enemy!

Tony Payne: 1962-2006

Official, Mentor and Friend of High School Athletics

Tony Payne, a veteran official whose numerous MHSAA Finals assignments in football and basketball represent only a fraction of his decorated resumé, died on April 21 at the age of 44 following a lengthy illness.

A Lansing native and member of the Capital Area Officials Association, Payne was one of the most respected and knowledgeable officials in the state and the Midwest who ultimately ascended to the major college ranks in football and regularly worked a Big Ten schedule.

However, it was his tireless and selfless recruitment and training of young officials which made him more than just another person in stripes.

"Tony Payne was a big time official who worked big time games, but never 'big timed' anyone," said CAO A President Jeff Spedoske. "Tony would work in front of 100,000 people on a Saturday in the Big Ten and then work a freshman game the following Thursday in order to mentor new officials. He truly cared about the future of officiating, especially in the Lansing area. Tony was my friend and mentor; he was my brother and my partner. He was all these things to so many of us who officiate."

Payne, a graduate of Lansing Harry Hill High School where he excelled in three sports, also officiated NFL Europe and Mid-American Conference basketball, and seemingly every league in between.

"The passing of Tony 'T.P.' Payne is a terrible loss to the officiating community not only in Lansing but the entire state," said CAO A Assignor Mike Conlin. "Tony was an outstanding official and an even better person. He was the partner you wanted on the tough basketball game. He was the umpire you wanted in the middle to control a tough football game. As Tony progressed to the highest levels, he never forgot where he came from. He was always helping the young and less experienced official either by working a sub-varsity contest with them or observing and critiquing them at a scrimmage or camp. His legacy will live on in the officials that he influenced throughout his career."

Following high school, Payne attended Ferris State University on a football scholarship, earning his bachelor's degree in business administration which led to a successful career in banking.

Yet, nothing could keep T.P. away his first love, athletics, and he channeled that passion into a most prolific officiating career.

"The sure-fire, one-word description of Tony Payne is: excellence. He was a man of strong moral character, full of spirit and love toward everyone," said officiating colleague Justin Terry. "Tony possessed the ability and willingness to go the extra mile to make everyone look good. T.P. made life real nice on the court with his ability to communicate with the student athletes and coaches. He truly believed that the game was an extension of the classroom and he approached it just that way."

He will be missed when roll call is taken for that class in the fall, when another season begins.



Honors and Awards

McShannock, Prucka Named 2006 Forsythe Award Winners

Dan McShannock, athletic director at Midland Dow High School, and Dail Prucka, who recently retired after 39 years of service at Monroe Jefferson High School, are the recipients of the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Charles E. Forsythe Award for 2006.

This annual award is in its 29th year of existence and is named after former MHSAA Executive Director Charles E. Forsythe, the Association's first full time and longest-serving chief executive. One or two recipients are selected each year by the MHSAA Representative Council, based on an individual's outstanding contribution to the interscholastic athletics community. McShannock and Prucka were presented the award on March 25 at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing at halftime of the Boys Basketball Class A Final.

McShannock's selection for the award is unique in the respect that his father, former Muskegon High School coach and athletic administrator Thomas McShannock, won the award in 1992. It's the first time two members of the same family been named to receive the Forsythe Award. McShannock also was named a recipient of the MHSAA's Allen W. Bush Award in 2000. McShannock becomes the ninth Bush Award recipient to be later named a Forsythe Award winner.

Saginaw Arthur Hill was McShannock's first assignment, where he served for 19 years as a teacher, a coach in three sports, and an athletic administrator. As a varsity assistant football coach, he worked with a 1973 Arthur Hill team that finished the season 9-0, and was the last Michigan grid squad to finish its season unbeaten, untied and unscored upon. He also served as the head coach in girls track and field, and wrestling. His last nine years at Arthur Hill were spent as athletic director.

The past 14 years, McShannock has served as athletic director at Midland Dow, directing a 21-sport program. During his time as an athletic administrator, McShannock has also played host to over 70 MHSAA tournament events.

McShannock has been prominent in high school athletic administration on the statewide and national scene. As a member of the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, he has served as that organization's president; chaired and served on numerous committees; and was named the organization's Athletic Director of the Year in 2001.

In the community, McShannock is a Red Cross volunteer, a member of several committees with the Saginaw YMCA, and has previously served as a trustee of the WBA Ruster Foundation. A 1968 graduate of Muskegon High School, where he was an All-State football player, he went on to Western Michigan University and won three varsity letters in football before graduating with a health, physical education and recreation degree in 1972. He earned his Master's in secondary education administration from Michigan State University in 1975.

Prucka recently retired after exclusively serving the Jefferson School District in a career spanning 39 years as a teacher, coach and athletic administrator. His coaching experience ranged from the middle school to the high school, working with teams in football and girls track and field. He was honored by the Huron League as its Assistant Football Coach of the Year in 1989, and its Girls Track



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Midland Dow's Dan McShannock (left) and Monroe Jefferson's Dail Prucka were honored for their outstanding contributions to interscholastic athletics.

and Field Coach of the Year in 1994. He was inducted into the Michigan High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame in 2003.

He served as athletic director from 1967 to 1977, and then from 1994 until his retirement. As an athletic administrator, Prucka was instrumental in launching girls athletic programs at Jefferson, growing the overall program to 22 sports. He led a fund-raising drive to have new lighting installed at the school's football field, which were dedicated in his name. He also operated the school district's recreation center. He also was active as an MHSAA tournament host manager and committee member; served the MIAAA on its Membership Services and Publications Committees; and served in nearly every elected position with the Huron League. His professional organization memberships also include the National Federation Interscholastic Coaches Association, the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association, and the Michigan High School Coaches Association.

Prucka's community outreach is substantial. He has taught adult education classes, served as a volunteer repairing a local Girls Scout camp facility, served three terms on the Jefferson Education Association, has been a township board of trustee, an elder at the Session Presbyterian Church, and a member of the Monroe Community Players.

A 1961 graduate of Carleton Airport High School, Prucka received his Bachelor's Degree from Alma College in 1966, and his Master's Degree from Eastern Michigan University in 1984.

"In Dan McShannock and Dail Prucka, you have two men who have served educational athletics well," said John E. "Jack" Roberts, executive director of the MHSAA. "Both are held in high regard in the communities in which they have worked, and among their peers."

Jeanne Skinner Receives 2006 Norris Award

One of the state's leading volleyball officials and rules interpreters, Jeanne Skinner of Grand Rapids is the recipient of the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Vern L. Norris Award for 2006.

The Norris Award is presented annually to a veteran official who has been active in a local officials association, has mentored other officials, and has been involved in official's education. It is named for Vern L. Norris, who was executive director of the MHSAA from 1978-86, and well-respected by officials on the state and national levels. Skinner received the award at the MHSAA's 27th annual Official's Awards and Alumni Banquet at the Sheraton Lansing Hotel.

In her 31st year as a registered MHSAA official, Skinner's knowledge and expertise in volleyball has earned her assignments at all levels of MHSAA tournaments, including

the Finals for a stretch spanning more than a decade at one point in her career.

Her work on the court signifies only part of the contributions she has made to the sport statewide. She is a founding member and past president and vice president of the West Michigan Volleyball Officials Association, and still serves the association as a certified trainer.

Skinner also founded the Michigan Women's Coaches Association, which is now the Michigan Interscholastic Volleyball Coaches Association.

A state rated collegiate volleyball official, Skinner also is a founding member, assignor, trainer and evaluator for the Michigan Professional Volleyball Officials Association, assigning for the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

For the MHSAA, Skinner has conducted volleyball rules meetings throughout the state, served numerous terms on volleyball committees, and works for the train the trainers program.

Skinner works tirelessly to recruit and train volleyball officials throughout Michigan, and her career has paralleled the growth of volleyball in this state.

