

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
2020-21 VOLLEYBALL COMMITTEE MINUTES
January 27, 2021

Members Present:

Ramona Cox, Detroit
Tim Donnan, Southfield
Kyle Duby, Mesick
Kris Ernst, Fowler
Robin Kozuch, Morley (MIVCA)
Jean LaClair, Bronson (MIAAA)
Nancy Malinowski, Detroit
Bruce Martin, Saginaw
Nicole Norris, East Lansing
Mike Roberson, Grand Haven
Chris Westfall, Ypsilanti
Robert Wright, Sand Creek
Shannon Zinser, Clare

Members Absent:

Toni Cole, East Kentwood
Marcia Fierek, Cedarville

Others Present:

Kevin Fleming, MATS

MHSAA Staff:

Andi Osters (Recorder)

INTRODUCTION

The 2020-21 MHSAA Volleyball Committee met virtually on Jan. 27, 2021, via Zoom. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision making process and charge of the Volleyball Committee. Agenda items were compiled from correspondence, staff, committee members and the coaches' association. The committee was reminded that the scope of their work was to focus on growing the game of volleyball, protecting the health & safety of participants and maintaining the proper philosophy of educational, school-based athletics.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS AND RULE MODIFICATIONS

The committee discussed the Fall 2020 season, complete with rule modifications and tournament procedure adjustments to adhere with COVID-19 Executive Orders and MDHHS guidelines. Teams, coaches and officials were pleased with two specific changes: (1) team bench assignments (no switching sides between sets) and (2) visitors serving first (elimination of the pre-match coin toss). inquired about that rule change being permanently applied.

SEASON LENGTH

After review of last year's failed committee proposal to shorten the volleyball season by one calendar week, the committee discussed the concept again. Despite AD Update Meeting Survey data favoring the idea, committee members felt it necessary to allow the 2021 season to occur as previously scheduled, after such a dramatically altered season in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Coaches and administrators see this topic very differently at present, and more consensus would be needed to address the issue in the future.

OUT-OF-SEASON COACHING

During a review of results from the 2020 MHSAA Update Meeting Survey, the committee discussed the pros and cons of the new “16 Contact Day” provision granted to spring sport coaches during the Fall of 2020. Generally, the committee understood the rationale for providing this opportunity to spring coaches this fall, as it provided opportunity to those sports that were canceled in the spring of 2020. However, there was much concern about this concept advancing beyond this year, as many felt it could lead to sport specialization for student-athletes. The sentiment among the group is that the current 4-Player Rule allows for a deeper focus on individual skill development rather than a full-team practice environment. In smaller schools, the 16 Contact Days presented major issues for student-athletes trying to balance time commitments.

MHSAA FINALS VENUE

Committee members were provided a report of MHSAA Championships held at Kellogg Arena in Battle Creek on January 14-16, 2021. All agreed that Kellogg Arena staff and the Calhoun County Convention & Visitors Bureau exceeded expectations during a very challenging event. Committee members continue to see the venue as the best option for the MHSAA culminating tournament event: appropriate size, somewhat centrally located, and a true commitment from the Battle Creek community to spotlight the tournament.

BOYS VOLLEYBALL

The committee heard a brief presentation from Jason Heerema, Athletic Director from Grand Rapids Christian High School. Mr. Heerema detailed his experience administering a boys volleyball program and west-Michigan league consisting of 24 teams. MHSAA Participation surveys indicate that approximately 40 MHSAA member schools currently sponsor boys volleyball at some level (varsity, club, intramural, etc.). Most schools sponsoring the sport are adhering to MHSAA Handbook guidelines regarding eligibility, contest limits, etc. The committee reviewed the MHSAA Handbook regulation regarding tournament sponsorship and Title IX requirements, and agreed to continue monitoring sport growth in the spring of 2021.

NO RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MHSAA REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL