

# 100

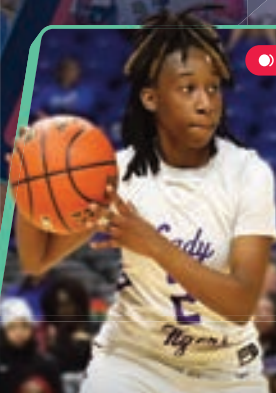
**MHSAA** 

benchmarks

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# Cover Story: The Celebration Continues



**4** As the MHSAA closes the celebration of its 100th year during the 2024-25 school year, this volume of *benchmarks* revisits highlights and memories from spring sports throughout history.

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## MHSAA News – 15

**Class in Session**  
MHSAA Classifications and Divisions have been announced for the 2025-26 school year across the state.



## Regulations Review – 20

**Summer Vacation**  
The summer months will soon be upon us. Know the regulations regarding participation for MHSAA-sponsored sports.



## Overtime – 24

**Mark Your Calendars**  
Stay “updated” for the 2025-26 school year by marking these important dates on your calendars.



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## Spring has Special Meaning for School Sports Seniors

**S**pring is often thought of as a time of rebirth, particularly in northern states like our own. Grass turns a lush green, trees and flowers bloom, the days grow longer, and our parks and trails begin to fill with people once again.

School activities also return to open-air venues—challenging as that can sometimes be during the early weeks of spring—as we welcome the third and final season of the athletic school year.

The spring season brings its own certain vibe compared to fall and winter for those of us who make school sports our life's passion. Administrators, teachers, and coaches undoubtedly yearn for a couple of months of their favorite leisure-time pursuits following weeks and months of seemingly endless days.

For those whom we serve—the students—there is enthusiasm unmatched by other months during the year, as many look forward to proms, senior awards and graduations.

And, for those who will graduate and leave our hallways, spring is one last chance to participate with classmates as their teammates. For the vast majority of high school student-athletes, this spring and all that follow are their last chance to participate in a sport while wearing their school's name across their jerseys. After June, the next time most graduating seniors gather in athletic competition, it will be on the intramural fields and courts of their chosen colleges and universities, or in various recreation leagues in their hometowns.

Even as thoughts might turn toward summer relaxation in nearby or faraway places, I offer this challenge to us all: finish strong! Make these last week's equally rewarding for your graduating seniors and for your staff as we continue to build lasting memories. This spring takes on a very bitter-sweet tone for me personally as our youngest child, Madi, is our last high school student and athlete. This spring's final track meets have taken on a more special meaning with all of us soaking in the "lasts."

School sports leaders will have more springs ahead. Seniors across our state have these final few weeks. Let's all help these final sands in the hourglass for the Class of 2025 count!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Uyl".

Mark Uyl  
MHSAA Executive Director



*For most seniors, the spring marks the last opportunity to wear a school athletic uniform.*



# Happy New Year! Prep for 2025-26 School Year

**MHSAA.com School Year Start Up:** Beginning in mid-July, all athletic directors must log into MHSAA.com and update school contact information for administrators and coaches and double-check the sports the MHSAA shows your school as sponsoring. Adding or dropping a sport must be done in writing on school letterhead. ADs are urged to submit their mobile phone numbers which are kept private and used for necessary contact by MHSAA staff. Accurate coach information allows for rules meeting completion by head coaches.

**Coach Requirements:** ALL MHSAA coaches – head coaches, assistant and subvarsity coaches – must complete a sport rules meeting. Schools shall attest that all assistant and sub-varsity coaches have completed an MHSAA rules meeting (online or in person) for that sport for the current school year prior to the deadline. Assistant or sub-varsity coaches who coach more than one sport during a school year must fulfill the requirement each season unless the sport is the same and the coach had completed the MHSAA sport-specific rules meeting earlier in the school year for that sport (e.g., JV boys and JV girls soccer coach). It is expected that schools will impose the penalty of Section 8(B) to assistant or sub-varsity coaches who do not meet this requirement by the deadline.

Each head coach of a varsity team in an MHSAA tournament sport hired for the first time as a high school varsity head coach at any MHSAA member high school after July 31, 2016 shall have completed either Level 1 or Level 2 of the MHSAA Coaches Advancement Program (CAP). If the head coach does not complete CAP Level 1 or 2 prior to the established deadline, that coach shall be prohibited from coaching in that season's MHSAA tournament for the sport involved and shall not be present at the facility where the MHSAA tournament involving that coach's team is being held. See Regulation II, Section 15(H)4.

**CPR Requirements:** High schools must attest by each season's established deadline that all varsity, junior varsity, and 9th-grade head coaches of each high school team have a valid, current Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification. This will ensure that each team generally has one coach present whom is CPR certified. The established deadline for all high school head coaches (regardless of level) shall be the latest date set for the completion of the MHSAA rules meeting for the sport. A person who is the head coach for more than one sport during the school year must meet the deadline for the first of those sports. It is expected that schools will impose the penalty of Section 8(B) to varsity, JV and 9th-grade head coaches who do not meet this requirement.

**New AD Orientation:** MHSAA Regulation II, Section 15 (I) requires that as a condition of participation in MHSAA Tournaments, a school designates a high school athletic director. In addition, that person must attend an Athletic Director's Orientation Program prior to Dec. 1 of that school year. Schools which fail to have their first-year Athletic Director attend shall be placed on probation and prohibited from hosting or receiving reimbursement for MHSAA tournaments.

While the requirement and penalty sound quite ominous, hundreds of administrators who have attended over the years will vouch for the meeting's value. These one-time, six-hour sessions are held in the MHSAA Office in East Lansing in July, August or September. Dozens of novice ADs come back for a voluntary second session held in November.

Athletic Directors hired this spring or summer, or late this past school year (after Dec. 1, 2024), are required to attend a 2025-26 New AD Orientation Program on either Wednesday, July 30, Wednesday, Aug. 6, Tuesday, Aug. 26 or Thursday, Sept. 18. All meetings are in the MHSAA Office from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. A registration form may be downloaded from MHSAA.com. under the "I Am . . ." Administrators page.

**AD In-service and Update Meetings:** Athletic directors should plan now to attend an AD In-Service and Update Meeting in the fall. While attendance is strong, some ADs have not attended as their duties have increased. We suggest the opposite approach and urge those who have not attended recently to make it a point of emphasis. Please see details in this issue.

**The MHSAA Office Summer Hours** are 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Thursday from June 16-July 17, 2025. The MHSAA Office will be closed the work week of June 30-July 4.

# 100 AND COUNTING

As we close the books on the MHSAA's first 100 years, we also say farewell to one last group of seniors and welcome into the next century those who follow.



It's been a year of celebration for the MHSAA and member schools, this 100th year in the business of providing high school and junior high/middle school students across the state with the opportunity and privilege to participate in school-based athletics.

From opening kickoffs, volleys and tee shots in the fall, through tipoffs and faceoffs during the winter, 2024-25 has already put an indelible stamp on its place in the history of this storied Association.

This fall marked the 29th year of MHSAA Cross Country Finals at Michigan International Speedway, and it's fitting that this distance event is the longest-running in MHSAA Championship history. The first boys champions were crowned in the fall of 1924, right before the birth of the Association that December.

As we celebrated year No. 100, the 2024 MHSAA Football Finals in November marked the 50th championship in that sport. Nearly 45,000 fans traveled to see the 10 title games combined, two 8-player contests at the Superior Dome in Marquette and eight 11-player games at Ford Field in Detroit. They were treated to several record-setting moments throughout the two weekends which have become a staple sandwiching the Thanksgiving holiday in Michigan.

Speaking of gridiron record-setters, this fall also saw one of the MHSAA's past greats inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Detroit Central's Antonio Gates, a two-sport athlete who played football and basketball, reached the pinnacle following his exceptional career as a tight end for the San Diego Chargers.

The winter scene also featured milestones as ice hockey crowned its 50th set of champions while the newest sport of bowling rolled into its third decade of competition. On the mats, girls wrestlers competed for a team championship for the first time ever in March.

And, the year is not over yet. What memories lie ahead for the 11 sports in which boys and girls championships will be settled across both peninsulas this spring?

For the seniors participating this spring, regardless of whether their seasons end at the District or Finals level of tournaments, they are sure to be memorable. For most, it will be the final time participating in a sport while wearing a school uniform.

The good news is, the dawn of a new century will come next fall, and with it thousands of underclass students ready to make their own marks under the guidance of coaches, teachers and administrators who will lead the way.

That's the way it's been for 100 years, and we thank you all.

# Through the Years: Spring Sports

The “MHSAA Vault” features stories from past publications in the MHSAA Library. For this Centennial Celebration year, we will look back at the history of the MHSAA’s championship sports, concluding with spring sports in this issue.

Since the fall of 1924, when Ann Arbor High School won the MHSAA Boys Cross Country championships, tournaments have been the crowning glory for the Association’s membership for a century. (The MHSAA officially was established Dec. 4, 1924, but that lone fall championship is included in official MHSAA titles).

And now, entering this 100th year of existence, 28 MHSAA Tournament Sports had produced a grand total of 6,510 Team Champions in MHSAA history throughout Michigan’s Lower and Upper Peninsulas, and thousands more individual victors within those sports.

These and other triumphs represent only the summit of each tournament run. Countless other memories and accomplishments have been achieved at District, Regional, Quarterfinal and Semifinal levels throughout the decades.





C.O. Brown Stadium at Bailey Park in Battle Creek served as the Final destination for MHSAA Baseball teams from 1990-2013.



## HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

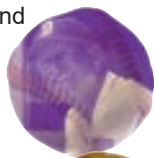
2014-Present: East Lansing (McLane Stadium at Kobs Field MSU)  
 1990-2013: Battle Creek (Bailey Park-Nichols, Morrison and C.O. Brown fields)  
 1987-1989: East Lansing (Kobs and Municipal fields)  
 1985-1986: Kalamazoo (Judson Hyames Field WMU)  
 1983-1984: Ypsilanti (Oestrike Stadium EMU)  
 1981-1982: Mt. Pleasant (Alumni Field CMU)  
 1971-1980: Each Class played at different sites, which included Battle Creek, Coldwater, Flint, Grand Haven, Grand Rapids, Marshall, Mt. Pleasant, Pontiac, Port Austin, Wyandotte and Wyoming

## DIAMOND GEMS

Blissfield's Larry Tuttle and Grand Ledge's Pat O'Keefe rank 1-2 atop the all-time MHSAA Baseball coaching chart for career victories.

**Larry Tuttle**, Blissfield (1968-2021, 1,332-430-5)

**Pat O'Keefe**, Grand Ledge (1968, 1970-2019: 1,315-326-2)



## CALLING THE SHOTS

The 2024 Major League Baseball World Series showcased a distinct Michigan flair during its television broadcasts.

Viewers treated to the commentary of **Joe Davis** (above left) and **John Smoltz** (center), while **Derek Jeter** (right) made appearances on the pregame and postgame shows. Notably, all three athletes hail from Michigan and have left their mark on the sports field.

Davis graduated from Pottsville High School in 2006, where he earned honorable mention all-state honors as a quarterback while playing football, and he also played four years of baseball at Pottsville. Today, he serves as the television voice of the Dodgers and covers both MLB and NFL national games for Fox.

John Smoltz, a graduate of Lansing Waverly in 1985, made his mark as an all-state basketball player but gained fame on the baseball diamond. Drafted by the Detroit Tigers out of high school, Smoltz enjoyed a remarkable 21-year career in Major League Baseball, and holds the unique distinction of being the only pitcher in history to record 200 wins and 150 saves.

Derek Jeter graduated from Kalamazoo Central in 1992, where he was named the Gatorade High School Player of the Year. In addition to baseball, he also excelled in cross country and basketball. Jeter was selected in the first round of the 1992 MLB Draft by the New York Yankees, where he went on to win five World Series championships during his illustrious 20-year career.

Both Jeter and Smoltz are members of the MLB Hall of Fame.

## TITLE TOTALS

Class/Division	Years	Titles
Class A, B, C, D	1971-1997	108
Division 1, 2, 3, 4	1998-2024	104

*Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19*

## HITTING HOME

Michigan boasts two of the top four baseball winning streaks in NFHS history, including **Homer** (below), which held the top spot for a few years.



The small-town school from Southern Michigan hit it big during the 2004 and 2005 campaigns, winning a then-national record 75 consecutive games.

That remarkable feat was eclipsed by Portsmouth HS of New Hampshire which won 89 straight from 2008-12, and then Martensdale St. Marys of Iowa (2010-12) with 88.

**Orchard Lake St. Mary's** had its sights set on both streaks from 2021-23, but fell just shy, settling for the MHSAA standard of 84 wins in a row.





## TITLE TOTALS

### BOYS TITLE TOTALS

Lower Peninsula	Years	Titles
Open Class	1926-1929	4
Class A-B	1930-1934	5
Class A, B	1935-1997	128
Class C-D	1935-1974	39
Class C, D	1975-1997	46
Division 1, 2, 3, 4	1998-2024	100

*Note: No Tournament 1942, 1943, 1944; Two in 1971, Fall and Spring; Boys LP Golf moved from fall to spring for the 2007-08 Season, thus NO Finals in 2007 calendar year*

Upper Peninsula	Years	Titles
Class C-D-E	1945-1961	18
Class B	1945-1961	18
Open Class	1962-1977	17
Class C-D	1978-1994	17
Class C, D	1995-2000	12
Class A-B	1978-2000	23
Division 1, 2, 3	2001-2024	69

### GIRLS TITLE TOTALS

Upper Peninsula	Years	Titles
Open Class	1972-1977	5
Class A-B	1978-2000	23
Class C-D	1978-1994	17
Class C, D	1995-2000	12
Division 1, 2, 3	2001-2024	69

*Note: Girls LP Golf was featured in the Fall issue of benchmarks.*

*Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19*

## HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

Year-by-Year hosts throughout the history of MHSAA golf are difficult to pin down, but **Michigan State's Forest Akers** facility (background) has been a mainstay in the Lower Peninsula, hosting one or more Classes or Divisions since the early 1980s. In the Upper Peninsula, Marquette, Iron Mountain, Escanaba and Rock Mid-Peninsula have been frequent hosts.

## FUL-PHIL-ING A DREAM

**Ben Cook** grew up rooting for PGA Tour star Phil Mickelson.

In May of 2021, the former Grand Rapids South Christian High School standout received the thrill of a lifetime when he posed for pictures beside his childhood idol following the PGA Championship.



Cook (left), 27, was the low PGA Professional, while Mickelson became the oldest golfer to win a major after a two-stroke win at the Kiawah Island Golf Resort in South Carolina.

"I've always been a big Phil fan, my whole life growing up," the then-27-year-old said.

"And then it just happened to be him that won and I got to stand next to him, which was very special. I was like, 'I'm totally part of history right now and this is crazy.' The oldest guy to ever win a major, and it being Phil. It was really cool."

Cook earned the Crystal Ball as the low PGA Professional after finishing the tournament in a tie for 44th at +4.

Cook was one of the Michigan's top high school golfers during his time at South Christian. As a junior, he helped the Sailors to a runner-up finish at the 2011 MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 3 Final with a 10th-place individual performance. The team finished among the top 10 again Cook's senior year, this time in Division 2, as he placed sixth.

Cook played collegiately at Ferris State University and led the Bulldogs to the Division II National Quarterfinals his senior year.

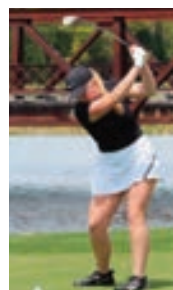
## FOUR FOR THE U.P.

While there have been numerous three-time MHSAA individual golf champions throughout history, there have only been four, four-time medalists, and all have come from the state's Upper Peninsula.

The first to do it was **Kendra Palmer** of Marquette, winning Class A-B from 1996-99. She passed the baton to Marquette's **Carley Saint-Onge**, who accomplished the feat in Division 1 from 2008-11.

The lone male in the fantastic four is **Hunter Eichhorn**, who captured Division 3 victories for Carney-Nadeau from 2014-17.

Most recently, Escanaba's **Paxton Johnson (right)**, joined the elite group while ruling Division 1 from 2016-19.





*In 2024, the MHSAA Boys and Girls Lacrosse Finals took place on a college campus for the first time, as the University of Michigan Lacrosse Stadium played host to the four title games. The facility will once again be the site in 2025.*

### HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

- 2024: Ann Arbor (University of Michigan Lacrosse Stadium)
- 2016-19, 2021-23: Howell (Parker MS)
- 2014-2015: Troy Athens HS
- 2013: East Grand Rapids HS
- 2010-2012: Birmingham Seaholm HS
- 2007-2009: Troy Athens HS
- 2006: Birmingham Seaholm HS
- 2005: Troy Athens HS

*Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19*

### TITLE TOTALS

Division	Years	Titles
Division 1, 2	2005-2024	38

*Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19*

## OH BROTHER

That's the feeling MHSAA Division 1 Boys Lacrosse teams have had since the inception of the tournament in 2005, as Brother Rice has rolled to 16 of the 19 championships, including the first 13 in a row.



The Warriors' streak came to an end in 2018 at the hands of Detroit Catholic Central by the narrowest of margins, 11-10.

Rice got right back at its winning ways, taking the next two in 2019 and 2021 (no season in 2020 due to Covid-19) before Hartland took the 2022 championship, also by an 11-10 count in the only overtime ever in a Division 1 Final.

## TWO FOR THE SHOW

Two schools have dominated MHSAA Division 2 Boys Lacrosse, as East Grand Rapids and Forest Hills Central have each won six crowns, accounting for 12 of the 19 championships.

They have faced each other four times in the title game, including three in a row from 2016-18. East Grand Rapids holds a 3-1 edge in those games, winning in 2008, 2017 and 2018.



### Championship Appearances *(Titles in Bold)*

- 18 - Birmingham/Bloomfield Hills Brother Rice (**2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023**)
- 11 - Detroit Catholic Central (2006, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, **2018, 2019, 2023, 2024**)
- 10 - Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central (2008, **2010, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022, 2023**)
- 10 - East Grand Rapids (2005, 2006, **2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021**)
- 7 - Detroit Country Day (**2005, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2022, 2023, 2024**)
- 5 - Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook Kingswood (**2006, 2007, 2013, 2014, 2015**)





DYNAMIC DUO

When Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook Kingswood junior **Isabelle Scane** (above left) and East Grand Rapids sophomore **Audrey Whiteside** (right) combined to score nine goals during the 2017 Division 2 Girls Lacrosse Final, it was more than just a chance championship game meeting.

They represented two of the finest programs in the state, which had made a combined 13 title game appearances and won a combined 10 Division 2 championships at that time. Scane and Whiteside also would go on to combine for 870 career goals and 230 assists as the only players in MHSAA history to eclipse 400 goals and 100 assists.

The two still rank 1-2 on the all-time MHSAA points list, with Scane (461 goals, 116 assists) topping the list at 577, followed by Whiteside at 523 (409 goals, 114 assists). Scane played from 2015-18, and Whiteside amassed her totals from 2016-19.

Joining those players on the 500-career-points list are Grand Rapids Catholic Central's Claire Marosi (515 points; 418 goals, 97 assists) and Salem's Mileena Cotter (506 points; 470 goals, 36 assists), both of whom played from 2021-24.

THE STREAK

Okemos compiled an MHSAA-record 64 game winning streak during the 2009 and 2010 seasons en route to back-to-back Division 2 championships.

Following a 12-6 win in the 2009 Final, Coach Bill Prahler's team faced Flint Powers Catholic for a second straight season in the 2010 Final.

The anticipated rematch turned into a one-sided affair for undefeated Okemos when it turned a 3-3 game into a 12-5 lead at halftime and won by a final score of 20-6. Okemos scored 10 consecutive goals and finished the game on a 13-1 run to cap off the unbeaten season and keep the streak intact.

**Kristen Hull** (right) led the Chieftains (29-0) in goals with eight, while Sarah Lowe chipped in with four goals and six assists, and MacKenzie Lawler scored three goals and assisted on eight others.

The streak would come to an end on May 3, 2011.

HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

- 2024: Ann Arbor (U of Michigan Lacrosse Stadium)
- 2022-23: Rockford HS
- 2019, 2021: Novi HS
- 2018: Grand Ledge HS
- 2016-17: Brighton HS
- 2012-2015: Rockford HS
- 2010-2011: Troy Athens HS
- 2006-2009: Bloomfield Hills Lahser HS
- 2005: Troy Athens HS
- Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19*

TITLE TOTALS

Division	Years	Titles
Division 1, 2	2005-2024	38
<i>Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19</i>		

Most Championships

- 9 - Rockford (2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021)
- 8 - East Grand Rapids (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2021, 2022)

Most Wins

- Season**
- 28 - East Grand Rapids (28-0) (2012)
- 28 - Okemos (28-0) (2010)
- Consecutive**
- 64 - Okemos (Entire 2009 & 2010 seasons - 3/21/2009 to 5/3/2011)



DeMartin Stadium on the campus of Michigan State University has hosted the MHSAA Girls Soccer Finals since 2015.



## HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

2015-Present: East Lansing (DeMartin Soccer Complex MSU)  
 2013-2014: Williamston HS and Mason HS  
 2010-2012: Williamston HS and East Lansing (Old College Field MSU)  
 2009: Troy Athens HS and Grand Rapids Christian HS  
 2007-2008: Troy Athens HS and East Kentwood (Crestwood MS)  
 2006: Troy HS and East Kentwood (Crestwood MS)  
 2004-2005: Troy Athens HS and Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central HS  
 2003: Novi (Meadows Stadium) and Richland Gull Lake HS  
 2000-2002: Canton Community Schools and Richland Gull Lake HS  
 1993-1999: Canton Community Schools  
 1991-1992: Northville HS  
 1990: Canton Community Schools  
 1988-1989: North Farmington HS  
 1986-1987: Northville HS  
 1983-1985: Flint (Atwood Stadium)

## TITLE TOTALS

Class/Division	Years	Titles
Open Class	1983-1986	4
Class A, B	1987-1997	22
Division 1, 2, 3	1998-2024	78
Division 4	2000-2024	24

Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19



## NEVER SAY NEVER

The 2023 MHSAA Girls Soccer Finals proved that it's all about getting hot at the right time.

**Grosse Pointe North** (below) won just four regular-season games before going on a run in the Division 2 playoffs, while **Clarkston Everest Collegiate** entered the Division 4 tournament losing seven of its last eight games and had won just three games all year.

Yet, both schools reached the Finals in their respective Divisions, the only times girls soccer teams had ever reached the championship match with fewer than 10 wins.

GPN would get that 10th win with a thrilling 3-2 shootout win over East Grand Rapids for the championship to finish the year 10-7-7.

Everest Collegiate ran into a perennial power in Kalamazoo Christian and dropped a 5-0 decision in the Final, but reached that game with a 1-0 Semifinal win over Grosse Pointe Woods U. Liggett, a team it had lost to 5-1 earlier in the year. Everest finished 8-8-1.



## Topping the Charts

Leading the MHSAA career lists for goals and shutouts are Leland's **Libby Munoz** (above left) and Hudsonville Unity Christian's **Holly VanNoord** (right). Munoz tallied 228 goals from 2013-16. VanNoord totaled 75 shutouts from 2009-12.



It should be noted that Schoolcraft's **Hannah Thompson** (left) scored 213 goals from 2019-22, but lost the 2020 season due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Thompson holds the top two spots on the MHSAA single-season list with 87 goals in 2021 and 83 in 2022.

## Most Championships

- 12 - Hudsonville Unity Christian (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2023, 2024)
- 12 - Madison Heights Bishop Foley (1988, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2011)
- 9 - Bloomfield Hills Marian (2003, 2004, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021)
- 7 - Novi (2005, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2018, 2019)
- 6 - Detroit Country Day (1991, 1996, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2021)





## HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

**2014-Present: East Lansing (Secchia Stadium MSU above)**

1990-2013: Battle Creek (Bailey Park-Convis & Flannery complexes)

1985-1989: Lansing (Ranney Park)

1983-1984: Midland (Emerson Park)

1981-1982: Lansing (Ranney Park)

1975-1980: Each Class played at different sites, which included

Allendale, Benton Harbor, Clare, Coldwater, Comstock,

East Detroit, Fowler, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Ionia,

Kalamazoo, Lansing, Manchester, Oak Park and Southfield

## TITLE TOTALS

Class/Division	Years	Titles
Class A, B, C, D	1975-1997	92
Division 1, 2, 3, 4	1998-2024	104

*Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19*

## WALKOFF FOR THE AGES EASY AS 1-6-3

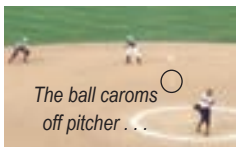
There have been numerous walkoff wins in the history of the MHSAA Softball Tournament, but never like the one turned in by Unionville-Sebewaing – on *defense* – in 2019.

The Patriots are no stranger to the big stage, having won an MHSAA-record 10 championships, but even that team and the USA faithful could not have envisioned how the Final vs Kalamazoo Christian would end.

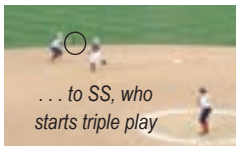
With USA holding a 3-1 lead in search of its sixth MHSAA softball crown, Kalamazoo Christian put runners on first and second with no one out as Sammy Gano came to the plate to face Patriot pitcher **Brynn Polega**.

Gano did her job, connecting for a hard line drive, but it went directly up the middle and off the right elbow of Polega. The carom went all the way in the air to shortstop **Rylee Zimmer** as both Comet runners were breaking. Polega caught the ball, stepped on second for out No. 2, then threw to **Delanie Pavlichek** at first base completing a triple play for the final out.

One of the top moments in MHSAA Softball history also got the No. 1 play of the day on ESPN.



*The ball caroms off pitcher . . .*



*. . . to SS, who starts triple play*



## CATCHING ATTENTION

An over-the-fence homer-robbing grab by Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart's **Alexys Zeien** (right) took just a few seconds to become legend during the 2023 MHSAA Softball Semifinals, creating a buzz all over Old College Field where the MHSAA and Michigan State were hosting Softball, Baseball and Girls Soccer Finals. The senior center-fielder's snag of what looked to be a sure-thing fence-clearing drive by Unionville-Sebewaing junior Gabrielle Crumm received national recognition as well, earning ESPN's No. 3 slot on its Top Plays segment.



