

**MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
SOFTBALL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

East Lansing, January 16, 2019, 9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Tom Calnen, Troy (MHSSCA)
Kris Isom, Adrian
Jeffrey Knapp, Walkerville
Nancy Malinowski, Farmington
Casei Marlan, Mason
Cheri Ritz, Wayland
Jamie Segorski, Escanaba
Garrard Taylor, Detroit
Michael Thompson, Frankfort
Greg Younger, Stevensville
Betty Wroubel, Pontiac (MIAAA)

Members Absent:

Jason Mensing, Ottawa Lake

Others Present:

Brianna Taylor, MATS

MHSAA Staff:

Andi Osters (Recorder)

The 2018-19 MHSAA Softball Committee met on Jan. 16, 2019 at the MHSAA office in East Lansing. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision making process and charge of the Softball Committee. Agenda items were compiled from correspondence, staff, committee members and the coaches' association.

Initially, Softball Committee members met jointly with Baseball Committee members to review Representative Council action, including (a) classification, (b) the work of the Site Selection Committee, and (c) the new baseball tournament calendar for 2018-19. The two committees then separated to address sport-specific topics.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

The committee reviewed District draw options, including the provision for District groups (by unanimous agreement) to play their District semifinal and final games on Friday instead of Saturday. It was noted that smaller schools with dual-sport spring athletes appreciate Friday District play, as it allows for those athletes to compete in both softball and track & field. Committee members emphasized that pre-District tournament games should be granted the same preparation, staff and treatment as the rest of the draw.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The annual High School RIO™ report for the sport of Girls Softball was provided: the internet-based data collection tool used in the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study. Committee members discussed the prevalence of arm, wrist, hand and finger injuries related to improper sliding technique(s).

PLAYER DECORUM

The committee discussed the recent trend of artificial noisemakers (drumsticks, buckets, whistles, etc.) being used inside team dugouts. The committee advised staff to include in MHSAA Tournament Manager Materials and Participating School Tournament Information the following: "All artificial noise-making devices shall be excluded from dugouts and the field. Game equipment shall only be used for the purpose intended."

EQUIPMENT

Committee members, for the second year, talked about compression testing of bats during the MHSAA Tournament. The current process (testing prior to both Semifinal and Final rounds) has resulted in fewer than 10 bats being removed from play in the past five years. The group also reviewed how the absence of a NOCSAE standard for defensive facemasks warrants a more permissive approach in the NFHS playing rules for that specific piece of equipment: players are allowed, but not required, to wear a facemask in the field.

UMPIRES

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the declining number of qualified and competent softball umpires. The committee was informed of efforts being made by the MHSAA Officials Department to improve coach, parent, spectator and player behavior through the upcoming "Get Personal...Get Ejected!" campaign. The NFHS/MHSAA op-ed column [*"Dear Mom and Dad: Cool It!"*] addressing parent behavior was reviewed and drew unanimous support for the committee. The group recommended that MHSAA Regular-Season and Tournament Public Address Scripts address parent behavior more directly.

DISCUSSION ITEMS - NO ACTION

1. Out of Season Coaching (review of 4-Player rule, rotations, and open gyms)
2. Travel limitations, inter-state sanctioning
3. Defensive facemasks, NOCSAE standards
4. Turf fields
5. NFHS Rule Changes, Major Editorial Changes, and Points of Emphasis

NO RECOMMENDATIONS TO MHSAA REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL