

benchmarks

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mhsaa

Scholastic Coaching:
More Than
a Numbers Game

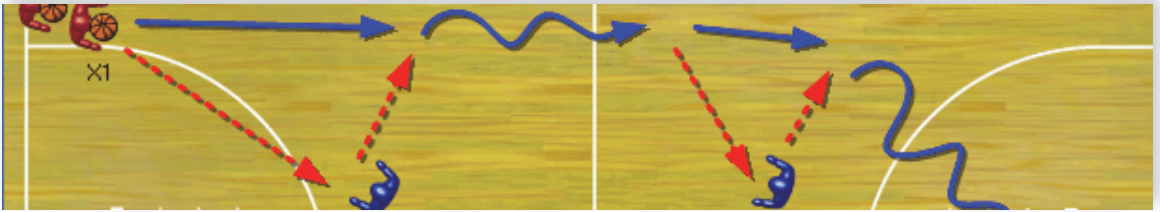


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Cover Story: Scholastic Coaching More Than Xs & Os



4

Athletic success is often quantified by wins, losses and a multitude of statistics. In school sports, there is so much more at stake, primarily the development of young people as they prepare for adulthood. There is a rare breed who yearn for the opportunity to provide such guidance on an annual basis. They are known simply as, “Coach,” and their reach can be everlasting.

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The Vault – 20

Being Greene

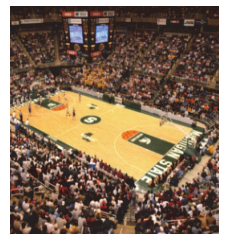
For many avid prep sports enthusiasts in Michigan, the word “Coach” still stirs memories of Lofton Greene, whose reign at River Rouge was legendary.



MHSAA News – 26

More Buckets for the Buck

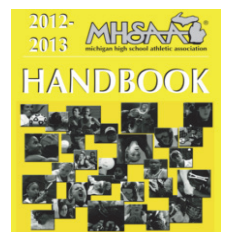
The MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals format undergoes a change in 2013, allowing fans to see the games in a shorter period of time, at a lower rate.



Regulations Review – 36

It’s About Team

Also known as the “Loyalty Rule,” the Limited Team Membership rule limits non-school competition in the same sport during the same season.



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Putting Students No. 1 is the Only Win that Matters



Sometime long ago, the men and women who are our best coaches stopped coaching a sport. They started coaching kids. They are the coaches who insist that they coach kids more than Xs and Os. They are the coaches who provide not just strategies for athletic games and meets, but also strategies for life.

High school sports has more to offer than learning how to block and tackle, how to dribble and shoot, and how to kick, pass, catch and throw.

Students who miss out on the other more important stuff – because their administrators didn’t demand it, their coaches didn’t coach it or their parents didn’t reinforce it – miss out on the stuff that helps kids become successful in life.

What gets in the way of the kind of “character coaching” that makes such a positive difference in students’ lives is the “No. 1 Syndrome,” which is the No. 1 problem in educational athletics, and often the root of all the other problems we face.

- It’s the view that only winning is of value, and how one wins is of little significance. It values results more than the process.
- It’s what causes communities to value varsity programs more than JV programs, and high school programs more than junior high programs.
- It’s what causes parents to insist their child not only get in the game, but play all the time and score the most points.
- It’s what causes poor sportsmanship and disrespectful actions toward officials, opponents and sometimes even teammates.
- It’s what causes the attitudes which create the appetite for behaviors that risk the health of children, such as excessive weight loss in wrestling or the use of steroids or other performance-enhancing substances.
- It’s what causes schools to fire good coaches with poor win-loss records, while retaining poor teachers with good win-loss records.



More emphasis on students, family and character leads to winning in life. Coaches with this perspective are those most valued in school sports.

This issues of *benchmarks* is dedicated to the communities, schools and coaches who refuse to succumb to the No. 1 Syndrome, who put students’ education and health before all else, and who make us proud to be associated with student-centered, school-sponsored sports.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John E Roberts". The signature is fluid and cursive.

John E. “Jack” Roberts
MHSAA Executive Director

Kicking Around the Soccer Issue

The MHSAA's *From the Director Blog of Nov. 27* discussed the trend of U.S. Soccer creating "Development Academies" for high school age soccer players that prohibit those players from competing on their high school teams. Following are some reader responses.

I understand the frustration of having our best players recruited to play for Development Academies, but if you look at the bigger picture with U.S. soccer as the focus then I understand their reasoning. If I had players who were able to play at an academy and that is what they wanted to pursue, I certainly would not try to deter them. I am one who believes that it does create a space in high school athletics for another player who may not have had that opportunity otherwise.

– Ben Conklin

The players have the right to chase their dreams but this academy approach should not be a huge surprise to anyone. It is a step up from all the local premier (club) teams that have sprouted up all over our state.

Let's face it, soccer has turned into business and many coaches are reaping the rewards by being affiliated with some of these clubs, and also coaching at the high school level as well. Coaching a high school team makes it an easy draw for these coaches who snare from these "Club" teams. While they enjoy the benefit financially, they are also preparing and developing their roster for the high school season by keeping them together year round. While some coaches set the main stage of high school soccer, some are coaching more than one team at their club. Some are actually doing their

"If I had players who were able to play at an academy and that is what they wanted to pursue, I certainly would not try to deter them. I am one who believes that it does create a space in high school athletics for another player who may not have had that opportunity otherwise."

coaching at three or four teams in their club. Parents seem to be hungry to see their sons/daughters playing at as high a level as they can, or afford. Maybe a scholarship is the objective.

These parents shell out a lot of money to these groups. Being familiar with some of these organizations, I am flabbergasted at many coaches employed by a club who have never played soccer before. Of course the push is on for bragging rights by some of these clubs in trying to get their coaches certified. So now, the shoe is on the other foot. These same coaches who are taking control of the local soccer players and making exceptional fees from them are beginning to lose some of their choice players and of course the money that is attached to them.

– Bernie Turner

If HS soccer could serve the top soccer athletes then it would not be an issue, but it can't. Don't forget you are talking about only approximately 100 (soon to be 150) players on the boys side in the entire state! And they do come from all over the state to play academy.

You are talking about such a small number of players it's not worth worrying about. Academy

is where the kids who have good shots at Division I and/or National team expectations should play and get noticed. High school soccer doesn't help these kids. And, no, my kid is not good enough for an academy team!

– Steve

US Soccer is not alone in placing exclusions and restrictions on sport and soccer participation. I coach at varsity level but I am not from Michigan. I am from the UK. I was brought up immersed in playing and watching soccer and have been for the past 36 years.

I am still perplexed, and saddened, by the restrictions around sports participation for young people. I know that I can not coach travel teams with a certain number of my high school players; that I can not meet with a team before certain dates or have them practice with a ball.

I know I can not change the mindset of how things are run here, but after three years of frustration at the status quo I felt I had to offer some feedback on my experiences as someone from overseas. I love the game and the benefit it brings to young people and don't want to see restrictions preventing them from having these experiences.

– Daniel

Shots on Goal offers readers a forum for feedback. Submit your opinions, share your experiences or offer suggestions to benchmarks@mhsaa.com. Be sure to visit MHSAA.com for MHSAA Executive Director Jack Roberts' twice-weekly blogs. Comments are encouraged, and may also appear here in ***Shots on Goal***.



Making a Difference

For many students, continuing education occurs after the final bell, and their best teachers wear whistles.

