

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
Competitive Cheer Committee Meeting
East Lansing, January 25, 2017
9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

David Chrisinske, Middleville
Patti Glenn, CCCAM
Sonya Latz, Elsie
Ken Mohny, MIAAA
Eric Pierce, West Bloomfield
Stacy Smith, Caledonia

John Thompson, Brighton
Megan Tourda-Nelson, Bay City
Jessica Trefry, Michigan
Christina Wilson, Brighton

Staff:

Kathy Vruggink Westdorp (Recorder)

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer Committee reviewed its responsibilities as a standing sports committee and the process of making recommendations to MHSAA staff and the MHSAA Representative Council. In addition, the Competitive Cheer Committee reviewed the charge of the Competitive Cheer Sub-Committee which met on January 11, 2017. This Sub-Committee studied the technical aspects of girls competitive cheer and made a recommendation which was submitted to the Competitive Cheer Committee for additional review.

A draw for the order of competition at the MHSAA Competitive Cheer Finals was done by committee members, and the Girls Competitive Cheer Tournament Manager's Materials and Participating School Information were also reviewed. In addition, the minutes from last year's Competitive Cheer Committee and the 2017 Competitive Cheer Sub-Committee were perused. District and Regional sites were reviewed and members of the Committee also received 2016-17 Competitive Cheer clarifications and interpretations.

COACHING REQUIREMENTS

Committee members reviewed information regarding coaching requirements and deadlines for 2016-17. Starting in 2015, the athletic director or principal of each school shall attest that all high school coaches (sub varsity or assistant coaches, paid or volunteer) complete an MHSAA rules/risk management meeting in their sport or, in the alternative, one of several health and safety courses designated on mhsaa.com. Effective with the 2015-16 school year, high school administrators were required to attest that all varsity head coaches have a valid current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certificate. Effective with the 2016-17 school year, each head coach of a varsity high school team, hired for the first time 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). Committee members heard the high percentage of compliance that occurred with MHSAA member schools to all of these initiatives.

HISTORY OF GIRLS COMPETITIVE CHEER

Information regarding the history of girls competitive cheer was shared with the Competitive Cheer Committee including how the MHSAA first was required to have girls competitive cheer meet the definition of a sport. To that end, a format was created by Michigan cheer coaches and athletic administrators with the purpose of providing consistent rules, while allowing teams to perform all aspects of cheer techniques and styles designed to promote athleticism. Additionally, meeting the criteria of a sport provided by the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education, was imperative. Girls competitive cheer has provided a great opportunity for girls to participate in a sport which participation and spectatorship has soared. Further information included that spectatorship has nearly quadrupled in the last thirteen years which is evidence that girls competitive cheer has very solid support.

PHYSICAL FORM – SIZE AND FORMAT

A current and prototype of a new physical form was considered for committee input. The new form includes some additional consent information as well as prior information. The form was developed to provide the medical history of the student as well as information on the pre-participation physical, consent, insurance and signature included on one side of the physical. Committee members considered the form and provided feedback regarding the size and necessary content. Many of the committee members indicated that they

utilize a Medical Treatment Consent form; however not necessarily the form that is currently included on the physical form because it requires updating three times a year. Information received was shared with additional MHSAA staff.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL ACTION

A summary of Representative Council action which included Handbook changes and sports changes was provided. Included within the information were the Representative Council changes for 2015-16 and online health and safety meeting information embedded into online rules meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COMPETITIVE CHEER SUB-COMMITTEE

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer Sub-Committee met with the purpose of annually reviewing current competition and safety rules and to propose changes and additions to the Competitive Cheer Manual. The committee focuses on the technical aspects of competitive cheer and advises the full committee and ultimately the Representative Council of the rules that may need review, revision or update. Review of the recommendations that come from the Competitive Cheer Coaches Association of Michigan also occurs. The recommendations from the MHSAA Sub-Committee are as follows.

