

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

East Lansing, January 11, 2018, 9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Kris Isom, Adrian
Jeffrey Knapp, Walkerville
Jason Mensing, Ottawa Lake
Jeffrey Offringa, Kalamazoo
Jamie Segorski, Escanaba
Garrard Taylor, Detroit
Michael Thompson, Frankfort
Deb VanKuiken, Holly (MIAAA)
Justin Wilson, Wayland
Betty Wroubel, Pontiac
Greg Younger, Stevensville
John Young, Howell

Members Absent:

Tom Calnen, Troy (MHSSCA)
Casei Marlan, Mason

MHSAA Staff:

Andi Osters (recorder)

The 2017-18 MHSAA Softball Committee met on Jan. 8, 2018 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) the separate classification of the two sports, (b) the work of the Site Selection Committee, and (c) the newly-adopted 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. Additionally, committee members encouraged tournament host sites to treat softball and baseball facilities with equal attention and care now that the sports are classified separately.

SEMIFINAL GAME SCHEDULE

Several committee members expressed an interest in alternating the game schedule, every other year, for semifinal tournament play to allow for D1/D2 and D3/D4 schools to swap Thursday/Friday. The committee recommended that MHSAA staff discuss the idea with member schools and coaches in both softball and baseball communities this spring.

JUNIOR HIGH / MIDDLE SCHOOL ISSUES

At the request of the JH/MS Task Force, the committee considered several items related to contest limits. Committee members supported expanding the limited team membership regulation (allowance for non-school competition during the school season) to include team sports at the junior high level. There was also support for an increase in the number of contests permitted during the 13-week school season – specifically, an increase in allowed competition dates from 10 to 12, with a limit of two team tournaments.

BAT TESTING

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the testing of bats during both the regular season and MHSAA tournament play. Concern exists for both the safety of players and the integrity of the equipment as the season progresses. The current practice of testing team bats only during MHSAA Semifinal and Final rounds was reviewed. The committee recommended that, in light of new NFHS rules requiring head coaches to attest that their team is legally equipped, that MHSAA staff prepare a Point of Emphasis in the annual Rules Meeting that addresses proper inspection of team equipment.

PARTICIPATION NUMBERS

Citing declining participation numbers in both sub-varsity and middle-school level softball, the committee examined various strategies for growing the game within member schools. The MHSSCA will also work with their membership to stress the importance of school-based softball.

DISCUSSION ITEMS - NO ACTION

1. Out of Season Coaching (review of 4-Player rule, rotations, and open gyms)
2. District, Regional and Quarterfinal groupings
3. Defensive facemasks, NOCSAE standards
4. NFHS Rule Changes, Major Editorial Changes, and Points of Emphasis

NO RECOMMENDATIONS TO MHSAA REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL