

BASEBALL / SOFTBALL COMMITTEE

January 14, 2014

Committee Members:

Aaron Babicz, Novi
Mike Bakker, Fenton
Clint Colosky, Clare
Rick Garlinghouse, Auburn
Mark German, Temperance
Brian Gordon, Novi
Paul Guardard, Flint
Lynn Johnson, Bangor
Jeff Lindsey, Spring Lake
Tim McDonald, Auburn (MHSBCA)
Juston Miller, Lowell
Brain Neel, Kalamazoo

Meg Seng, Ann Arbor (MIAAA)
Jon Studley, Caro
John Thompson, Brighton
Dave VanNoord, Hudsonville
Scott Warriner, Eaton Rapids
Don Watchowski, Ortonville

Staff:

Randy Allen
Andrea Osters
Mark Uyl (Recorder)

The 2013-14 MHSAA Baseball / Softball Committee met in the MHSAA office building to review topics involving the MHSAA tournament series in baseball / softball.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Regular Season Scheduling: The committee reviewed the change adopted by the Representative Council last May that eliminated the 56 games + dates and replaced it with a limitation of 38 regular season games. The feedback provided by the group was positive as they believed this made scheduling much more simple and straightforward.

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 made the transition to BBCOR certified bats recently and softball continues to encounter issues surrounding altered bats. Additional discussion centered on the 2014 NF rule changes, pitching limitations and MHSAA concussion protocols.

Tournament Procedures: Discussion also took place on the Friday District option, tournament schedule and site expectations. With the change of a two-day Final tournament to three-day Final tournament in 2014, further discussion will take place on how this change impacts the current tournament schedule. The committee also discussed the 30-out pitching limitation in light of the new 3-day Semifinal and Final tournament schedule. The group made no formal proposal at this time to change the rule but will discuss further following this year's Final tournament with some baseball teams now playing Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday with no reset of the 30 outs. There was some support for a future change that would require teams to use more pitchers than the current 1-2 pitchers at the Semifinal and Final levels.

Finals Venue: The committee discussed the Finals site change to Michigan State University in 2014, and provided input on the Semifinal and Final game schedule along with organization of pre-game warm up facilities.

Coaches Association Issues: A lengthy discussion took place on furthering the positive current relationship between the MHSAA and both coaches associations. The group discussed the implications of a possible change allowing school uniforms to be worn when seniors, with no

remaining eligibility, participate in the all-star games conducted by the two associations. There was also support to allow coaches associations to recognize winners of significant awards (player of the year, coach of the year, Hall of Fame inductee, etc) to be recognized at MHSAA Final events in those sports.

Scrimmages: There was strong support from the committee to eliminate the current restriction that only two of the four allowed scrimmages must take place before the first contest. The group favored a simple regulation of allowing four scrimmages which may be used at any time during the season.

Middle School- 6th Grade Students and Contest Limitations: The committee reviewed the two junior high / middle school issues regarding 6th grade participation on 7th and 8th grade baseball / softball teams without Executive Committee waivers and increasing the maximum contest limits. There was good conversation on both topics that dealt with student safety and social issues but there was no strong consensus for a further recommendation. The group was unified that an increase in maximum days of competition for baseball or softball at the junior high level would not have a significant impact on the number of junior high / middle schools that would join, or return, to the MHSAA membership at this level.

Other Topics: Members of the committee briefly reviewed and discussed the travel rule and scrimmages during spring break and having further discussion with the coaches associations in expanding a “Reaching Higher” type experience in baseball and softball as is currently done in basketball.

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

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

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Allow the use of school uniforms to be worn by seniors (with no remaining eligibility) that are selected and participate in the all-star games conducted directly by the Michigan Baseball and Softball Coaches Associations (18-0).