*“A coach can never make a great player
of a youngster who isn’t potentially great.*

*But a coach can make a great competitor of any child.
And miraculously, coaches can make adults out of children.*

*For a coach, the final score doesn’t read
so many points for my team; so many points for theirs.*

Instead it reads:

So many men and women out of so many boys and girls.

And this is a score that is never published.

*And this is a score that coaches read to themselves,
and in which they find real joy...*

When the last game is over.”

—Anonymous



The author of the poem on the preceding page prefers to be left anonymous, but there are those in the MHSAA office who know the person behind the words. And, they know the words were genuine, coming from a former long-time high school coach who believed in those values and lived them.

In today's ever-changing world, one wonders if all coaches would be better off going about their tasks anonymously. In the fall issue of *benchmarks*, we shined a spotlight on a group whose highest compliment is to go about their business unnoticed: the contest officials.

This issue celebrates those who don't have that luxury. In communities across the country, large and small, rural and urban, everyone seems to know the names of their high school coaches. And, the cost of such infamy comes with heavy taxes these days, levied by societal shifts whereby an increasing number of parents and children perceive playing time, starting roles and connections to big-time colleges as natural-born rights.

Punch "high school coach firings" into Google, and you'll get close to 13 million results. Upon inspecting a healthy sampling of these stories, some dismissals are due to misconduct – criminal or otherwise – but you'll find far greater instances involving parental meddling and win-loss records.

More alarming is this: in related topics at the bottom of the first search page, "how to get a high school coach fired" appears. A click on that little gem returns more than 21 million results, including such sub-searches as "how can parents legally fire a high school basketball coach" and "how to get rid of a high school coach." Might be enough to make a person want to officiate.

Unfairly, the public measure of coaches too often does not go beyond the scoreboard. Sadly, the fates of these educators hinge upon the performance of people not old enough to vote or, in many cases, drive.

And yet, coaching positions continue to be among those most coveted in many communities. What is it about the profession? What drives these individuals? Thankfully, our fields and gyms continue to be filled with leaders who *don't* overemphasize wins and losses; who exude fairness and sportsmanship; who simply aim to teach lessons to students the way any math or science teacher would. People who *care* about *your* children.

And, by and large, the reason is because they had the right experiences with the right coaches when they were younger.

"My swim coach (Darin Millar, Royal Oak HS) was a major factor in why I entered education and coaching," said David Zulkiewski, who is in his 13th year of paying it forward as coach of the boys and girls swim teams at Bloomfield Hills Andover. "I went to a private all boys school (Warren DeLaSalle) and the Christian Brothers provided a great role model for me that aided in my decision to become a teacher/coach. I saw the sacrifices they made and how hard they worked to help students and athletes."

It's in the makeup of coaches to dive head first into the profession, which is really a continuous cycle that begins when today's crop of coaches were in their heyday as athletes.

"Participating in athletics created some of my best high school memories," said Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg cross country coach Tamara Benjamin. "After college, when I had the chance to begin coaching, I jumped at it. I felt it was an honor and a privilege to coach a high school team, and 25 years later I still feel the same way."

For still others, the exposure to coaching came even earlier, as they experienced the way of life on a daily basis.

"My father was a high school coach of football and basketball. I was in the gym a lot growing up and it became a goal of mine to become a coach also," said Diane Laffey, the winningest softball

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Diane Laffey (center) has been making a difference in the lives of student-athletes at Regina HS for five decades, a trade she learned growing up the daughter of a coach.

coach in MHSAA history, and No. 5 on the girls basketball list in her 50th year at Warren Regina. “I saw how he cared for his players off the court as well as on and it made me believe that perhaps I could make a difference in an athlete’s life.”

There are, no doubt, many coaches who wish all parents would have been coaches, at least for one day. Perhaps then, there would be a greater understanding of what the job entails on a daily basis, and maybe even some empathy from a group which often causes far more headaches than even the most inexperienced playing roster.

A recent survey of more than 3,000 coaches nationwide identifies parents as the biggest challenge to the daily tasks of today’s athletic mentors (See the story on page 15 of this issue),

The study revealed that nearly 50 percent of the respondents identified over-involved parents as the No. 1 concern, while 80 percent of the subjects perceived that a child’s playing time was the parents’ No. 1 issue with today’s coaches.

“Parents, seem to be more and more demanding of your time and commitment, a street that does not travel both ways,” said Don Kimble, now in his 24th year as the swimming & diving coach at Holland High School.

“The biggest problem with our job is parents,” said Mike Roach, bowling coach at Battle Creek Pennfield. “With the proximity of spectators to athletes in bowling, its hard to get them to understand that as coaches it is our job to coach and their job to cheer. Some have taught their kids and now have a hard time letting the coach do his or her job.”

Part of the issue also stems from the parents’ perception of their kids’ best sports.

“It seems like many sports are now becoming year-round activities instead of seasonal. I think it’s very important that children play a variety of sports instead of specializing when they are young. I think parents owe it to their child to have them try several sports or activities to find which one their child

likes, not the one the parent likes,” said Rockford hockey coach Ed Van Portfliet.

The pressures to specialize can come from other sources, too, often times coming from within the walls of the school. Despite the bad rap parents can get, the majority do have their child’s best interests in mind. In many cases, they respect and listen to a coach’s advice. At times, in fact, coaches are their own worst enemies.

“In many schools I think pressure to specialize comes from the respective coaches. I try to keep a lid on it at Regina – but I know that some of our girls do specialize,” said Laffey, who also is the school’s athletic director. “I encourage them to play more than one sport; and a lot of our athletes do that. I emphasize to our coaches that these girls are high school students and they should be allowed to participate in as many extracurriculars as possible.

“I think the travel club teams and AAD in many sports is hurting high school athletics. Student-athletes are being asked to specialize too early.”

Abby Kanitz, just 28 years old and a neophyte in the coaching business compared to Laffey, has seen too much of it already. As if to prove her stance on multi-sport participation, Kanitz has been the competitive cheer coach at Thornapple-Kellogg for six years, and recently added track and field duties to her resume’.

“There should be no specialization,” said Kanitz. “A student-athlete who has the opportunity to be an athlete in college will not lose that opportunity by participating in other sports. I think the pressure comes from coaches, sadly. Parents – if the coach is respected – listen to coaches and take the opinion and feedback to heart. If we are encouraging our athletes to experience more than one sport in high school, chances are their parents will, too.”

That type of pressure, real or perceived, can lead to the athletes putting restrictions on themselves.

“In the past things were simpler. There weren’t as many demands on our athletes. There weren’t

as many options and distractions,” said Gary Ellis, boys tennis coach and athletic director at Allegan. “There was less specialization – if you could, you went from one sport to the next and enjoyed the one you were playing at the time.”

Dave Emeott, 18-year boys track & field coach, and 7-year cross country coach at East Kentwood, agrees.

“When I was in high school I participated in four sports my senior year,” he said. “These days the three-sport athlete is as rare as a popular referee. I completely understand the shift to specialization and being competitive, but I sure had a lot of fun with all my teammates and would not trade it for any improved performances.”

The increase in perceived importance of community-based sports has also led to heightened tunnel-vision when it comes to an athlete and their parents choosing his or her path.

In the worst-case scenarios, the youth programs are headed by non-school coaches who lack accredited training and do not share the same educational philosophies of the school coaches. Parents also susceptible to heeding the advice of these coaches, and the results can be disastrous.

“I believe as school coaches we need to be more involved in youth sports; we understand our programs and how to develop young people,” said James Richardson, wrestling coach of 22 years at Grand Haven High School. “Parent volunteers in our youth programs are extremely important, but most are not educators. The parents need to be educated and made aware of our expectations as much as our student-athletes.”

At such an impressionable time in their lives, athletes in the youth sports realm learn from every-

one in the setting, from teammates to coaches to spectators. Not all of the lessons are positive.

“Ultimately we want all athletes to become good citizens and athletics is an excellent avenue for this. If you have ever spent a few minutes in the bleachers at a youth sporting event, you will soon realize we have a long way to go,” said Emeott. “If the fans of these events are who our young athletes are learning citizenship and proper behavior from, then we need to consider spending more of our practice time at all levels teaching citizenship to our athletes, and maybe even to our parents.”

To remedy these situations, greater ties are needed between the school system and community youth programs.

“We need more adult volunteers to help coach and teach our youth in a positive manner,” said Cathy Mutter, competitive cheer coach at Munising for the past 21 years. “We have many opportunities in Munising for students to participate in a variety of sports and activities. The programs are very valuable to the youth of our community. It keeps them active and involved in organized activities. They learn the rules and regulations of the sports they are participating in and the value of teamwork.”

Emeott adds, “I think, at a minimum, each organization should have an extensive parent code of conduct. A parent code of conduct could help educate the parents of our future athletes.”

Mike Van Antwerp, in his ninth year at the helm of the boys lacrosse program at Holt also coaches youth soccer while running a couple summer lacrosse leagues, and can see room for improvement.

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Ed Van Portfliet (right, with clipboard) pours his heart and soul into Rockford's hockey program, but also believes that student-athletes should experience a wide variety of sports while in school.



“Participating in athletics created some of my best high school memories. After college, when I had the chance to begin coaching, I jumped at it. I felt it was an honor and a privilege to coach a high school team, and 25 years later I still feel the same way.” — Tamara Benjamin, Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg HS

“Youth sports should foster teamwork, fun, work ethic, thinking and processing skills as well as respect for the game,” Van Antwerp said. “In many environments it is working, but it depends on the program and the coaches. The focus has to be on teaching the game, not winning the game.”

In some cases, it’s becoming increasingly expensive to *play* the games. The pay-to-play phenomenon is a pothole that most of today’s coaches didn’t have to dodge when they were in high school. Some districts apply a blanket fee to participate in all sports, while others are sport-by-sport, in some cases making the student choose one sport over another.

“We ended pay to play about six years ago, thankfully,” said Ellis. “When we had it, numbers dropped significantly. Those who were tennis players, played. The drop was in those who wanted to ‘try it,’ so it limited the number of new players.”

The use of participation fees to help fund interscholastic athletics in Michigan high schools has doubled during the last nine years, although the percentage of schools assessing them has held steady over the last two, according to surveys taken by the MHSAA.

The most recently completed survey indicates that of 514 member schools responding, 260 schools – 50.5 percent – charged participation fees during the 2011-12 school year.

Yet, in speaking with those directly affected, it’s simply part of the job; almost an afterthought. Simply add another fund raiser in some shape or form.

“We have fundraisers, and I wish we didn’t. They take so much time and effort,” said Jim Niebling, who has organized his share in 23 years as Portland’s boys tennis coach and 18 as the girls mentor. “Our most successful fund raisers have been charity poker events, and ushering at MSU’s Breslin Center.”

Several schools sponsor the typical pop can fund raisers, while Richardson tosses in a couple new wrinkles with mulch sales and a pig roast to help fatten the coffers for his program.

At Portland, the fee is \$125 per student, per school year, and in some ways, Niebling thinks it might even be a positive influence.

“The amount is low enough and it’s for a whole year,” Niebling said. “So if anything, it may have even increased participation in some activities so parents could feel that they ‘got their money’s worth.’”

In the cases of newer MHSAA sports such as bowling and lacrosse, generating funds is just a carryover from the days when the schools sponsored club sports.

“We have always been self-funded and it is a challenge to raise money in-season, so we try to do it out of season,” said Kimberly Vincent, Grand Haven girls lacrosse coach for six years. “I work with kids to help them reduce their costs; earn money on the side and with used equipment.”

Fellow lacrosse coach Van Antwerp notes that the annual cost to participate in his sport is nearly \$400, but he’s seen no marked decrease in roster size.



For Munising and cheer coach Cathy Mutter, the biggest challenge is often the long weekly bus rides that pull students out of school and take a toll on the transportation budget.

Athletics is no different than other sectors of society; not all team rosters offer the same demographic makeup. As such, some sports have been hit a little harder in recent years.

“My husband and I are proprietors and we helped to get high school bowling off the ground when our son was in high school,” said Marshall boys and girls bowling coach Sue Hutchings. “The school charges \$50 pay-to-participate. Our bowling program charges \$65. It has impacted us more this year due to financial problems in our district. We always work through the situation on a case-by-case basis.”

For others, geographic location can put hardships on students and the budget that other schools can’t fathom.

“There are eight competitive cheer teams in the entire Upper Peninsula. We have to travel almost every weekend at least six hours one way to a meet/competition,” Mutter said. “The time the ath-

letes spend out of school and on the road is challenging physically and academically. The cost adds up as well. With school budget cuts and families struggling to make ends meet, it is a huge burden at times.”

Mutter works as the school nurse for the Munising district, so in that regard, she does have some advantages over many leaders in her sport, which has a fair share of non-faculty coaches. By nature, those who are employed within a school district enjoy some inherent benefits compared to non-faculty personnel.

“The biggest issue is practice times,” said Brenda McDonald, Grand Rapids Kenowa Hills/Grandville gymnastics coach for 14 years. “I cannot go right after school like many other sports and sometimes that is hard on the girls with homework and other areas.”

Peter Militzer is the boys and girls tennis coach at Portage Central, for 21 and 18 years, respectively. By day, he’s the tennis director at the YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo. By nature, he is partial to tennis, but still champions the cause for multi-sport participation.

“Coaches and parents need to stop pushing kids into one exclusive sport,” Militzer said. “Our athletic director (Jim Murray) pounds the ‘well-rounded athlete’ idea into our heads at every staff meeting. During the off-season I don’t personally work with tennis players or apply pressure on them to only play tennis. I don’t think sport specialization is necessary for athletic success.”

He’d like to be around his players more, but only for familiarity purposes, a yearning many non-faculty coaches share.

“Not having access to players and their info during the day is the greatest challenge I face not being in the building,” Militzer said. “I am fortunate to work with a great athletic director and his assistant, and they keep me in the loop.”

Being kept in the loop is one of the primary challenges facing non-faculty coaches, who often times are well apprised of contest rules, but might not be as familiar with MHSAA regulations.

Brian Telzerow, a youth ministry professor at Kuyper College who coaches boys golf at Forest Hills Northern and girls golf at Forest Hills Eastern, makes a concerted effort to work closely with the schools, saying, “I have to be very intentional in communication with and from the school.”

Grand Haven’s Vincent, a marketing communications professional, echoes the sentiment.

“We are not in the loop of communications, network and friendships. Our kids miss out on some opportunities because of it,” Vincent said. “For instance, the use of special equipment, facilities, and other benefits available to other

teams with coaches who are at the school. We have to go onsite to pick up our mail, it is not forwarded to us.”

The gap can at times cause lapses in important communication from the MHSAA for those least familiar with some of the Association’s regulations. Most coaches have preseason meetings for players where rules and regulations are discussed, but it is important that all the right messages are being relayed to team members and parents.