- Allow forward/backward suspended rolls, in a double-braced pyramid, to be transitioned directly to a stunt. The wording would be as follows:
In a braced suspended forward/backward roll pyramid:
 - Hand-to-hand or arm-to-arm contact must be provided by bases, back-spots, or bracer(s).
 - A single-braced suspended forward/backward roll in a pyramid is only allowed to a cradle or sponge and not to the cheering surface or a stunt.
 - A double-braced suspended forward/backward roll pyramid is allowed to a cradle, sponge, or a stunt, and not the cheering surface.

DISCUSSION ITEMS BY COMPETITIVE CHEER COMMITTEE

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer Committee continues to discuss several topics regarding the evolution of girls competitive cheer as a sport. This includes whether girls competitive cheer should have a requirement of the same number of athletes in each Division and round of competition. Additional conversation included whether the changes for the middle school and sub-varsity (who now follow the same rules as the varsity teams in terms of mandated numbers) resulted in any changes in competitive cheer opportunities. Conversation included that in several sports, there are teams that are not able to participate at all without the required numbers and competitive cheer teams may still participate in all rounds of competitive cheer (with penalty) without the required numbers. This committee encourages that all coaches make a commitment to participation for all athletes on their teams and make ethical choices to increase participation in all rounds of competitive cheer.

The Girls Competitive Cheer Committee also fully discussed a proposal received to add Round 1 to MHSAA Middle School Girls Competitive Cheer in an effort to provide the greatest amount of participation in the sport at the middle school level. Additional reasons for adding Round 1 included increased contest opportunities, additional exposure to all facets of competitive cheer and consistency in junior high/middle school sports with high school sports. Further discussion included that the addition of Round 1 could also allow for the greatest amount of participation without regard to specific gymnastics skills. Several of the committee members indicated that they currently have only 6 – 8 weeks in a season, and providing instruction for all three rounds would be very difficult in that span of time. Also discussed was a possible reduction in time and skill in each round. The Girls Competitive Cheer Committee requested that this subject be further reviewed in Middle School Committee and be discussed further at the Summer Task Force with emphasis on middle school participation, competition and safety while considering any possible new formats.

Additional discussion included other proposals that came from CCCAM and the sub-committee which included counting aerial skills for bonus, incremental choreography bonus, additional interpretations especially pertinent to middle school competitive cheer, clarifying foot position and listing additional information in the glossary.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

A continuance of the practice of having a spring/summer editing group of coaches and judges review the Competitive Cheer Manual and further update the Manual was recommended. This practice would include a review of non-safety and safety related violations, and lend further clarity and parameters to existing rules. The inclusion of girls competitive cheer recommendations approved by the MHSAA Representative Council and discussion of ways to provide a format for greater middle school participation would also be a responsibility of this editing group.

2016-17 COMPETITIVE CHEER TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

The 2016-17 Competitive Cheer Tournament will hold Districts on Friday and Saturday, February 17 and 18, 2017. There will be six Districts in four Divisions which will each have four teams progress to eight Regionals the following week on Saturday, February 25, 2017. Four teams from each of the eight Regionals will move to the Finals at the DeltaPlex in Grand Rapids on Friday, March 3 and Saturday, March 4, 2017. This will include four separate sessions of competitive cheer. The Competitive Cheer Committee reviewed the 2017 plan for assigned seating at the DeltaPlex which includes tickets specified for school seating and spectator seating. The Competitive Cheer Committee continues to enthusiastically embrace the concept for assigned school and spectator seating to assist with the large crowds at the DeltaPlex.

RECOMMENDATION TO REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Allow forward/backward suspended rolls, in a double-braced pyramid, to be transitioned directly to a stunt. The wording would be as follows:
In a braced suspended forward/backward roll pyramid:
 - Hand-to-hand or arm-to-arm contact must be provided by bases, back-spots, or bracer(s).
 - A single-braced suspended forward/backward roll in a pyramid is only allowed to a cradle or sponge and not to the cheering surface or a stunt.
 - A double-braced suspended forward/backward roll pyramid is allowed to a cradle, sponge, or a stunt, and not the cheering surface. (10-0)