## MORSE THAN 1

For 40 years, no player in the history of the MHSAA had homered more than once in a title game. That changed when Wayland's **Leigha Morse** drove this 3-run homer to left field in the seventh inning of her team's 11-0 win over Frankenmuth for the 2015 Division 2 crown. Morse began the scoring with a solo shot in the second.

## Most Championships

10 – Unionville-Sebewaing (06, 07, 09, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24)

8 – Stevensville Lakeshore (95, 97, 98, 04, 10, 11, 14, 22)

8 – Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes (83, 92, 93, 95, 97, 00, 03, 04)

## MONDAY FUNDAY

In 1993, **Pinconning's** Angie Rosich and Fenton's Lisa Hillman locked up in a pitcher's duel

for the ages in Class B. It was so good, in fact, that neither team lost on Saturday. The length of the game combined with rain forced the longest Final in history – 20 innings – to be completed that Monday, with Pinconning taking a 1-0 win. The game picked up in the 15th inning, and Dana Bersano put the Spartans up with an RBI single in the top of the 20th. Rosich took care of the rest, finishing off her 32-strikeout performance, a record that still stands. The marathon winners are pictured above.





## HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

**Kalamazoo's Stowe Stadium is the oldest continuous MHSAA Tournament venue**, having hosted at least one Class or Division of MHSAA Tennis Championships since 1947. The site first hosted in 1945 following WWII. More recently, the Midland Tennis Center has also provided first-rate facilities – and indoor courts during the unpredictable Michigan weather – since the 1970s for LP Boys and Girls Finals. In the **Upper Peninsula**, several schools have played host with girls currently competing in the fall, and boys in the spring.

## LP GIRLS TITLE TOTALS

Class/Division	Years	Titles
Open Class	1972-1973	2
Class A	1974-1996	27
Class B, C-D	1979-1996	36
Division 1, 2, 3, 4	1997-2024	107

*Note: Girls LP Tennis moved from fall to spring for the 2007-08 Season, thus NO Finals in 2007 calendar year*

*Note: Boys Lower Peninsula was featured in Fall benchmarks*

## UP BOYS TITLE TOTALS

Class/Division	Years	Titles
Class B	1946-1947	2
Class A-B	1948-1965	19
Open Class	1945, 1966-1976	12
Class A-B	1977-2000	26
Class C-D	1946-2000	60
Division 1, 2	2001-2024	50

*Note: Girls Upper Peninsula was featured in Fall benchmarks*

**All totals above include co-championships**

*Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19*

## DOMINATING NO. 1 SINGLES

Only three LP girls and two UP boys tennis players in MHSAA history have claimed four No. 1 singles championships.

Grosse Pointe Woods University Liggett's **Dawn Martin** (right) was the first to accomplish the feat, from 1985-88

A couple years later, Detroit Country Day's Kendra Howard began her run, from 1990-93.

The most recent addition to the list was Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook Kingswood's Shannon Matthews from Fall 2004-Spring 2008. (*Girls tennis in the LP moved from fall to spring during the 2007-08 school year*).

Above the bridge, Fred Albert of Ironwood asserted his dominance at the top flight from 1945-48.

It took seven decades, but he got some company on the ledger when Marquette's **Alec Olivier** (right) won four No. 1 titles from 2016-19.



## PRYCHITKO A TRAILBLAZER FOR GIRLS TENNIS

When **Stephanie Prychitko** (back row, left) was inducted into the Michigan High School Tennis Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1987, she was referred to as "a legend in her own time."

From 1976-86, Prychitko coached Grosse Pointe South to 11 consecutive LP Class A team championships, seven of them outright.

Girls tennis had become an MHSAA-sponsored sport only a few years before South's dominance began, with the 1972 season. But her coaching career predated that by decades – at the time of her Hall of Fame induction in 1987, MHSTeCA reported she had completed 36 seasons having led teams to 16 league and 15 Regional championships as well, with a 273-28 record.

According to various reports, Prychitko began her coaching career with three seasons leading the boys team at Western State HS in Kalamazoo before taking over at South in 1952. Prychitko graduated from Hamtramck High, and in 1947 reached the quarterfinals of the National Junior Girls grass court tournament.





## HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

### Lower Peninsula

2000-Present: Grand Rapids Area

Prior: Separate Classes held in various regions of the state throughout history.

### Upper Peninsula

2000-Present: Kingsford HS

1980-1999: Marquette HS

Prior: Unavailable

## TITLE TOTALS

Lower Peninsula	Years	Titles
Open Class	1973-1973	1
Class A-B, C-D	1974	2
Class A, B, C, D	1975-1999	102
Division 1, 2, 3, 4	2000-2024	100

Upper Peninsula	Years	Titles
Open Class	1973	1
Class A-B, C, C	1974-1999	80
Division 1, 2, 3	2001-2024	70

**All totals above include co-champs**

*Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19*

## SENSATIONAL SAMI

A year after becoming just the second female to win four MHSAA titles at one meet, Reed City's **Sami Michell** won four events again at the 2013 MHSAA Division 3 Finals, claiming championships in the same events: 100- and 300-meter hurdles, the 200 dash and long jump. That gave Michell 12 MHSAA titles, destroying the Lower Peninsula girls record of 10 individual titles for a career.

Maria Shoup of Mason County Eastern won the 100 and 200 hurdles, 800 meters and long jump in 1979.

## Most MHSAA Championships

### Lower Peninsula Finals

17 – Ann Arbor Pioneer (1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2017)

11 – Fowler (1982, 1983, 1989, 1990, 1998, 2011, 2012, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2024)

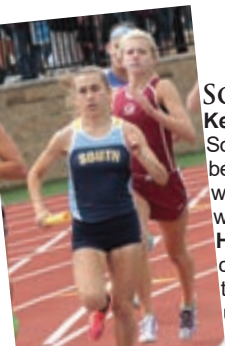
11 – Detroit Renaissance (1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2022)

9 – Oak Park (1982, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023, 2024)



## STILL STANDING

Detroit Mumford's **Shayla Mahan** has the fastest Finals 100-meter time in 11.50, set in 2006. She also set the 200 (23.74) record that day, and was part of the 2005 record 400 relay (47.15) but only her mark in the 100 remains.



## SOUTH RISES IN 2012

**Kelsie Schwartz** (left) ignited Grosse Pointe South's record-setting 3,200 quartet with a personal best lead leg of 2:13.0, followed by (from left below with **Coach Stephen Zaranek**) **Ersula Farrow**, who clocked 2:13.3 for her split. Twins **Haley** and **Hannah Meier** were next, and when Hannah anchored with a 2:08.2, the Blue Devils owned a national mark of 8:48.29. The national mark stood until a foursome from Texas eclipsed it in 2024.



*Oak Park has become a force in recent years, winning eight of the last 10 LP Division 1 titles.*

## Upper Peninsula Finals

26 – Marquette (1973, 1977, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2007 shared, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023)

18 – Escanaba (1974, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1992, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007 shared)



**Hold that pose, please.** The scene above is familiar for UP Track & Field participants, as the Marquette leads the way with 26 titles.

## HOME GAMES -- FINALS HOSTS

### Lower Peninsula

2000-Present: Grand Rapids Area

Prior: Numerous

### Upper Peninsula

2000-Present: **Kingsford HS** →

1980-1999: Marquette HS

Prior: Numerous



## FISHER GOES THE DISTANCE

Grand Blanc's **Grant Fisher** (left) is one of the premier distance runners in MHSAA history, having five individual titles to his credit, three in the 3,200 meters and two in the 1,600. His 4:00.28 in the 1,600 at the 2015 MHSAA Finals is still an all-time record.

He went on to Stanford where would earn 12 All-America honors, but the best was yet to come.

At the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, Fisher became the first American ever to medal in both the 5,000 and 10,000 meters, taking the bronze in both events.

## TITLE TOTALS

Lower Peninsula	Years	Titles
Class A, B, C	1925-1999	225
Class D	1927-1999	72
Division 1, 2, 3, 4	2000-2024	100

Upper Peninsula	Years	Titles
Class D-E	1940-1959	19
Class B	1940-1959	19
Class C	1940-2000	62
Class A-B	1960-2000	42
Class D	1960-2000	41
Division 1, 2, 3	2001-2024	71

Note: No Tournament in 1943

**All totals above include co-championships**

Note: No Finals in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19

Boys Track & Field athletes had been competing statewide for years before the official MHSAA Finals began in 1925, as this 1927 program from MSU would indicate at the top.



## TWO FOR FOUR

Only two LP boys athletes have won four individual events during one Finals meet: Pewamo-Westphalia's **Cory Noeker** (left) and Dearborn Heights



Robichaud's **Tyrone Wheatley** (lower left). Noeker won the 2010 D4 100 and 200 dashes, and the 110 and 300 hurdles; Wheatley took the 1990 Class B long jump, 100 and 200 dashes, and 110 hurdles.