“From the outsider’s perspective I would imagine the MHSAA’s greatest challenge is to empower

“Ultimately we want all athletes to become good citizens and athletics is an excellent avenue for this. If you have ever spent a few minutes in the bleachers at a youth sporting event, you will soon realize we have a long way to go,” — Dave Emeott, East Kentwood HS

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courtesy of James Richardson

Instilling belief in a student and changing their expectations of themselves is one of the great rewards for Grand Haven coach James Richardson (left).

athletic directors with the knowledge to make the correct decisions for our athletes and coaches,” Emeott said. “The MHSAA can only be as good as the individual school districts.”

Kimble, who is Holland Aquatic Center’s supervisor of competitive swimming in addition to his high school coaching duties, adds that school support can be an issue in certain sports as well.

“Communication as well as off-site involvement of the non-swimming community within the school can create challenges,” Kimble said. “Since our pool is also not part of the campus, not many students and/or faculty attend swim meets, or have even been to the pool.”

Yet, for all the pitfalls and hurdles, coaches are at peace with who they are; and they know that there are others who would take their jobs in a heartbeat. That’s what keeps them in it the most. It’s feelings like this:

- “I coach life more than I coach golf. We teach every day of our lives by the way we live and what we say. Teaching is more of a lifestyle than a job. It is truly a privilege to walk with students through some of their most formative years.” – *Telzerow*
- “Working with so many high school girls and seeing them succeed in life is probably the most rewarding thing to me. To see many of them go into the coaching field makes me feel that I have done some things right to make them want to coach.” – *Laffey*
- “I think the most rewarding moments are when we witness real change in a young adult. As coaches, we have a view like no other. We watch a gangly, immature freshman walk into the gym, and a grown adult walk out.” – *Emeott*
- “Coaching is helpful in teaching as every person on your team has a role, and understanding the differences of young people and what they can contribute to your program makes coaches find ways to incorporate these same methods into the classroom.” – *Richardson*
- “I have made lasting friendships with coaches and judges from all over the state. I have attended many weddings and baby showers for former athletes.” – *Mutter*
- “Teaching and coaching are one in the same. The goal in both situations is to help the student develop as an individual; to develop good life skills and attitudes. Athletics provides opportunities that do not exist in the classroom: developing leadership skills and teamwork.” – *Ellis*



courtesy of Peter Miltzer
For Portage Central’s Peter Miltzer, the lifelong relationships built through coaching far outweigh fleeting victories.

• “It goes beyond just winning games. It’s seeing the growth and development of the young men I’ve coached. It’s seeing them overcome difficulties to reach goals. It’s seeing the academic successes and the accomplishments after they leave our program.” – *Van Portfliet*

• “On a more personal level, I’ve been able to witness the positive impact the sport has had

on many kids, whether it’s them working extremely hard to make a contribution to the team, or their success creating new options for them in terms of school.” – *Van Antwerp*

- “The most rewarding moments are the small things: an athlete new to the sport suddenly ‘getting it;’ a parent in tears because their child is so happy at what he or she is doing; an athlete who says, ‘Thanks for being a good coach.’” – *Hutchings*
- “Athletics is second to school. When you teach and coach, you truly understand the reason. It’s not about being eligible, it’s about teaching your athletes proper priorities – school comes first.” – *Kanitz*
- “The most rewarding moments are when former players stay in touch with you. Next most rewarding is when I see a former player who tells me they still enjoy playing tennis. I’ve coached team state champions, and individual state champions, but those brief moments don’t compare.” – *Miltzer*
- “I’ve been to hundreds of grad parties, weddings, family gatherings, baptisms, etc. I feel honored that these kids and young adults take the time to include me in their lives. Notes and letters I continue to receive from past athletes are very humbling.” – *Benjamin*

This story is not about strategies, Xs and Os, or gameplans. All of these coaches are fierce competitors who are driven to win. But they are fueled by something deeper.

“I played tennis for Harley Pierce Sr. He was eventually named to the high school football and tennis coaches halls of fame, plus he was named the national tennis coach of the year in the early 1980s,” said Niebling. “I didn’t appreciate him then as much as I did a few years later when I became a teacher/coach. Only after being out of high school and then coaching myself did I realize what influence he had on me.”

As alluded to in the poem to open this story, that is the real score.

– *Rob Kaminski, benchmarks Editor*

A Sportsmanship “Town Hall” With Valued Leaders

Anyone who has ever attended an MHSAA sporting event has undoubtedly heard the public address announcements touting sportsmanship.

Sportsmanship is one of the many lessons taught through school sports, but are today’s student-athletes willing pupils in the subject, or are too many kids opting for elective courses in showmanship offered via YouTube and cable networks?

While many involved in high school athletics have noticed a decline in sportsmanship, it’s not too late to inject this valuable ingredient back into our games, but efforts need to begin at the local level, and the scholastic environment needs to support community venues where poor sportsmanship often flourishes.

East Kentwood’s Dave Emeott: “I think it is easy to see that sportsmanship is at least diminished. I think sportsmanship starts in the home, but we can not always depend on the household to teach these lessons. As we sit in the stands, we realize that if this is where they learn it, then we need to get to work. I think we need to teach parents what a good sport looks like, as well as students. It is apparent that students will be the kind of sports they are permitted to be. Most coaches want good sportsmanship, but struggle with the balance of teaching character and winning or losing.”

Thornapple-Kellogg’s Tamara Benjamin: “Sportsmanship could be endangered. If a parent is allowed to sit in the stands and berate coaches, officials, and other athletes, it’s difficult for our students to see that this behavior is wrong because it is being tolerated. My expectations for our girls’ behavior is made clear the first day of practice. I hold

them accountable for themselves and we go forward each day.”

Holland’s Don Kimble: “I believe that it starts at home; always looking for a reason for failure opens the door to unsportsmanlike behavior. On our team, sportsmanship is stressed within the team first; if you cannot be a sportsman to your teammates, then you cannot be to others.”

Grand Haven’s Kimberly Vincent: “We’re all about sportsmanship and work with students and parents to set expectations. There are too many people pointing fingers at other people about this subject and I think coaches have to set the example.”

Pennfield’s Mike Roach: “Youth sports programs need to concentrate on sportsmanship and the fact that there are winners and losers in sports. By not keeping score, the kids do not learn how to win, nor do they learn how to handle losing. Keep score. Teach kids that it is not the end of the world to lose, but be gracious in winning and losing.”

It could be true that much of the focus on poor sportsmanship is a result of just that: the spotlight on *poor* sportsmanship, rather than the good.

Thornapple-Kellogg’s Abby Kanitz: “I think that too much focus is put on the unsportsmanlike situations. There is much more good out there than bad; it just doesn’t make for great stories. It does not take much more than one bad situation to ruin a game, competition or meet. I think sportsmanship comes from the coach. If your athletes know

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EDITOR’S NOTE: A diverse group of coaches representing all 28 MHSAA Tournament Sports were sent questionnaires to contribute to this issue. We thank the 19 who took time to respond.



you have high expectations in this area, then their parents will know, too.”

Allegan’s Gary Ellis: “Sportsmanship is alive and well, though it is under attack. Students are exposed to so many examples of poor to horrendous sportsmanship on TV, that it seems to be the norm.”

Andover’s David Zulkiewski: “I see positive sportsmanship every day with my athletes and that’s because we focus on it and make it part of our daily practice and competition. Our team is much more than swimming or diving; it’s about excelling at life. So many of our kids will not compete in athletics after high school, so we try to give them skills they can use in the real world. Being a good sport is one of those skills.”

Grand Haven’s James Richardson: “Kids want and need structure, and will uphold the guidelines as long as they are clearly defined and enforced consistently. As coaches we need to build relationships with the kids and teach them proper behavior, and serve as models for them.”

Holt’s Mike Van Antwerp: “Sportsmanship is still around. If kids respect their opponents as individuals, they are good sports. Most of them would get along well if they were on the same team, so it’s important they realize that. The kids they play against are no different from them. If they respect the game, respecting their opponent follows.”

To be sure, no coach worth his or her clipboard sets out to allow poor sportsmanship. But, emphasizing proper conduct early and often should be as essential as conducting tryouts.

Munising’s Cathy Mutter: “Sportsmanship is an important part of high school sports and life in general. I always tell my athletes, ‘You do not deserve; you earn. You have to work hard, be positive and be fair.’ I teach them to strive to be the best they can

be on the team, in the classroom, at the jobs they have, and at home in their family life. Many programs struggle due to the fact they do not work together as a unit. You are only as strong as your weakest link.”

Rockford’s Ed Van Portfliet: “The O-K Conference and the member schools have done a great job of promoting sportsmanship and I think it’s alive and well in our area. We teach our players it’s important to play hard, but they also have to respect their opponent and the game. We don’t tolerate actions or play from our players that would be considered disrespectful or detrimental to the game.”

Regina’s Diane Laffey: “We always talk sportsmanship at our team meetings, our parent meetings and our coaches meetings. I guess it is an endangered species in some areas – but I do not feel it has gotten anywhere near that point at our school. I make every effort to make sure that our athletes, teams, coaches and parents keep sportsmanship at the top of our list.”

Allegan’s Ellis: “Leagues have a responsibility to educate their students about proper behavior at high school athletic events and how to treat their opponents. Schools need to develop leaders – on teams and in the stands – who set the tone at contests. The biggest trophy given out at our year-end awards night is the sportsmanship trophy.”

Marshall’s Sue Hutchings: “Sportsmanship starts with the coaching staff respecting the players and hammering the philosophy home. If one of our players exhibits bad sportsmanship, they are taken out of the competition and made to apologize. And, trust me. It has happened. Our conference coaches are all pretty tight and have worked together for a number of years. We all share the same philosophy and have very, very little trouble with bad sportsmanship.”

Sometimes, proper sportsmanship is simply woven into the fabric of a given sport.

Forest Hills Northern/Forest Hills Eastern's Brian Telzerow: "Sportsmanship in golf is the leader in integrity. There is no other sport that is as self-policing as is golf. The young men and women must play with honor and integrity, calling penalties on themselves with no referees present. There is no entitlement here. After we play, players shake hands with all other competitors in their groups. We also make it a practice to say thanks to the host team and to the host course personnel. This is intentional to instill gratitude for the privilege of playing this sport."

Portland's Jim Niebling: "Sportsmanship may very well be endangered, but not in high school tennis and certainly not on our teams in Portland. Just this season my No. 1 singles player was playing his arch-rival in the league championship match. They had gone back and forth for years and both knew the implication of winning the match for the upcoming Regional and Final tournaments where they were surely going to have to play



again. The loser would be seeded lower and would have decidedly more difficult draws. But when the other player, up a set, began to cramp in the second set, looking like he may not be able to finish the match, my player walked to his cooler, pulled out a Gatorade and handed it to his opponent.

"My player ended up losing that match, and he knew that was a possibility when he handed his opponent that Gatorade. If that's not sportsmanship, I don't know what is."

Grand Haven's Richardson: "Sportsmanship is promoted on our team because in wrestling we are only in charge of ourselves and our actions. It's a sport that holds individuals accountable. It is difficult in our sport to place blame on others."

Kenowa Hills/Grandville's Brenda McDonald: "I always have my girls practice good sportsmanship. They always thank the home team or say, 'Good job,' to the opposing team. Many of the girls know the girls on other teams from previous gymnastics classes, so they enjoy seeing them again."

Sportsmanship is a Way of Life

The following is the "From the Director" blog of Jan. 4, 2013, on MHSAA.com

Twenty years ago, the MHSAA received a plaque from a member school that I continue to prize above all other awards our organization has received. The plaque reads: "In recognition of outstanding contributions to interscholastic athletics, and for promotion of sportsmanship as a way of life for all young athletes."

There are no words I would more prefer to describe the work of the MHSAA, then and now, than those highlighted words. No work we do is any more important than promoting sportsmanship as a way of life. Reduced to a phrase, that's our most essential purpose; that's our product.

Not victories, titles or championships, but sportsmanship. Not awards or records, but sportsmanship.

It's teaching and learning sportsmanship more than speed and strength; sportsmanship more than coordination and conditioning; sportsmanship more than skills and strategies. Even more than teamwork, hard work, discipline and dedication, it's sportsmanship we teach and learn.

In *Discovery of Morals*, the sociologist author (not a sportsman) writes, "Sportsmanship is probably the clearest and most popular expression of morals. Sportsmanship is a thing of the spirit. It is timeless and endless; and we should strive to make it universal to all races, creeds and walks in life."

Sportsmanship is more than a list of dos and don'ts; more than grace in victory and defeat; more than how we play the game and watch the games. It's how we live our lives.

Sportsmanship begins in our homes. We work on it in practice. It extends to games. It reaches up to the crowd. It permeates the school halls and shopping malls. And it begins to affect society for good, or for bad.

Advancing Coaches Education

Forty-two years ago last August, I showed up at a high school near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for my first teaching and coaching job.

I remember being introduced to the team at a meeting before the first practice, and then just 60 minutes later, out on the football field, I heard a player call me “Coach.” The next day, I overheard one player say to another . . . “Coach Roberts said . . .”

In less than 24 hours, I had gone from being Jack Roberts to “Coach Roberts.” It was a very special feeling.

However, it came with no special training – just the blind trust of players gave me the title “coach,” well before I ever earned it.

My father was a coach and every boss I’ve ever had was, at one time or another, a coach. It’s a great profession, and frankly, I still miss it sometimes.

After parents, and sometimes before parents, the coach is the most important person in the educational process of school sports. Good coaches can redeem the bad decisions that administrators sometimes make; while bad coaches will ruin the best decisions that are ever made. Coaches have enormous influence on how kids think and what they value.

Coaches operate classrooms that, at least once each week, are open to the public. They are working with students in emotional settings, where there is some risk of injury, observed by hundreds or even thousands of spectators.

There is no time or money better spent in youth sports than the time and money spent on coaches’ education. Every coach, every year. Continuing education in the best practices of supervision, instruction, medical aspects of sports and risk management, as well as ethics, sportsmanship and leadership.

The MHSAA’s Coaches Advancement Program provides just that kind of continuing education. It’s specifically designed for the junior high/middle school and high school coach. It’s delivered face-to-face, anytime and anywhere across the state of Michigan. The goal in CAP is to help coaches to coach with competence, care and character.

Go to MHSAA.com for the details, and the schedule, to which we are adding weekly.

TRAINING UPGRADES

Almost every informed observer of school sports in Michigan would admit that more coaches need more training for their work than they are receiving. Some need more background in the Xs and Os; more need basic CPR training, and many more need continuing education in the subjects addressed in CAP

While we can almost all agree on those observations, many leaders of school sports worry that



raising coaching education requirements too far or too fast reduces the pool of coaching candidates and exacerbates the coaching shortage that really exists for many sports in many places. There are indications, however, that attitudes are changing and schools are becoming more receptive to having the MHSAA require statewide what schools have been unable or unwilling to require locally.

Nearly 55 percent of 634 respondents on the 2012 MHSAA Update Meeting Opinion Poll indicated they favor a requirement that all coaches have completed at least one level of CAP prior to their third year of coaching at any level at any MHSAA member school. The MHSAA Representative Council may vote in May on some modification of that proposal – perhaps requiring by 2016-17 that only **high school** coaches complete **CAP Level 1 or 2** by the third year of coaching at any MHSAA member school. In its current form the proposal would not apply to junior high/middle schools.

More than 74 percent of 637 respondents on the Update Meeting Opinion Poll registered their support of a requirement that all coaches hold valid certification in CPR prior to their second year of coaching at any MHSAA member school. In May, the MHSAA Representative Council may vote on a modification of that proposal also. It might require by 2015-16 that only member **high schools** require all their coaches to have that certification by their second year of coaching.

An overwhelming 93.6 percent of 640 survey respondents favored the requirement that all coaches complete a free online course in both concussion and heat illness prevention prior to their third year of coaching at any MHSAA member school. Once again, the Council may consider a slight modification of the proposal in May. The Council may require by 2014-15 that only MHSAA member **high schools** require all their coaches of MHSAA sports to complete on an **annual** basis one of the free online sports safety courses designated by the MHSAA. This modification would be more flexible as to content and address only high school coaches, but it would be an **annual** requirement that would start in 2014-15, if approved by the

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High School Coaches Survey Identifies Parental Concerns

Over 3,000 high school coaches and athletic directors responded to a nationwide survey conducted by Growing Great Relationships (GGR) in cooperation with the National High School Coaches Association (NHSCA). The purpose of the survey was to understand what coaches and athletic directors see as their greatest needs concerning coach-parent and coach-athlete communication and relationships. GGR and NHSCA will use the results to design trainings and programs that address the identified needs.

The first section of the survey addressed issues surrounding parents of athletes. The first question asked coaches about their greatest concerns dealing with parents. More than 50 percent indicated over-involved parent as their No. 1 concern.

The second question asked coaches what they think parents are most concerned about. Overwhelmingly, almost 80 percent reported the child's amount of playing time as their perception of a parent's biggest issue.

The next question asked coaches who are the most difficult parents. Athlete "Wanabees" were identified by 55 percent of the respondents.

Coaches were then asked what parents should do to support them. Over 70 percent indicated keeping them informed of personal difficulties their child was having at home. This was followed by 63 percent asking parents not to use social media regarding the team, or to gossip about the team or the coach's expertise. Athletic directors' responses were similar but with different percentages. Almost 73 percent ranked not using social media or gossip about the team as the most important.

The second section of the survey asked

coaches about their greatest concerns regarding relationships with their athletes. The first question asked coaches about the challenges they face communicating with student-athletes. Almost 58 percent indicated an athlete receiving contradictory



Student-athletes often receive contradictory advice from parents, which can be detrimental to the relationship with a coach.

advice from parents and other coaches/advisors. This was followed closely with 55 percent stating an athlete's inflated belief about his or her ability. Athletic director responses were similar but with somewhat different percentages. The greatest response, 70 percent, was the athlete receiving contradictory advice.

The second question asked the coaches for other factors interfering with their relationships with their student-athletes. The factor indicated by 58 percent of coaches was an athlete over burdened with competing school demands (clubs, academics). For this par-

ticular question, the response from the athletic directors closely matched the coaches.

Athletic directors were asked that in their role what their greatest concerns dealing with parents and athletes. The most frequent answer by 76 percent of athletic directors was parents bypassing coaches to complain directly to them.

In addition almost 500 coaches and athletic directors wrote in additional concerns not identified in the survey questions that they have in their ability to communicate and work with athletes and their parents.

– Richard & Jane: Relationship Coaching

Scan the code
for further
survey
information



From the Director – continued

Representative Council.

How this annual requirement would interface with the current rules meeting requirement for all head coaches at the high school level is not certain. It is possible the MHSAA would prepare an online meeting for **head** coaches that blends sports safety and the traditional rules meeting, point to alternative online sports safety courses for **assistant** coaches to complete, and provide online rules meetings for **officials** that differ in content from those for coaches.

It was probably never true that athletes' "blind trust" was enough to make a person a coach; but it's now undeniably true that "best practices" require much more initial preparation and continuing education than many people have who are involved with school sports teams today.

Pay-to-Play Policy Near 50 Percent in Ohio

Last June, the OHSAA sent a survey to 800 high school athletic directors around the state. A total of 548 (68.5%) athletic directors responded back with their information and opinions, including 466 public schools and 82 private schools. The following are some of the interesting findings from the survey:



from the OHSAA

Pay-to-play policies are in place at nearly 50 percent of OHSAA schools, according to a recent survey.

- The large majority of athletic directors (400/548; 73%) who responded to the survey agree with the OHSAA regulation that prohibits live video of Friday night football games (except when the majority of the broadcast is handled by students on the school's website). Athletic directors said they believe live video would hurt their athletic department's budget by reducing their gate. The public school average was slightly higher in this category (358/466; 77%), whereas the private school average was significantly lower (42/82; 51%).

- Nearly half (265/548; 48%) the schools that responded to the survey will have pay-to-participate (PTP) fees during the 2012-13 school year. The public school average (222/466; 48%) was consistent with that trend, whereas the private school average was slightly higher (43/82; 52%).

- In terms of districts, the Central and Southwest districts reported having the highest percentage of schools with PTP fees, both at 63%, followed by the Northeast (49%) and Northwest (33%) districts. The East (31%) and Southeast (21%) districts reported the lowest number of schools with PTP fees.

- The Northeast district had the highest average PTP fee (\$181), followed by the Central (\$156), Southwest (\$141), Northwest (\$120), East (\$96) and Southeast (\$81) districts.

- The highest PTP fee for one varsity sport was \$1,500, coming from a Northeast district school for ice hockey, and the lowest PTP fee was \$10 in the Central district.



- There were 8,368 total head coaches at the 548 schools that responded, averaging out to 15 coaches per school. The highest number of coaches at a school was 36 in the Northeast district, and the lowest number was two from the Southwest district. Seven hundred thirty-six head coaches coach more than one sport.

- Some interesting gender results found that of 8,368 head coaches, 1,861 are female (22%), 255 are females coaching a male sport and 2,204 are males coaching a female sport.

- Multiple athletic directors noted in their survey responses that students pay a one-time "transportation fee," which helps offset costs due to the rising price of gasoline.

- In the Northwest district, Arcadia High School reported that its new head boys' basketball coach is Cara Noel, a female and Arcadia graduate.

For complete results of this survey, visit OHSAA.org or contact Kristin Daugherty.

Note: The numbers used in this report are based off the information provided by schools that responded to the survey. Therefore, the percentages reported are not wholly representative of the entire state of Ohio.

– Reprinted with permission from the Fall 2012 Issue of OHSAA Magazine by Kristin Daugherty, Administrative Liaison

Detriments of Sports Specialization

According to Dr. K. Anders Ericsson, in order for a person to achieve expertise in a sport or activity, he or she must invest approximately ten years or 10,000 hours of practice. Thus, children, parents, and coaches might see specializing in one sport as a fast-track to gaining the expertise needed to win starting positions, state championships, and even college scholarships.

better?” While I was tempted to respond selfishly with answers specific to my sport (most likely making our team better), I would try to think of the “whole child,” causing me to reply with the question, “What other sports are you going to try this year?”

The cultures in high school athletic departments can be somewhat ambivalent. While



At what point does specialization hit the wall and become detrimental to young athletes?

However, these remarkable accomplishments (if they are actually reached) can come with some nasty baggage including social isolation, mental burnout, psychological stress, and overuse injuries such as stress fractures, Osgood-Schlatter & Sever's Diseases. Often times what remains is a kid with some very polished skills but no love for the sport, and a body that has had enough!

To combat these problems, young athletes should diversify their participation among numerous sports until at least the age of 14 or 15. When a young athlete diversifies his or her sports they reduce the physical impact by spreading it across different parts of the body, thereby allowing for a faster and more thorough recovery. Furthermore, sport diversification allows kids to learn transferable physical skills to other sports, not to mention introducing them to a larger group of active peers, along with more coaches and role models to assist with the tribulations of adolescence.

As a former coach I can attest to the excitement I felt when I had a group of players that were gung-ho and fully committed to my sport. I would become outwardly excited when they would ask, “What can I do this off-season to get

coaches would like to believe that their colleagues always support them and their program, there is adequate reason for them to be skeptical. After all, with the trend of sport specialization, coaches at the same school can end up competing with each other for athletes – even when their seasons do not overlap. Often times I have heard coaches say, “I don't discourage kids from going out for another sport.” Even if they do not outwardly deter kids from joining other sports, a coach's personal interests, reactions, and body language can be felt and heard sometimes even louder than their words.

Coaches need to begin supporting, collaborating with, and trusting the expertise of their colleagues – believe they will improve student-athletes on many levels (maybe even in ways the original coach cannot). Coaches must work together and encourage young athletes to diversify with additional sports.

The culture of the athletic department starts with the athletic director. Athletic directors must build a department and coaching staff that is conceived in collaboration, trust, and support for the high school's entire athletic program. True collaboration cannot exist among coaches if competition for athletes is going on – coaches

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must share the pool of athletes by supporting and even encouraging participation in other sports.

Athletic Directors may be thinking, “Easier said than done,” so here are a few tips:

- Hold preseason meetings with all head coaches at the beginnings of each of the three major sports seasons (fall, winter & spring).
- At these meetings, create buy-in with open communication. With the help of your coaches, make a list of the ways sport diversification can help the overall athletic program. Record the many transferable skills that are seen between two sports (cross-country gets wrestlers in shape during the fall season; basketball produces more athleticism for volleyball; track creates faster football players, etc.)
- List some fears or myths that each other’s sports or training regimens might present (heavy lifting on game days slows players down; football players lose bulk during wrestling season, coaches not wanting their best player to get hurt playing “other” sports, etc.). Once these fears are brought into the open and effectively addressed, coaches will be much more open to supporting each other’s programs.
- Make a policy for off-season training (weight room, speed training, fall baseball, etc.). Establish these as supplemental and should be held at different times of the day than practices or games). Example: Mandatory weight training sessions should take place before or during school – Not during another team’s practice. This will eliminate kids from having to prioritize between participating in Sport A, or training for Sport B.
- Create a huge master schedule to map-out and plan all summer sports camps so they do not overlap with each other. This will allow athletes to participate in multiple camps and reduce the competition coaches have for athletes’ time in the summer.

Encourage (politely demand) that all head coaches keep the scorebook and/or run the clock at the home games for the other sports programs. When athletes and parents see the head coaches supporting other programs, the tone will be set that the athletic department is diversified and supportive of all of its teams.

- Encourage (politely demand) that all coaches work in the weight room during the off-season and during the summer. This boosts cooperation amongst coaching staffs. No longer will the weight room be seen as belonging only to the one team. Conversely, the football coaches will not feel like they are babysitting athletes from other sports when they come to train.

- Encourage (politely demand) that all head coaches keep the scorebook and/or run the clock at the home games for the other sports programs. When athletes and parents see the head coaches supporting other programs, the tone will be set that the athletic department is diversified and supportive of all of its teams.

Athletic Directors, if you are met with some hesitation then know that you are creating change. If you have backlash or resentment from your coaches then sit down with them and hear them out. However, stay true to your vision that collaboration, trust, and support is the new culture that you want for your athletic department. To paraphrase Jim Collins from his book *Good to Great*, you are trying to get the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people sitting in the right seats.

Coaches, this change might take some getting used to, but in the end sport specialization will be better understood and allowed as the exception rather than the norm. Kids will participate in multiple sports and you will be a member of a high school coaching staff built on collaboration and trust. These will combine to create a richer athletic culture at your school. However, the greatest improvement will be for your student-athletes’ individual experiences; they will be healthier physically, socially and psychologically.

Scott Westfall has spent the last 10 years as a teacher, coach, and athletic director in Fort Collins, Colo. He is working on his Doctorate at Michigan State University, with an emphasis in sport psychology and athletic administration, and assisting the MHSAA with its student leadership programs. Westfall is a former high school football, wrestling, tennis and cross country athlete, and rugby player at the collegiate level. He can be reached at westfa28@msu.edu.

CAP: Over 13,000 Strong and Growing!

Over 13,000 coaches have completed at least one level of the MHSAA Coaches Advancement Program in Michigan schools, colleges and universities. This is a great time to receive further CAP training. You may sign up at MHSAA.com (under the Education tab) for future CAP courses, or if you are looking for a way to bring the CAP program to your school, association, conference or district, visit MHSAA.com.

Remember that after the completion of one level of CAP, participants receive liability insurance in the amount of \$1 million per occurrence while coaching their school team during the interscholastic season for the school year in which a level of CAP is completed as well as for the following year. This sequence continues with every level of CAP taken. In addition, GamePlans is provided six times a year and coaches who complete a session of CAP are eligible to receive State Board Continuing Education Credits (SB-CEUs) to be used in the renewal of selected certificates from the Michigan Department of Education.

It will be important to continue your learning opportunities by attending additional CAP clinics, reading more books and joining your coaches association. The list of responsibilities involved in the coach's job sometimes seems endless, but it will be important to realize most of your responsibilities may be those as educational leaders. In *The Seven Secrets of Successful Coaches*, Jeff Janssen and Greg Dale ask the question, "What does it take to be a successful coach?" and challenge you to think about your response to the question. As you consider a response, it is important to remember that ultimately your success as a coach will not solely be judged on the quantity of wins you have, but also on the quality of the relationships you develop with your athletes. The successful coaches who were

interviewed for their book did not use winning as their only, nor more important measure of success. Instead, it was found that many of sport's most successful and respected coaches have a much broader and deeper definition of success.

The following quotes offer further definitions of success:

"Your definition of success should have more depth than the equivalent of winning a national championship." – Mike Krzyzewski, Duke University Basketball Coach

"Rings don't mean that you are a champion. It's that kid 10 years from now who calls you up and says, 'You know what? You were very special in my life.' That's what it's all about." – Mike Candrea, University of Arizona Softball Coach

"Everybody has the X's and O's. It's your ability to be organized and to communicate with people. That is what differentiates the successful coaches." – Mary Wise, University of Florida Volleyball Coach

"You must have the more elusive ability to teach and to motivate. This defines a leader; if you can't teach and you can't motivate, you can't lead." – John Wooden, Former UCLA Basketball Coach

You can see that it is important to make the connection between education and athletics as your primary mission which means that the coach is foremost a leader and communicator. Your continual efforts to be a long-long time learner through CAP or other clinics will be important as you improve the sport experience of participating students, minimize the inherent risks faced, and stay current in your profession.



MHSAA File Photo

CAP Coordinator Westdorp Earns Honor

The National Federation of State High School Associations has named MHSAA Assistant Director Kathy Vruggink Westdorp the recipient of the 2013 NFHS Coach Educator of the Year Award.