"Jeanne is among the two or three most influential persons in Michigan volleyball officiating," said MHSAA Executive Director John E. "Jack" Roberts. "The MHSAA has



Jeanne Skinner received the 2006 Norris Award from MHSAA Executive Director John E. "Jack" Roberts (left) and former Executive Director Vern L. Norris (right) for whom the award is named.

John Johnson, Okemos

been blessed by her dedication to the high school level and her mentoring of so many officiating colleagues for Michigan's most popular high school girls sport."

A former teacher in the Wyoming Park school district, Skinner received her bachelor's degree from Western Michigan University, and her master's degree from the University of Michigan. Currently she teaches volleyball officiating at Aquinas College.

"Jeanne is a very unassuming person who leads by example," said MHSAA Assistant Director Gina Mazzolini. "Her teaching background combined with her knowledge of the game of volleyball allow her to effectively instruct and mentor officials at all levels. She has a genuine concern for the officiating profession and promotes it at every opportunity."

NORRIS AWARD PAST RECIPIENTS

- 1992 – Ted Wilson, East Detroit
- 1993 – Fred Briggs, Burton
- 1994 – Joe Brodie, Flat Rock
- 1995 – Jim Massar, Flint
- 1996 – Jim Lamoreaux, St. Ignace
- 1997 – Ken Myllyla, Escanaba
- 1998 – Blake Hagman, Kalamazoo
- 1999 – Richard Kalahar, Jackson
- 2000 – Barb Beckett, Traverse City; Karl Newingham, Bay City
- 2001 – Herb Lipschultz, Kalamazoo
- 2002 – Robert Scholie, Hancock
- 2003 – Ron Nagy, Hazel Park
- 2004 – Carl Van Heck, Grand Rapids
- 2005 – Bruce Moss, Alma

Volleyball Officials Training Camp

July 21-23 - Ferris State University

Contacts: Jeanne Skinner – H: 616-677-1721; Skinnj101@aol.com

Jill Baker-Cooley – W: 231-876-2208; H: 231-592-9748; jbaker@wmisd.org

Classroom Sessions Include: Ball Handling, Contest Management, Libero Tracking & Administration, Officiating Techniques, Plus Other Topics per Your Request!

Cheating Your Health – Steroids

ABOUT STEROIDS

There is no question that steroids work to increase lean muscle mass. But at what cost? What potential problems await those who take anabolic steroids?

There is a saying that, "the dose makes the poison." Translation: The more of a drug you take, and the longer you take it, the greater the risk of negative side effects. This is the case with anabolic steroids.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGES

Anabolic steroids are also associated with mental changes, with the potential for:

- Increased aggression and in some cases "roid rage."
- Psychological and physical dependence, similar to the properties associated with addictive drugs.
- Feelings of euphoria and invincibility in some individuals; and in others delusions and paranoia.

Anabolic steroid withdrawal can be associated with depression, and in some cases, suicide.

There is a disease, muscle dysmorphia (also known as "reverse anorexia nervosa"), that drives young people to be obsessed with body appearance and composition. These individuals exhibit obsessive eating and exercise behaviors. This disease is associated with increased anabolic steroid abuse.

IN THE LIVER AND CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM...

Anabolic steroids like testosterone, if taken by mouth, are destroyed by the liver before they ever get into your blood. Therefore, they must be injected to be effective. Injections of any substance have risks associated with them, including:

- Contracting AIDS or hepatitis B or C, or
- An infection in the injection site which can result in an abscess or cellulitis requiring medical treatment.

Chemists are able to modify the steroid structure in order to allow the steroid to pass through the liver unchanged. Most of these steroids are called 17-alkylated steroids. The following points are important for consideration:

- The "price" for an orally available steroid was damage to the liver cells that results in elevated markers of liver damage (enzymes, bilirubin) in the blood. Fortunately, this damage is usually reversible when you stop taking the anabolic steroid.
- In some people, a rare condition called Peliosis hepaticus (blood-filled cysts in the liver) develops. The condition is usually reversible if the use of steroids ceases and medical treatment is sought.

- In an unlucky few, liver tumors and cancer can be the result of taking anabolic steroids. And liver cancer is almost always fatal.

Along with the effects on the liver, the use of anabolic steroids results in changes in the blood lipids to a pattern associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease. No long-term controlled studies have been done to document whether the increased risk results in shortened lifespan. The lipid pattern usually returns to normal if anabolic steroid use is stopped.

THE ENDOCRINE SYSTEM...

Since they are related to testosterone, anabolic steroids interfere with the body's endocrine system. Anabolic steroids can impact the endocrine system in several ways:

- The body's normal production of testosterone can stop.
- The testes generally shrink and sperm production is diminished. In some individuals, total lack of sperm results in infertility, and in a few individuals, this infertility is permanent.
- Some anabolic steroids are converted into estrogens in the body, which can result in the permanent development of breast tissue in men.
- There is concern that abuse of anabolic steroids could result in prostate disease, but no well-controlled studies have been conducted to prove or disprove this.

PHYSICAL CHANGES IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Since anabolic steroids are responsible for the appearance associated with maleness, steroid use in females can result in embarrassing physical changes that can be irreversible, including:

- Lowering of the voice
- Cessation of breast development
- Growth of hair on the stomach and upper back
- Baldness at the temples and crown of the head
- Growth of the clitoris
- Serious disruption or cessation of the menstrual cycle

In children that have not reached maturity, steroid use can disrupt or prematurely initiate puberty. Anabolic steroids can also stunt growth by prematurely causing the long bones to stop growing.

So, are the bigger muscles worth playing Russian roulette with your health?

– U.S. Anti-Doping Agency
usantidoping.org

SCHOOLS NOT REQUIRED TO DO CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS OF OFFICIALS

The package of bills that became law Jan. 1, 2006, intending to protect school children from persons with criminal records was amended by the Michigan Legislature's passage of House Bill 5675 which was signed into law as Public Act 84 of 2006 on March 31, 2006.

While certainly not the primary reason for this trailer legislation, PA 84 makes clear that public and nonpublic schools are not required to perform criminal history checks of contest officials for their athletic events.

Athletic officials are outside the requirements in two ways, time and topic:

1. They do not work "regularly and continuously under contract," but merely on an intermittent or sporadic basis;
2. The services officials provide are not among the covered areas, which are "to provide food, custodial, transportation, counseling, or administrative services, or to provide instructional services to pupils or related and auxiliary services to special education pupils."

As it was doing prior to Jan. 1, the MHSAA will continue to do criminal history checks on all 12,000 persons who register with the MHSAA, and it is committed to denying registration to or suspending officials whose criminal histories would be problematic, including being convicted of any listed offense under the Sex Offenders Registration Act.

Michigan Hosts National Coaching Educators' Conference

The 2006 National Coaching Educators' Conference comes to Michigan, June 15-17, 2006. It is the only national forum for state-of-the-art information about quality coaching education and coaching practices.

The conference is sponsored by a coalition of organizations that includes the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, National Federation of State High School Associations, NCAA, NAIA and USOC. The Institute for the Study of Youth Sports at Michigan State University is co-hosting the event with the MHSAA.

Among the confirmed speakers are Dan Varner of Think Detroit, MHSAA Executive Director Jack Roberts, MHSAA Assistant Director Kathy Westdorp, and Flint Powers Catholic High School girls basketball coaching legend Kathy McGee.

The event will take place at the Candlewood Suites adjacent to MSU's Forest Akers West Golf Course in East Lansing.

Visit www.ncaceinfo.org and click on "2006 National Coaching Educators' Conference" for additional information.



ADVANTAGE GIRLS

How Michigan's Girls Rank Among National Participation Numbers

In 1998, a suit was filed in U.S. District Court to move girls volleyball to the fall season and schedule five other sports at the same time for girls as for boys.

Here's how Michigan high school girls fare in those six sports compared to boys and the rest of the nation.

	BOYS		GIRLS	
	Total	National Rank	Total	National Rank
Basketball	19,274	7	20,541	3
Tennis	8,723	4	9,439	3
Swimming & Diving	5,201	5	6,879	4
Volleyball	165	20	21,564	4
Golf	7,941	5	3,677	5
Soccer	14,562	8	13,675	6

Based on 2004-05 Sports Participation Survey of the National Federation of State High School Associations

2006-07 NATIONAL TESTING DATES

ADMINISTRATION - COUNSELORS - COACHES

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR 2007:

MICHIGAN MERIT EXAM DATES

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has notified schools that, to comply with state law and the requirements of ACT which is the main component of the Michigan Merit Exam (MME), the following schedule for MME testing has been established for spring of 2007:

March 13 – ACT
 March 14 – WorkKeys + Michigan Math
 March 14-21 – Michigan Science and Social Studies (not weekends)

March 27 – ACT Makeup
 March 28 – WorkKeys + Michigan Math Makeup
 March 28-April 5 – Michigan Science and Social Studies Makeup (not weekends)

The established dates (not the makeup dates) are simultaneous with these MHSAA tournaments:

- Boys Basketball Regionals – March 13-17
- Girls Volleyball Quarterfinals – March 13
- Girls Volleyball Semis & Finals – March 15-16
- Boys Basketball Quarterfinals – March 20

MHSAA leadership will review policies and procedures for boys basketball tournaments and the Finals week for girls volleyball to determine if adjustments can be and should be made.

Please advise students of the 2006-07 test date schedule. Your students should be aware of athletic tournament dates and should attempt to schedule their respective test date away from tournament dates of the sport or sports in which they are interested and participate. Following are test dates for 2007 and dates where tournaments would create conflict.

ACT ASSESSMENT DATES

October 28, 2006	Fall Tournaments
December 9, 2006	None
February 10, 2007	None
April 14, 2007	None
June 9, 2007	Spring Tournaments

SAT TESTING DATES

October 14, 2006	Fall Tournaments
November 4, 2006	Fall Tournaments
December 2, 2006	Fall Tournaments
January 27, 2007	None
March 10, 2007	None
May 5, 2007	None
June 2, 2007	Spring Tournaments

AP EXAM DATES

May 7-11, 14-18, 2007	None
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(AP Exams take place over a five-day period for each subject)

Sportsmanship

Winter Good Sports Are Winners! Award Recipients Tabbed

The recipients of the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Good Sports Are Winners! Awards for the recently-completed 2006 Winter sports season have been named, with each school to receive recognition from MEEMIC Insurance, the Association's corporate partner in sportsmanship efforts.

Hesperia in team dual wrestling, Richland Gull Lake in girls competitive cheer, Saline in ice hockey, Union City in girls volleyball, and Mt. Pleasant Sacred Heart in boys basketball, were selected by the tournament management at their respective finals for displaying the most exemplary sportsmanship by their coaches, student-athletes and spectators. Each school receiving a Finals award will be presented a commemorative banner and crystal trophy at a venue of the school's choosing at a future date.

Hesperia was a Division 4 finalist in team dual wrestling, Gull Lake was a Class B finalist in girls competitive cheer, Saline was a Division 2 finalist in ice hockey, Union City was a Class C finalist in girls volleyball, and Mt. Pleasant Sacred Heart was a finalist in Class D in boys basketball.



In addition to receiving the finals award, Union City also won an award in girls volleyball at the Regional level.

For Gull Lake and Saline, this is the second time each school has received the Good Sports Are Winners! Award at the Finals level of MHSAA tournament play. Gull Lake won the 1994 award at the Girls Soccer Finals; and Saline won the 2003 honor at the Boys Soccer Finals.

At the District, Regional and Quarterfinal levels of MHSAA tournaments, all schools which meet a set of sportsmanlike standards will be recognized. Those schools will be presented framed certificates from MEEMIC Insurance.

In all, 297 teams in team dual wrestling, girls competitive cheer, ice hockey, girls volleyball and boys basketball are being recognized for their outstanding sportsmanship at Winter tournaments. Those teams will also be recognized through the publication of their names in the *MHSAA Bulletin*, the MHSAA Finals program series, and on the MHSAA Web site. During the course of the school year, over 1,000 teams will be recognized in 11 activities for their sportsmanship efforts during MHSAA tournaments.

- S** **Self Discipline:** Regulation of oneself for the sake of improvement.
- P** **Patience:** The capacity to bear pain or trials calmly or without complaint.
- O** **Optimism:** To anticipate the best possible outcome.
- R** **Respect:** To consider worthy of high regard or esteem.
- T** **Teamwork:** Each doing a part but all subordinating personal prominence.
- S** **Self-Sacrifice:** To give up or renounce for a cause, ideal, belief or end.
- M** **Morality:** Conformity to ideals or right human conduct.
- A** **Attitude:** A positive mental position assumed for a specific purpose.
- N** **Non-Defensive:** Receptive to coaching, encouragement or enlightenment.
- S** **Self-Control:** Restraint exercised over one's own impulses and emotions.
- H** **Humility:** Not being arrogant or assertive.
- I** **Integrity:** Firm adherence to a code of moral artistic values.
- P** **Perseverance:** To persist in spite of opposition or discouragement.

From Dale Hierlmeier, A.D. at Southwestern Jr./Sr. HS in Hanover, IN

Complete lists of the Good Sports Are Winners! Award recipients can be found on the Recognition page of the MHSAA Web site.

Evaluation/Report Forms for Tournament Managers may also be found on the Good Sports Are Winners! Award page, as well as the Administration page under Tournament and Event Management.

Officials for Kids Gaining Momentum Statewide

Approved Officials Associations throughout Michigan are teaming up to support the state's four Children's Miracle Network hospitals through "Officials for Kids," a fundraising effort founded by a group of Lansing area officials in 2004.

Among the latest contributions were donations from the West Michigan Officials Association, Heart of Michigan Officials Association and Capital Area Officials Association.

The HMOA recently raised a generous donation of \$1,000, which will go toward the construction and maintenance of a Pediatric Emergency Room and Waiting Room at the Sparrow Regional Children's Center in Lansing.

The HMOA, like many other approved associations, was impressed with the involvement and ingenuity shown by the CAO. According to Bruce Moss, secretary of the HMOA, the HMOA wanted to join the CAO in "leading the way" for the Officials for Kids cause.

The WMOA in Grand Rapids recently held a Give-A-Game Event that garnered over \$2,100 in donations from officials and spectators. All funds raised will go directly toward CMN programs at DeVos Children's Hospital. The WMOA presented its check at the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals in March, along with the CAO, which raised \$5,000.

In the southeast part of the state, the Metro Detroit Officials Association in Detroit is working toward creating a Zone 3 committee to spearhead fundraising efforts to assist the Beaumont Foundation. To get involved with Officials for Kids in the southeast, please contact MDOA secretary/treasurer Bob Williams.

The Officials for Kids program has significantly benefited from the cultivation of working partnerships among state-approved associations, and undoubtedly will gain momentum with further support.

All four Michigan Children's Miracle Network hospitals are seeing the results of officials working together to benefit children's healthcare. If you have questions about the program, or want to help, please visit the Officials page on mhsaa.com.



DeVos Children's Hospital

Glenn Eckelkamp, Pete VanGessel and Conroy Zuiderveen of the West Michigan Officials Association present a check to Kristin Linscott, Development Coordinator for DeVos Children's Hospital Foundation.

Like Father, Like Son



When Chandler Terry (left) joined his classmates from Lansing Christian High School's choral group to sing the National Anthem prior to the MHSAA Class A Boys Basketball Final on March 25, he was the second member of the family to display his vocal talents prior to a prep tipoff.

Earlier in the season, when Holt High School needed a singer for the Anthem, Justin Terry – Chandler's father and an MHSAA registered official – stepped to the mic and then proceeded to officiate the contest.

It remains to be seen if Chandler will now put on the striped shirt...

Online Officials Registration Underway For 2006-07 School Year

Registrations for individuals interested in becoming a high school athletic contest officials for the 2006-07 school year may now do so online through the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Web site – mhsaa.com.

Effective with the 2006-07 registration period, online registrants will receive a \$5 discount off their processing fees. MHSAA registration fees are among the lowest in the nation. A \$10 fee is charged for each sport an official wishes to work, and the online processing fee is \$20. Officials registering by mail and on a walk-up basis will incur a \$25 processing fee. Officials registered in 2005-06 will be assessed a late fee of \$20 for registration after July 1. The processing fee includes liability insurance coverage of up to \$1 million for officials while working contests involving MHSAA schools.

There is an officials' registration test, which is for first-time officials and officials not registered in the past year. The test consists of 75 questions derived from the *MHSAA Officials Guidebook*, which is available on the Officials page of the MHSAA Web site, and may be used during the open-book test.

Online registration can be accessed by clicking "Officials" on the Home Page of the MHSAA Web site. For further information, contact the MHSAA at 1661 Ramblewood Drive, East Lansing, MI 48823. Telephone: 517/332-5046. E-Mail: register@mhsaa.com.

Hats Off to Our All-State Team



The end of each sports season brings with it the naming of deserving young people to all kinds of all-league, all-area and all-state teams. This kind of recognition can be healthy in school sports because it gives kids an additional sense of accomplishment for a job well done.

We'd like to take the time to join the recognition parade and name our own all-state team...the people who work behind the scenes to make high school sports a great experience for our kids. Without these people, there would be no educational athletic programs available to kids; programs which serve as tools for reaching and teaching boys and girls. And unlike any other postseason honor squad, everyone here is on the first team.

- **Local Boards of Education** – Who set the tone for the educational athletic program by embracing the mission – that school comes first; and who help set policies for coaches, administrators and student-athletes to live by.
- **Administrators** – Superintendents, Principals, Assistant Principals and Athletic Directors – Who provide the visible leadership in the school district for the program, and give attention to the plethora of details involved.
- **Athletic Department Secretaries** – There's high turnover in administrative positions in schools these days, but in many buildings, it's the secretary of the athletic director that is the glue that keeps the program running in tip-top shape.

- **Assistant Coaches** – No head coach makes it on their own. Assistant coaches fill a variety of roles from play callers to personal counselors for student-athletes, and do it all without asking for recognition in return.
- **Trainers, Facilities and Equipment Managers** – They tape the ankles, sew the uniforms, line the fields and are there at a moment's notice when needed.
- **Team Managers and Statisticians** – There are more students than just the players who reap the benefits of being a part of the team. These students learn many of the same lessons in their roles as the athletes do between the lines
- **Reserves** – Someone has get the first team ready every week. Someone has to get ready to be the first team next year.
- **Booster Clubs** – They provide a variety of services to our school programs which enhance the experience of our children.
- **Other Support Groups (Bands-Sideline Cheerleaders-Pom Pon & Dance Groups)** – The games wouldn't be the same without them. Sure, they have their individual platforms to perform on, but together they make high school sporting events a great experience; a unique experience in youth sports.

- **General Student Body** – They support the sports program and the sports program supports them.

Talk to someone who's ever gone through a year where the school sports program didn't exist. They'll tell you that without sports, a day in school is like a day in a tomb.

- **And Parents** – Yes, parents. I'm still one of them, and we're easy targets for criticism in school sports because we make ourselves that way. But most of us support our programs and our kids in ways that are healthy, and educational.

This is truly an all-state team. You can find these people in every school, in every community. People who support and enjoy their role in the educational athletic experience. People who give true meaning to the Celebration of Participation and one of our other catch phrases – High School Sports – It's About Team!

— John Johnson
MHSAA Communications Director

Editor's Note – This commentary aired on radio stations across the state on the weekly program, MHSAA Perspective, in March. MHSAA Perspective is available on-demand through the MHSAA Internet Broadcast Service Web site – mhsaanet-work.com. New editions of MHSAA perspective begin in the Fall.

The Lessons of Sport

This time of year always magnifies winning and losing. It's when high school and college champions are crowned seemingly everywhere.

Conversely, it's when young men and women walk off the court or the ice or the wrestling mat with their heads down, having fallen just a little short in their ultimate dreams of being a champion.

Either way, they are both tremendous successes and not failures because of one or two losses.

That in itself is the lesson that should be learned from sports - especially at the high school and collegiate level.

As Mt. Pleasant Sacred Heart stood ready to accept its medals after Saturday's loss to Wyoming Tri-unity Christian in the MHSAA Class D state basketball championship game at the Breslin Center, Irish coach Keisha Brown took the time to talk individually to several of her players with her arms around them.

The message?

"It's been 31 years since a (Sacred Heart) student has been able to walk off the playing floor having played their last game in a state championship game. That's a tremendous achievement," Brown told the gathered media in the postgame press conference.

"It's hard for these kids, though, because they wanted to come out with a win. It's hard for them to feel good about being a runner-up. But I have one of the most successful, if not most successful, basketball teams in the state.

"They are young men and I want to make sure they understand that they are not failures, but champions."

To those who view sports from the sidelines, Brown's statements would be disregarded because Sacred Heart - which has beaten its fair share of local schools in the last two years - didn't win a state title.

Those people view sports in the black-and-white of winning and losing, not in terms of developing character, leadership and work ethic.

They are missing the point - entirely.

Her comments speak to what competition means. These young men - and every other young man or young woman - who have been down that road before coming so close to their goal can tell you losing that last game hurts badly.

The tears shed of falling short of the ultimate goal are very real after every state title game and every game that ends a season, for that matter.

It's down the road that we gain perspective on what we've accomplished.

For Sacred Heart, which includes junior center Caleb Simons, the nephew of former Pine River coach Dave Simons, that was a combined record of 50-3 and the first trip to the state finals since 1975.

That's meaningful.

"Obviously, losing hurts right now, but probably in a week or two, we'll look back and realize that we are one of the best teams in Sacred Heart history. Probably not the most skilled, but the maybe the best team," said Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart senior John Roberts.

That is a little of what sports can mean.

It's being around friends and learning together. It's developing friendships that last a lifetime. It's developing character and leadership skills for use in the "real world."



Al Goldis, Associated Press

The sting of a heartbreaking defeat is temporary. Conveying the lessons offered through sport can last from generation to generation.

It's not about winning and losing, it's about what you gain from the experience of going through both.

So as you sit around this weekend watching the NCAA Final Four, ponder some of the lessons learned from sports if you played them.

If you weren't an athlete, ponder some of the good things you've done in your life and the things you learned from them.

I promise you those things mean more than who walks off the court the champion and who walks off the runner-up.

— Marc Vieau
Cadillac News

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Spring Sport Dates

Visit mhsaa.com for Pairings and Ticket Information

SPORT	First Practice Date	First Contest Date	Days or Contests	Opt-Out Due Date	Ratings Due Date	MHSAA TOURNAMENT DATES				
						Districts	Regionals	Quarters	Semis	Finals
Baseball	Mar 13	Mar 13	56 G+D	May 10	May 26	May 30, Jun 2 or 3	Jun 10	Jun 13	Jun 16	Jun 17
Golf - LP Girls	Mar 13	Mar 16	16D	May 10			May 18, 19, 20 or 22			Jun 2-3
Golf - UP Boys & Girls	Mar 13	Mar 13	16D	May 19						Jun 2
Lacrosse - Boys & Girls	Mar 13	Mar 24	18C	May 10	May 26	May 30-Jun 6			Jun 8	Jun 10
Soccer - Girls	Mar 13	Mar 24	18C	May 10	May 26	May 30-Jun 3	Jun 6-10		Jun 14	Jun 17
Softball	Mar 13	Mar 13	56 G+D	May 10	May 26	May 30, Jun 2 or 3	Jun 10	Jun 13	Jun 16	Jun 17
Tennis - LP Boys	Mar 13	Mar 13	16C	May 10			May 18 or 19			Jun 2-3
Tennis - UP Boys	Mar 13	Mar 13	16C	May 19						Jun 1
Track & Field	Mar 13	Mar 13	18D	May 15-16			May 19-20			Jun 3

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