## ONE GIANT LEAP STILL MAKING "PAYMENT'S FOR UP JUMPERS

The MHSAA Boys Track & Field record book includes separate records for each Class and Division in history. In **bold**, are the overall, all-time records by event, regardless of school size. So, it stands to reason that most entries in bold were set by Class A, B or Division 1, 2 athletes. And, Lower Peninsula, of course.

Then, there's **John Payment**'s giant leap from the Class D 1989 meet in Marquette. That's right, Marquette. Not only was Payment participating for Class D Brimley, but UP Class D at that.

All Payment did that day was raise the bar – literally – to set a high jump mark that stands statewide, in all classes, in both peninsulas, to this day. After clearing 6-10, Payment missed twice at 7-0, and then successfully cleared the bar to tie the 10-year old MHSAA Finals record. He cleared 7-1 on his next attempt and the stadium exploded in celebration.

The standard still stands today, in **bold**, on the MHSAA Boys High Jump list. You can look it up!







## Classifications Announced for 2025-26

**C**lassifications for Michigan High School Athletic Association elections and postseason tournaments for the 2025-26 school year have been announced, with enrollment breaks for postseason tournaments posted to each sport's page on the MHSAA Website.

Classifications for the upcoming school year are based on a second semester count date, which for MHSAA purposes was Feb. 12. The enrollment figure submitted for athletic classification purposes may be different from the count submitted for school aid purposes, as it does not include students ineligible for athletic competition because they reached their 19th birthday prior to Sept. 1 of the school year and will not include alternative education students if none are allowed athletic eligibility by the local school district.

All sports' tournaments are conducted with schools assigned to equal or nearly equal divisions, with lines dependent on how many schools participate in those respective sports.

For 2025-26, there are 754 tournament-qualified member schools. Schools recently were notified of their classification, and sport-by-sport divisions were posted to the MHSAA Website today (April 7). MHSAA Executive Director Mark Uyl said a school may not subsequently lower its enrollment figure. However, if a revised enrollment figure is higher and indicates that a school should be playing in a higher division, that school would be moved up.

Three MHSAA Finals champions crowned during the first two seasons of this 2024-25 school year are set to move to new divisions for 2025-26. The Orchard Lake St. Mary's (11-player Division 2) and Deckerville (8-player Division 1) football teams won titles in November but will move into 11-player Division 3 and 8-player Division 2, respectively, this upcoming season. Holland Christian's boys tennis team – champion in Lower Peninsula Division 4 this past fall – will move into Lower Peninsula Division 3.

Schools also may request to play in a higher classification or division in a sport for a minimum of two years. Requests to opt up in fall sports for 2025-26 must be submitted by May 1, winter sports by Aug. 14 and spring sports by Oct. 15.

Visit the respective sport pages on the MHSAA Website at [mhsaa.com](http://mhsaa.com) to review the divisional alignments for all MHSAA-sponsored tournament sports. Click the "SPORTS" menu on the home page to access the page for each sport, then the "Assignments" link on the selected sport page and then "DIVISION LIST" to see the 2025-26 division. Boys volleyball, which will begin play with MHSAA sponsorship in 2025-26, will be classified in September, providing more time to identify the number of schools that will have varsity teams in that sport for its inaugural season.

Traditional classes (A, B, C, D) – formerly used to establish tournament classifications – are used only for MHSAA elections. To determine traditional classifications, after all counts are submitted, tournament-qualified member schools are ranked according to enrollment and then split as closely into quarters as possible. For 2025-26, there are 188 member schools each in Class A and Class B, and 189 member schools each in Class C and Class D.

Effective with the 2025-26 school year, schools with 788 or more students are in Class A. The enrollment limits for Class B are 370-787, Class C is 171-369, and schools with enrollments of 170 and fewer are Class D. The break between Classes A and B decreased five students from 2024-25, the break between Classes B and C decreased eight students, and the break between Classes C and D is two students higher than for the 2024-25 school year.

The new classification breaks will see 22 schools move up in Class for 2025-26 while 22 schools will move down:

### Moving Up from Class B to Class A

Adrian  
Bloomfield Hills Marian  
Fruitport  
Hastings  
Marysville  
Niles  
Owosso

### Moving Down from Class A to Class B

Battle Creek Harper Creek  
Detroit East English  
Linden  
Sault Ste. Marie  
Sparta  
St. Johns  
Wayland

### Moving Up from Class C to Class B

Clawson  
Detroit Central  
Hartford  
Kent City  
Napoleon  
Taylor Prep  
Warren Michigan Collegiate

### Moving Down from Class B to Class C

Clinton Township Clintondale  
Constantine  
Erie Mason  
Fennville  
Ishpeming Westwood  
Ovid-Elsie  
Quincy

### Moving Up from Class D to Class C

Benton Harbor Countryside Academy  
Detroit Crockett Midtown Science & Medicine  
Kalamazoo Phoenix  
Fulton  
New Buffalo  
New Haven Merritt Academy  
Traverse City Greenspire  
Ubly

### Moving Down from Class C to Class D

Ann Arbor Central Academy  
Eau Claire  
Fowler  
Ishpeming  
Marine City Cardinal Mooney  
Southfield Manogian  
Three Oaks River Valley  
Whittemore-Prescott

### New Postseason-Eligible Tournament Schools in 2025-26

Ann Arbor Michigan Islamic Academy  
Athens Factoryville Christian  
Flint Cultural Center

### Enrollment Breaks by Classes – 2025-26

(Number of schools in parentheses)  
Class A: 788 and above (188 schools)  
Class B: 370 – 787 (188)  
Class C: 171 – 369 (189)  
Class D: 170 and below (189)

# Arnetta Thompson Honored with 2025 Hampton Award

A leader on the basketball court as a high school and college standout, and then a leader in the classroom and at every level of educational administration over a 33-year career, **Arnetta Thompson** has been a staunch advocate for underrepresented groups in sports.

To recognize her work in creating opportunities for those groups, and all students, the Wyoming Godfrey-Lee Public Schools superintendent was selected as the recipient of this year's Nate Hampton Champion of Progress in Athletics Award by the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

The Hampton Award was created by the MHSAA's Representative Council to honor Nate Hampton, who retired in 2021 after serving in education and educational athletics for 50 years, including the last 32 as an MHSAA assistant director. Honorees have championed the promotion and advancement of opportunities for women, minorities and other underrepresented groups within interscholastic athletics, while serving as an administrator, coach, official, educator or school sports leader in Michigan.

Thompson is the second recipient of the award, as Novi principal Nicole Carter received the inaugural honor last year. Thompson received the Hampton Award during the MHSAA Boys Basketball Division 1 Final on March 15 at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing.

"I just feel honored that I'm allowed to be in these spaces, to be selected as a principal or a superintendent, that people believe in me enough to believe I can help their students become better people and reach their goals," Thompson said. "The rewarding part is seeing those students that you reconnect with or those you stay connected with and see what their paths in life become as a result of crossing paths with me.

"I'm passionate about students – especially students that are not always the top of the class, not the typical student – and helping guide them with the resources and with people that look like them and then opportunities to do some things they hadn't done and didn't even think they could do."

Thompson is in her second school year as superintendent of Godfrey-Lee schools. She previously served 20 years in Grand Rapids Public Schools – as a teacher for six, then as an athletic director, assistant principal, instructional assistant

principal and K-8 principal – and also served as an elementary curriculum specialist for Muskegon Public Schools and in multiple roles in the Muskegon Heights Public School Academy System including as superintendent during the 2021-22 school year. She began her professional career as a teacher in Memphis City, Tenn., schools after graduating from Tennessee Tech University.

She is a two-time appointee to the MHSAA Representative Council – previously serving from 2009-13 and currently a two-year term.

"Arnetta Thompson's work to empower her students and those who have worked for her and with her is simply inspiring," said MHSAA Executive Director Mark Uyl. "She has brought compassion and vision to every district with which she's served. The Hampton Award recognizes promotion and advancement of underrepresented groups within interscholastic athletics, and Arnetta has continuously provided leadership in that area including now during a second tenure on the MHSAA Representative Council."

Thompson earned her bachelor's degree in secondary education biology from Tennessee Tech in 1990, and her master's in education with a concentration in educational leadership from Western Michigan University in 2001. She went on to also earn an educational specialist degree from Grand Valley State University in 2011 and her doctorate in philosophy from Eastern Michigan University in 2017.

During six years teaching at Memphis City, Thompson also served as varsity head coach of the girls basketball, volleyball and track & field teams. Coming to Grand Rapids Public Schools in 1997, she served as a lead teacher at Grand Rapids Union's alternative high school, then as athletic director and assistant principal at Grand Rapids Creston. She also served as an assistant girls basketball coach at Grand Rapids Ottawa Hills for one season and coached the Grand Rapids Central varsity for four.

Thompson earned eight varsity letters across three sports for Ottawa Hills before graduating in 1985, garnering all-state recognition in basketball and all-city in volleyball and also competing in track & field. She then played four seasons of basketball at Tennessee Tech, starting on the team that reached the NCAA Tournament in 1988-89.

