

WRESTLING COMMITTEE MEETING

East Lansing, January 25, 2012

Members Present:

Steve Babbitt, Blissfield
Aaron Babicz, Novi
Brian Bishop, Bay City
Todd Cheney, Hartland (MWA)
David Cooper, Romulus
Dave Dean, Lowell
Kevin Dean, Edwardsburg
John Dignan, Ypsilanti (MASSP)
Joe Droski, Sparta
Mike Garvey, Kalamazoo (MIAAA)
Jeff Goodwine, Saginaw

Brad Jacobs, Ludington
Greg Lattig, Mason
Russ McKenzie, Madison Hts.
Dennis Paquette, Bangor
Casey Randolph, Tecumseh
Jeff Seiser, Addison
Shawn Veitch, Caledonia
Steve Wilson, Constantine

Staff:

Mark Uyl (Recorder)

The 2011-12 MHSAA Wrestling committee met in the MHSAA Office Building to review topics involving wrestling issues and the tournament series. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision making process and charge of the Wrestling committee.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2011 Update Meeting Opinion Poll Questions: The committee discussed two of the opinion poll questions from the fall Update meetings that dealt with student health and safety online meetings for coaches and required levels of regular season competition against other MHSAA member schools. The committee provided input on the potential health and safety meetings and were neutral on any changes to the required number of regular season meets against non-MHSAA member schools.

National Federation Topics: A lengthy conversation took place regarding NF wrestling weight classes. The committee, along with most of the input received from member school coaches, favored keeping the current weight classes used in Michigan (103-285). Members were hopeful the NF would revert back to the traditional weight classes after experiencing negative push-back from many other states. Several individuals noted the new NF weight classes that were created last year did not follow much of the data supplied by the NWCA. The committee could live with adjusted NF weight classes if a weight class was returned to the "middle weights" and the new, additional class to the "upper weights" was removed. A brief discussion on concussion protocols then ensued, with committee members believing that current regulations were very effective.

Weight Monitoring Program: Members of the committee were given the annual summary data on hydrostatic appeals, descent plans and the NWCA online weight monitoring program. There continues to be great support of the MHSAA-NWCA partnership. A long conversation took place regarding the positives and negatives of the home weigh-in allowance for regular season competition. The two main concerns continue to be that principals are not taking an active enough role in the home weigh-in process and school coaches are not properly following the published protocols. The group then discussed adding a second weigh-in to the Team Wrestling Finals in Battle Creek as an additional layer of weight monitoring and management.

Wrestling Schedule & Calendar: The committee discussed the numerous changes that have been made over the past four years relative to the wrestling schedule and calendar. The maximum number of dates has been reduced from 16 to 14 and practice now begins on the Monday preceding Thanksgiving. While many of these changes have been overwhelmingly positive, the committee believed that one final tweak to the start of practice was needed to resolve this issue for many years to come.

Final Venues and Formats: The committee reviewed the current Final venues in Battle Creek and Auburn Hills, along with the format that each event uses.

Transfer Issues and Wrestling: A long and spirited debate took place for the second consecutive year around concerns of an increasing number of wrestlers moving from school to school during their high school careers. Many of these transfer wrestlers had been medal winners at the Individual Finals at one school only to change schools the following year to join with other high profile wrestlers. The committee was unanimous that this issue needs increased study and conversation in hopes of slowing and discouraging this troubling trend. Suggestions included extending the period of ineligibility for transfer students to one full year rather than just one semester as is being used in other states to dissuade this movement of high profile wrestlers in light of possible undue influence issues.

Committee Correspondence: The committee reviewed four proposals that were received from member school personnel. The first proposal dealt with identifying weeks during the season where the starting weight would be determined for all schools statewide. While this idea had some support, no action was taken. The second proposal would require a pre-meet coin flip which would then determine if the order of matches would go in ascending or descending order. No action was taken on this proposal. The third item dealt with format changes to the Team tournament series which would ultimately bring 16 schools per Division to the Team Finals site, rather than the 8 per Division that currently advance. This proposal will advance to the Representative Council. Finally, the committee reviewed a proposal that wanted the MHSAA to sponsor some girls-only weight classes during the Individual tournament series. The committee believed more study was necessary, and that the MHSAA would communicate with some of the non-school wrestling organizations in Michigan to better evaluate the interest level, participation numbers and appropriate weight classes that are currently offered for female participants in non-school events.

Other Items: A suggestion was made that the MHSAA should return to assigning officials directly to all Individual District sites to better manage the number of available officials.

WRESTLING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. At the Team Final tournament, add a second weigh-in on Saturday morning prior to the Semifinal round of wrestling. This second weigh-in would be independent of the previous day's weigh-in, and all competitors would get a 1-pound growth allowance for consecutive days of weigh-in (19-0).
2. As the final move to the wrestling schedule process, revise Regulation II, Section 11 (E) to allow wrestling practice to begin two Mondays before Thanksgiving rather than the current regulation of one Monday (19-0).

3. Advance two schools from each Team District to the Team Regional tournament, and advance two schools from each Team Regional tournament to the Team Finals venue. Sixteen (16) schools per division would advance, and the Round of 16 and Quarterfinal completion would take place on Friday, and the Semifinals and Finals would take place as currently scheduled on Saturday. This new approach would allow more teams to advance to the Final tournament, greatly reducing the possibility of a top team being eliminated from the tournament in the District or Regional round (19-0).
4. Revise Regulation I, Section 9 to increase the period of ineligibility for transfer students from approximately one semester to approximately two semesters (11-8).