Thompson has been married to her husband Willie for more than 30 years. They have two daughters, Daenetta Joseph and Arnell Thompson.



Arnetta Thompson



# Kris Isom Named 2025 Forsythe Award Winner

For 39 years, **Kristen Isom** poured herself into education and educational athletics as a teacher, coach, class advisor, athletic director, league president and advocate statewide as a member of the Representative Council of the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

To celebrate nearly a lifetime of contributions – including several that continue to impact this state’s student-athletes – Isom was selected as the 2025 honoree for the MHSAA’s Charles E. Forsythe Lifetime Achievement Award.

The annual award is in its 48th year and named after past MHSAA Executive Director Charles E. Forsythe, the Association’s first full-time and longest-serving chief executive. Forsythe Award recipients are selected each year by the MHSAA Representative Council, based on an individual’s outstanding contributions to the interscholastic athletics community at the local, regional and statewide levels. Isom was honored during the MHSAA Boys Basketball Division 4 Final on March 15 at Michigan State University’s Breslin Student Events Center.

Isom retired at the close of the 2023-24 school year after 38 at Adrian Madison and one at Clinton, where she attended high school and then began her teaching career before moving to Madison and becoming a pillar locally and statewide for nearly four decades.

In addition to serving as part of the MHSAA’s Council from 2008-23, Isom served as the president of the Tri-County Conference for more than two decades, on top of all the daily responsibilities that come with serving as a school athletic director. She also was one of the few athletic directors who also coached every year at some level, leading teams in basketball, volleyball, sideline cheer, softball and track & field.

“What I miss the most is the interaction with the kids. The coaching of course, but then everyday them coming into the office or giving me a hug or asking me what’s up,” Isom said. “It’s not always the athletes you intermingle with; it’s the kids in need, and even today when I see them or run into them, I get a hug or thank you, and that makes it all worth it.”

Isom has been recognized several times in the past for her contributions. She received the



Kris Isom

MHSAA’s Women In Sports Leadership Award in 2019, after previously being honored with an MHSAA Allen W. Bush Award in 2016 to recognize her behind-the-scenes contributions to school sports. She also was named Region 6 Athletic Director of the Year in 2000 by the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA).

During her time at Madison, she saw several of her school’s athletic programs enjoy success. Among recent highlights, Madison’s competitive cheer team finished Division 4 runner-up in 2022, the girls track & field team won a Lower Peninsula Division 3 Finals championship in 2017 and finished runner-up in 2016, and the 2016 volleyball team reached the Class C Semifinals with her daughter Rachel a contributor.

Kristen Isom indeed was a significant contributor to MHSAA work from a behind-the-scenes point of view, as she was a frequent host of District, Regional and Quarterfinal competitions and also MHSAA Coaches Advancement Program (CAP) sessions at her school. She also has been a longtime member of the MIAAA and National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

“For nearly four decades, Kristen Isom served as an excellent example of how to navigate the daily challenges of athletic administration while making a difference in the lives of her students and an impact on educational athletics on a larger scale as well,” said MHSAA executive director Mark Uyl. “She often showed a way forward as the MHSAA worked through complex topics, and always with the best interests of students first and foremost.”

A graduate of Clinton High School, Isom received her bachelor’s degree in science and teaching certification in physical education and health in 1984 from Michigan State University. She earned her master’s in elementary education in 1986 from Eastern Michigan University and also has completed graduate courses from Fresno Pacific University.

In addition to the MIAAA and NIAAA, Isom also has been a member of the Michigan Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (MAHPERD) and the Michigan State University Alumni Association. She’s been active with the Clinton United Church of Christ and Land & Lakes Ladies Club in various service efforts, and participated in local Meals on Wheels and roadside cleanup projects.

Isom is married to her husband Jerry, and she’s also maintained her real estate license for 30 years and is continuing in that work.

## 2025 WISL Award Recognizes Jennifer Thunberg

**T**hrough several professional roles in education, **Jennifer Thunberg** always has maintained a strong connection with athletics and provided leadership – locally, within her league and sport community, and currently at the statewide level serving on the Representative Council of the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

To recognize her vast and ongoing contributions, Thunberg was named the 39th recipient of the MHSAA's Women In Sports Leadership Award.

Each year, the Representative Council considers the achievements of women coaches, officials and athletic administrators affiliated with the MHSAA who show exemplary leadership capabilities and positive contributions to athletics. Thunberg received her award during the Division 1 Girls Basketball Final, March 22 at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing.



Jennifer Thunberg

A standout herself as a three-sport athlete at Bay City Central and then volleyball player at Saginaw Valley State University, Thunberg began her coaching career at Central in 1997 and teaching career there in 2001. After coaching the volleyball junior varsity two seasons while still playing collegiately, she led the varsity to a 249-201-43 record over 10 seasons before moving on to Pinconning High School, where she served as athletic director from 2008-14.

Thunberg returned to Central as an assistant principal and became the school's athletic director in 2017. She remained in that position until becoming principal at Freeland Middle School two years ago.

"A lot of the women who are on that (WISL Award) list are women who have been mentors of mine – who I have worked very closely with – and to be included in that group of women, I'm humbled and honored," Thunberg said. "Jean LaClair (Bronson, 2015) has been a mentor of mine since I began my coaching career, and I can't say enough about her. (There are many) between the volleyball world and athletic director world, and I'm just honored to be part of it."

During her time as Bay City Central's volleyball coach, Thunberg also served as president of the Michigan Interscholastic Volleyball Coaches Association (MIVCA) from 2005-08, and was instrumental in the creation of the annual Miss Volleyball Award honoring the state's top high school senior.

As Pinconning and later Central's athletic director, Thunberg hosted several MHSAA Tournament events and Coaches Advancement Program sessions. She also has served on MHSAA committees for volleyball rules, site selection, Scholar-Athlete Award selection and Women In Sports Leadership Conference planning.

She was one of only two female athletic directors in the Saginaw Valley League when she took that position at Central, and she served as the league's executive director during the 2022-23 school year. The Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA) named her its Region 8 Athletic Director of the Year in 2022.

Thunberg also served on the board for the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals from 2015-21. She was appointed to the MHSAA's Representative Council at its 2023-24 Fall Meeting and is serving a two-year term.

"At every stage of her educational career, Jennifer Thunberg has taken on a leadership role, and her vision and dedication to students is admired by her athletic and administrative communities across the state," MHSAA Executive Director Mark Uyl said. "She is a strong believer in the power of athletics to help drive a student's all-around education, and we are thankful to have her voice representing school sports."

A 1996 graduate of Bay City Central, Thunberg played basketball, volleyball and softball for the Wolves. At SVSU, she earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education and master's in educational leadership, and she remains among the volleyball program's all-time leaders in single-season aces.

Thunberg earned her certified athletic administrator designation from the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) in 2010, and her certified master athletic administrator designation in 2014.

In addition to leading a school and serving on the MHSAA's Council, she's also currently serving as president of the Bay County Sports Hall of Fame.

"I was student council president in high school, National Honor Society vice president, and whatever group I got involved in ... I just liked to be involved in those organizations," Thunberg said of taking on leadership roles. "And every single one of those organizations improved and helped me more than I've helped the organization. They've taught me things, helped me get to know more people – helped me become who I am today."

Her husband Todd Thunberg is a teacher and Bay City Central's girls basketball coach, and they have two daughters, 13-year-old Taylor and 11-year-old Rylee.



## 2025 Norris Award Goes to Debby Karabeets-Betts

**D**ebby Karabeets-Betts has dedicated more than 50 years to serving high school and middle school students, often in several roles simultaneously to provide opportunities to learn and compete both academically and athletically.

To celebrate especially her 30-plus years as a Michigan High School Athletic Association-registered game official and her immense impact on that community, Karabeets-Betts has been honored with the 35th Vern L. Norris Leadership in Officiating Award.

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 officials' education. It is named for Vern L. Norris, who served as executive director of the MHSAA from 1978-86 and was well-respected by officials on the state and national levels.

Karabeets-Betts began her career in education in 1973 and spent the next 40 years as a teacher and later guidance counselor. Her contributions to school sports also began in 1973 with her first of what would become several coaching tenures. She became an MHSAA-registered official first during the late 1970s, then returned to officiating in 1990-91 – first in swimming and track & field, later adding volleyball and cross country – and has officiated a combined five MHSAA Finals – two each in volleyball and boys swimming & diving and one in girls swimming & diving.

But that covers only one area of her influence on statewide officiating. Also a collegiate volleyball line judge in the Big Ten Conference over the last 16 years, Karabeets-Betts co-wrote the "Best Practices for Line Judges" protocol adhered to at MHSAA Finals and has been an MHSAA officials trainer in the sport since 2010. She has conducted more than 100 officiating and line judging clinics over the last two decades, mentored several school-aged officials as part of the MHSAA Legacy Program and spoken to numerous high school classes.

"The (essence of) officiating is that you bring sportsmanship, safety and respect and love for the games," said Karabeets-Betts, who first met Vern Norris while officiating an MHSAA Finals at Eastern Michigan University. "I have so many former players' children that I'm officiating now. ... You want that knowledge to make sure they have the most fair playing field that you could possibly give them."

Karabeets-Betts, who lives in Livonia but did the majority of her teaching and counseling at Taylor public schools, first stepped into educational athletics as a professional in 1973 when, as a first-year teacher, she also took on the head coaching positions at Taylor Truman for girls swimming, volleyball and track & field during the early years of those programs.

She made the former Inkster Cherry Hill High School a force in boys swimming & diving, coaching that program to 10 straight Tri-River League titles and

a Lower Peninsula Class B-C-D runner-up finish in 1977 before that school closed in 1985. She was named Coach of the Year in that league multiple times for that sport and also girls track & field.

She also earned multiple Western Wayne Athletic Conference Coach of the Year honors during a decade-long run at Taylor Center from 1986-96, where she led the boys cross country, swimming & diving and track & field programs. Karabeets-Betts would later coach the Dearborn Divine Child volleyball team to a Catholic High School League title and take the Riverview Gabriel Richard girls basketball team on a long Class C Tournament run.

Karabeets-Betts moved on to coaching volleyball at Schoolcraft College, serving as an assistant coach for a decade through 2010 and helping that program reach the National Junior College Athletic Association Tournament. She continued officiating MHSAA events and became a collegiate volleyball official in 1996.

She has served as an officials observer at the MHSAA Volleyball Semifinals and Finals the last four seasons and also several more as the officials crew chief for that high-profile event.

"Debby Karabeets-Betts has brought her expertise and dedication as an educator into the athletic classroom, especially as one of our state's most respected and admired teaching officials and mentors in volleyball," MHSAA Executive Director Mark Uyl said. "Her work across several sports has had a far-reaching impact stretching decades and continuing to this day."

Karabeets-Betts graduated from Taylor Center High School in 1969. She earned her bachelor's and education specialist degrees from Michigan State University in 1973, the former in physical education, health and recreation and the latter in exercise physiology and science. She later earned master's degrees in educational guidance and counseling, and athletic administration, from Eastern Michigan University, and then her doctorate in education and guidance and counseling from EMU in 1990.

She has contributed to her community in several more ways, including as a member of the Taylor Jaycees organization and president of its women's club where she participated in some of the many charity efforts she's been part of locally. She served on the Taylor Schools and Community Council and volunteered as part of the district's crisis team, organized a traveling theatre troupe that performed at local elementary schools and taught first-aid classes at the local community center.

Karabeets-Betts has been honored several times for her service, including with 12 Golden Apple Awards from the Wayne Regional Educational Service Agency. She received the Michigan Exceptional Educator of the Year Award from EMU in 2003 and the Guidance Counselor of the Year Award from the Wayne County Intermediate School District in 2010.

She is married to husband Dennis, who also is an MHSAA-registered swimming & diving official and worked the Lower Peninsula Finals to conclude both the girls and boys seasons this school year. They have two daughters, Desiree McMahon and Lori Hall, and a son Greg Betts.



**Debby Karabeets-Betts**

# Summer Vacation Includes Athletics

**D**uring the summer, some limitations continue. Except for football, fewer restrictions are in place.

There are no school teams in the summer; however, school coaches and students may assemble from the same school over the summer in various settings beginning on the Monday after Memorial Day. Football has a practice limit of no more than seven players in the summer prior to Aug. 1 in informal football activities in helmets and shoes with a coach.

**••SUMMER COMPETITION LIMITS:** Five sports are limited to 15 dates of competition when more than four or seven students from that school and a school coach are present in competition against others not enrolled in that school. Basketball, volleyball and ice hockey (four players and coach); soccer, lacrosse and football (seven players and a coach). Football may only have seven summer dates of competition (7-on-7 passing league games) See Football Section below. Summer competition must be prior to Aug. 1 and must follow the travel rule if held outside of Michigan: However, when “summer teams” travel out of state to a bordering state or a site within 300-miles one-way and teams are present from other states that exceed the MHSAA travel limit, “summer teams” may participate against any team at the event. Sports not on this list are not limited in summer competition, but the Three Year-Round Principles continue to apply.

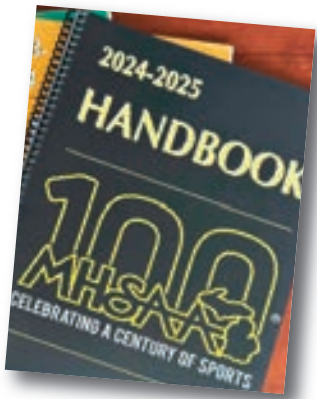
**••INCOMING 9TH GRADERS** become “high school students” when the four-player rule ends on the Monday after Memorial Day. Provided these former 8th-graders are not still involved in middle school sports, they may begin working out with high schools of enrollment in the summer.

This does not change the rule that prohibits recruiting for athletic purposes (undue influence).

**••THE FOUR-PLAYER PERIOD ENDS** on the Monday after Memorial Day which is also the Monday after Baseball and Softball District Tournaments and the Track Finals. Except for the dead period (below), any number of players may have contact with their coach in the summer provided the Three Year-Round Principles apply (there is a seven-player limit in football). Schools must regulate the frequency and intensity of any summer voluntary workouts so students may participate in more than one sport and so that families may have time away from school sports.

**• • S U M M E R DEAD PERIOD:** A seven-day zero player/coach and zero school facility period of time from the end of school or participation in the MHSAA spring tournaments to Aug 1. No coach contact whatsoever is allowed including at fundraisers, functions or places of employment. Each school sets its own seven-day dead period and it applies to ALL sports, except that non-school summer baseball or softball games and practices may continue in the summer dead period. Most schools select a seven-day period which includes July 4.

**••FOOTBALL:** Only football helmets and football shoes are permitted out of season in ANY setting, including camps or clinics, whether held in-state or out-of-state. No pads except during the season. The exception being that shoulder pads may be worn at college summer camps sponsored and run directly by NCAA/NAIA institutions. A football coach may hold 15 dates of non-mandatory activity with any number of players in grades 9-12 or 6-8 separately. Teams may use these dates as they see fit under other regulations (i.e., practice or 7-on-7) but a team or individual may not exceed seven “7 on 7” competitions. Any camp day would be counted among the allowed 15 dates. In the summer, besides the 15 dates, school coaches and up to seven players may assemble at one time for informal football activities or workouts which must also follow the three Year-Round Principles.



Scan the code at right for complete out-of-season regulations



## Student Advisory Council Names Class of 2027

**E**ight student-athletes who will be juniors at their schools during the 2025-26 academic year have been selected to serve two-year terms on the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Student Advisory Council.

The Student Advisory Council is a 16-member group which provides feedback on issues impacting educational athletics from a student's perspective, and also is involved in the operation of MHSAA championship events and other programming. Members of the Student Advisory Council serve for two years, beginning as juniors. Eight new members are selected annually to serve on the SAC, with nominations made by MHSAA member schools. The incoming juniors will join the group of eight seniors-to-be appointed a year ago.

Selected to begin serving on the Student Advisory Council in 2025-26 are: **Nichole James**, Detroit Edison; **Mia McGregor**, Mio; **Camryn Siegers**, Holland Christian; **Lucy Weber**, Fenton; **Brody Hammer**, Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg; **Sam Bentley**, Ypsilanti Lincoln; **Mason Mireles**, Hartford; and **Joey Smokevitch**, Johannesburg-Lewiston.

Those eight new members were selected from 125 applicants, the second largest group of applicants in the 20 years of the council. The first Student Advisory Council was formed for the 2006-07 school year. With the addition of this class beginning this summer, members will have represented 148 schools from 53 leagues plus independent schools that do not play in a league. Combined, the new appointees have participated in 11 MHSAA sports, and six will be the first SAC members from their respective schools.

The Student Advisory Council generally meets eight times each school year, and once more for a 24-hour leadership camp. In addition to assisting in the promotion of the educational value of interscholastic athletics, the Council discusses issues dealing with the 4 S's of educational athletics: scholarship, sportsmanship, safety (including health and nutrition) and the sensible scope of athletic programs. There also is a fifth S discussed by the group – student leadership.

This school year, the Council handed out championship trophies at Finals events, led sessions during four Sportsmanship Summits, provided feedback to the MHSAA Representative Council on proposed rule changes, worked on a mental health initiative, and wrote the script for a public service announcement on adult spectator sportsmanship that was included in broadcasts throughout the last school year.

The new additions to the SAC will join the Class of 2026 members who were selected a year ago: **Itzel Albarran**, Bronson; **Harper Barnhart**, Brownstown Woodhaven; **Diamond Cook**, Southfield Christian; **Henry Ewles**, Pontiac Notre Dame Prep; **Cole Haist**, Big Rapids; **Frannie Keeley**, Jenison; **Trey LaValley**, Romeo; and **Ethan Stine**, Bridgman.

### Student Advisory Council Belief Statement

*Adopted Nov. 2007*

*As the voice of Michigan's student-athletes, the Student Advisory Council's role is to convey the message of how high school sports are supposed to be played. We are responsible for helping the MHSAA maintain a positive and healthy atmosphere in which interscholastic athletes can thrive.*

*We believe athletes should be competitive, sportsmanlike and excel academically. We believe students in the stands should have fun, but not take the focus away from the game. We believe coaches should act as teachers, helping student-athletes develop while still keeping high school sports in perspective. We believe that parents should always be positive role models and be supportive of their child's decisions. We believe officials commit their own time to high school sports and respect should always be shown and given to them.*

*The most important goal for student-athletes is to enjoy high school sports while keeping a high level of respect between all those involved in the games.*

*– Written by the Student Advisory Council, adopted by MHSAA Representative Council in Nov. 2007*

MHSAA Representative Council

Chris Adams\*

Superintendent  
Camden-Frontier High School  
Class C-D — Southeastern Michigan

Eric Albright\*\*, President

Athletic Director  
Midland High School  
Class A-B — Northern Lower Peninsula

Jay Alexander\*

Executive Director of Athletics  
Detroit Public Schools  
Detroit Public Schools Position

Mike Bakker\*\*

Principal  
Fenton High School  
Statewide At-Large

Ross Fort (ex-officio)

Special Asst to Deputy Superintendent - Finance & Operations  
Michigan Dept. of Education, Lansing  
Designee

Chris Hartman\*

Athletic Director  
Kingsford High School  
Class A-B — Upper Peninsula

Sean Jacques\*\*

Assistant Principal/Athletic Director  
Calumet High School  
Class C-D — Upper Peninsula

Jeff Kline\*

Athletic Director  
Mt. Morris High School  
Statewide At-Large

Jason Malloy\*\*

Athletic Director  
Westland John Glenn High School  
Appointee

Dr. Monica Merritt\*\*

Superintendent  
Plymouth-Canton Schools  
Appointee

Vic Michaels\*\*, Secretary-Treasurer

Director of Physical Education & Athletics  
Archdiocese of Detroit  
Private and Parochial Schools

Chris Miller\*

Athletic Director/Director of Operations  
Gobles High School  
Class C-D — Southwestern Michigan

Anna Npvak\*\*

Athletic Director  
Harbor Springs High School  
Class C-D — Northern Michigan

Chris Riker\*\*

Athletic Director  
Portage Northern High School  
Class A-B — Southwestern Michigan

Fred Smith\*\*

Athletic Director  
Bangor Middle School  
Junior High/Middle Schools

Adam Stefanski\*

Athletic Director  
Boyne City High School  
Junior High/Middle Schools

Dr. Arnetta Thompson\*

Superintendent  
Godfrey-Lee Public Schools  
Appointee

John Thompson\*\*, Vice President

Athletic Director  
Brighton High School  
Class A-B — Southeastern Michigan

Jennifer Thunberg\*

Principal  
Freeland Middle School  
Appointee

\*Term Expires December 2025

\*\*Term Expires December 2026

ANALYSIS OF MHSAA MEMBERSHIP  
May 2025

754 Total High Schools

Total Public Schools	651	86%
Charter (Public School Academies)	70	11%
Traditional Schools	581	89%
Total Non Public Schools	103	14%
Religious	97	94%
Secular (Non-Public)	6	6%

777 Total Junior High/Middle Schools

Total Public Schools	683	88%
Charter (Public School Academies)	44	6%
Traditional Schools	639	94%
Total Nonpublic Schools	94	12%
Religious	89	95%
Secular (Non-Public)	5	5%



# Candidates Set for September 2025 Election

## BALLOTS TO BE MAILED TO SCHOOLS IN SEPTEMBER 2025

Ballots for Representative Council elections will be mailed to principals of member schools from the MHSAA office Sept. 2, 2025. The ballots will be due back in the MHSAA office Sept. 19, 2025.

Six positions for membership on the Representative Council will be up for election this fall. Vacancies for two-year terms beginning December 2025 will occur as follows: Class C-D Southeastern Section L.P.; Detroit Public Schools; Class A-B Upper Peninsula; Statewide At-Large; Class C-D Southwestern Section L.P. and Junior High/Middle Schools, elected on a statewide basis.

In addition to the above-named Representative Council positions, there are three Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee positions to be voted on in September. A representative of the Class A-B, Class C and Class D will be elected by Upper Peninsula schools.

Look for the ballots and return them in time to be counted by the Board of Canvassers. Be sure you mark your ballot correctly and signatures are affixed in the proper places. Ballots must have two (2) signatures to be considered valid.

Details of the Representative Council composition may be found near the beginning of the *MHSAA Handbook*.

Following the due date of Sept. 19, 2025, the Board of Canvassers as provided in Article IV of the Constitution of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, will meet on Sept. 22, 2025 and declare the winners for the various vacancies.

In accordance with the approved nomination and election procedures, listed candidates have submitted their desire to run for a position by March 15, 2025.

They have included an approval to serve from their respective superintendent or principal and have certified their qualifications to run for the office which they seek. No write-ins will be possible because each candidate must be approved by March 15 in order to run for a position on the Representative Council.

Following are the declared candidates and the vacancies which will occur in December 2025:

### REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL CANDIDATES FOR SEPTEMBER 2025 ELECTION

#### Southeastern Section, Lower Peninsula – Class C and D Schools

- Chris Adams, Superintendent, Camden-Frontier Schools

#### Southwestern Section, Lower Peninsula – Class C and D Schools

- Chris Miller, Athletic Director, Gobles High School

#### Upper Peninsula – Class A and B Schools

- Chris Hartman, Athletic Director, Kingsford High School

#### Statewide At-Large

- Jeff Kline, Athletic Director, Mt. Morris High School
- Billy Shellenbarger, Superintendent, Clawson Public Schools

#### Junior High/Middle Schools

- Adam Stefanski, Athletic Director, Boyne City High School

#### Detroit Public Schools

- Jay Alexander, Executive Director of Athletics, Detroit Public Schools

### UPPER PENINSULA ATHLETIC COMMITTEE

#### Class A and B Schools

- Rob Fay, Athletic Director, Houghton High School
- Jackson Ingalls, Athletic Director, Marquette High School

#### Class C Schools

- Sam Larson, Athletic Director, Menominee High School

#### Class D Schools

- Vincent Gross, Superintendent, Paradise-Whitefish Township Schools

## Make Plans to Attend the 2025 AD In-Service/Update Meeting Series

Athletic directors should plan now to attend an AD In-Service and Update Meeting in the fall. While attendance is strong, some ADs have not attended as their duties have increased. We suggest the opposite approach and urge those who have not attended recently to make it a point of emphasis. Attending these efficient "2-in-1" programs improves leadership and service skills and can make your work less of a burden.

The Update meetings begin at noon and present current issues, rules, regulations, future plans, and pertinent Representative Council matters. SUPERINTENDENTS, PRINCIPALS, ATHLETIC DIRECTORS and SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS should attend Update Meetings each year. Lunch is served at Update Meetings only. The Athletic Director In-Services runs from 8:30-11:45 a.m. and will focus on new actions, describing and defining regulations, MHSAA procedures, group discussions and more.



### 2025 AD In-Service/Update Meeting Schedule

- Tues. Sept. 9 – Kalamazoo, Four Points by Sheraton
- Mon. Sept. 15 – Warren, Ukrainian Cultural Center
- Mon. Sept. 22 – Grand Rapids, Prince Conference Center
- Wed. Sept. 24 – Frankenmuth, Zehnder's
- Mon. Sept. 29 – Gaylord, Otsego Club and Resort
- Wed. Oct. 1 – DeWitt, Banquet and Conference Center
- Fri. Oct. 17 – Marquette, NMU Wildcat Room (no fee, no meal)

*Go to [MHSAA.com](https://www.mhsaa.com) Administrators page to register for a session near you!*

## Inform Students, Coaches, Parents of Summer Dead Period

Each school sets its own Summer Dead Period – a seven-consecutive day "zero player and coach contact period" for all sports and all coaches – no functions, fundraisers, parades, etc.

Non-school baseball and softball teams may continue their schedule during the dead period.

Set the period between a school's last day of participation in any MHSAA tournament and Aug. 1. It is recommended that the dead period include the 4th of July.

There is no requirement to report, but there is a requirement to designate and observe a dead period.

Please include ALL sports, especially tennis and swimming in the discussions. Be sure to publicize your Summer Dead Period to all parties and the community at large.



## Efficiency is Effective...

The MHSAA is always willing to assist with issues concerning Association regulations. Please remember, however, the most efficient method of communication with the MHSAA on eligibility questions is through the athletic director or principal. Athletic directors should gather all information necessary on a question prior to calling the MHSAA. Coaches or parents calling the MHSAA on eligibility matters can create confusion and delay. ADs or principals are encouraged to contact the MHSAA office directly. Please follow this efficient path of communication.



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