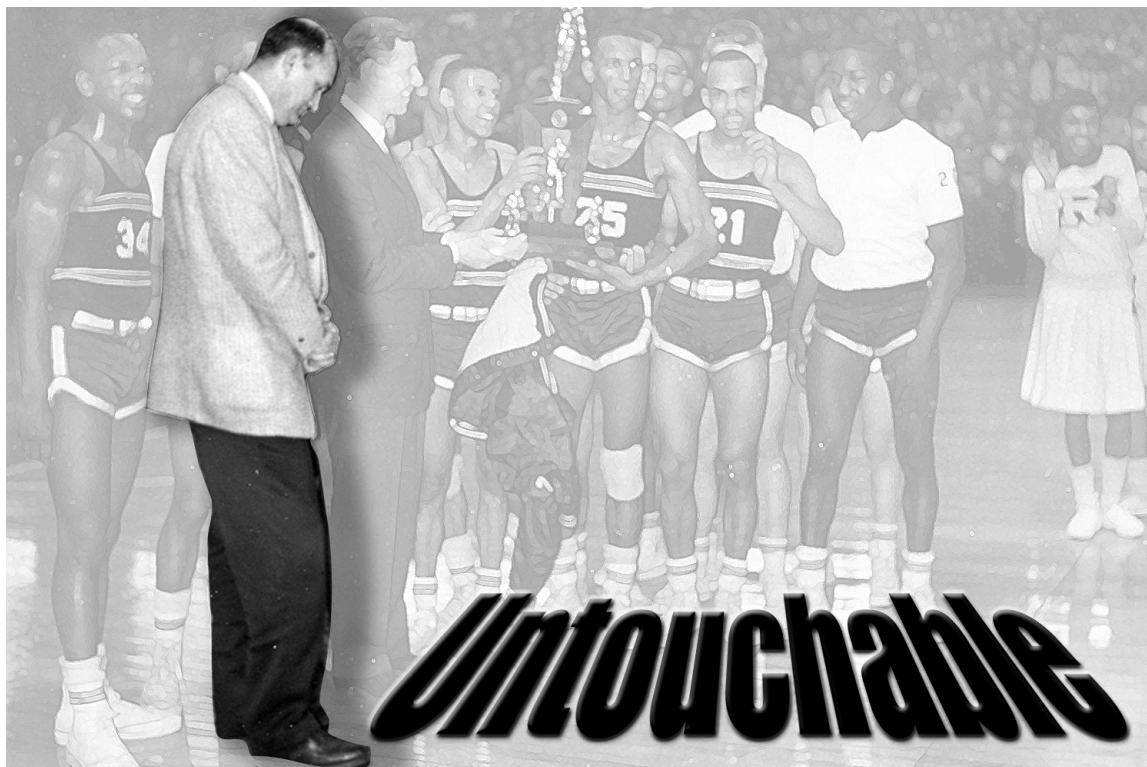
One of her primary responsibilities when hired there in 2004 was to revamp and revitalize the Michigan coaches education program. She has established, developed and authored the MHSAA Coaches Advancement Program (CAP), and is still active in training coaches throughout the state. The CAP Program is a six-level face-to-face coaches education program that is researched-based and interactive.

Delivery to Michigan's current and prospective interscholastic coaches is done in two ways. First, presenters trained and evaluated by Westdorp travel "anytime, anywhere" to provide programs, coordinated by schools, school districts, leagues and coaches associations. She personally presents many of the CAP units. Secondly, after faculty training and with Westdorp's regular evaluation, colleges and universities in Michigan are licensed to present up to five levels of CAP through their undergraduate or graduate studies.

All aspects of CAP are administered from the MHSAA office under Westdorp's direction. This includes the arrangements for continuing education credits through the State Department of Education, as well as liability insurance and an online newsletter for all coaches who complete CAP units.

Prior to her position at the MHSAA, Westdorp was principal of Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central High School, athletic director at Grand Rapids Creston, and a teacher at Grand Rapids Central. She has coached basketball, field hockey, gymnastics, track & field and volleyball.

“Greene” Means Basketball In Michigan



The following story is reprinted from the 1997 MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals program, taking a look at River Rouge coaching legend Lofton Greene.

Five days a week, Lofton Greene makes the trip. Last year (1996), the destination was Robichaud High School in Dearborn Heights where he worked as a varsity assistant coach. This year, the journey was to Roosevelt High in Wyandotte where he assisted with the freshmen squad. At 78, Michigan's leader in all-time varsity coaching victories still gets to teach kids about his passion – basketball. For that, he is grateful.

In the annals of the schoolboy game, Greene is legendary. His varsity squads posted an incredible 710 victories, 12 MHSAA championships and 20 Regional titles in his 40 years at the helm at River Rouge. The Panthers were defeated but 200 times – an average of five times a season. In total, he has posted 739 wins and 231 defeats in the varsity ranks. Thanks to World War II, 42 of those years were in Michigan.

Born in 1919, Lofton was the sixth of seven children born to Jessie Ruth Thomas and William Henry Greene. One of six boys, he was raised on a farm near Barlow, Kentucky. In 1928, he moved

with his mother and his brothers to Jackson, Michigan.

“My sister was the first born, and she was in nurses training in Owensbrough when we moved.” recalled Greene. “We hadn't planned to move permanently. My dad stayed behind to work the family farm. The plan was for my mother to move with my older brothers to Jackson so they could get jobs in the factories. My brothers would earn money so the family could buy some new farm equipment.”

The move was great for young Lofton. “I was 9 years old going into the 5th grade. It was fun for me. I had other kids to play with. On the farm, it was quite a distance between us and our neighbors.”

The move wasn't so great in the eyes of one of Greene's brothers. Alton had just finished his junior year of high school and wanted to remain for his final year. He stayed in Kentucky with his father and worked the farm.

“We ended up staying in Jackson,” said Greene, laughing. “Once my brothers got some money in their pockets, well...”

Greene's father joined the family in Jackson a short while later.

“Some friends who lived adjacent to us in Kentucky, had moved to the south side of Jackson. To

make my dad happy, we had a large garden there, and the two of us grew and sold vegetables and potatoes.”

Greene graduated from Jackson High School in June of 1936. A starter on the Viking basketball team, he had honed his skills under coach Howard Chanter in the old 5-A league.

“Our coach contracted pneumonia near the end of the season, and died just before the tournaments,” recalled Greene. “Our manager handled the team while he was in hospital. A guy from the old vocational school in Jackson coached us in the state tournaments. We beat Monroe then lost to Ann Arbor, 22-20. I got hot and had 10 of our 20 points.”

Following graduation, Greene returned to Kentucky, thanks to the efforts of his brother.

“After high school, Alton attended Western Kentucky,” commented Greene, “and he suggested that the coach, Mr. E.A. Diddle, get ahold of me. I got a letter asking me to come down.”

Lofton headed to Kentucky and enrolled at Western. He joined the basketball and baseball squads.

These were the days of the freshman rule, and, after a year, Greene moved to the varsity. The basketball team did very well during these years, and in 1940 the squad was invited to the second-ever NCAA basketball tournament.

“It was my senior year. The eastern playoffs were at Butler in Indianapolis. We lost to Duquesne (30-29) in the opening round. Indiana won the eastern division, and then the title (defeating Kansas 60-42).”

Majoring in physical education with minors in social studies and science, Greene graduated in June of 1940, and returned to Jackson to work for the summer. There weren't many openings for teachers in Michigan at the time. He had an offer from Center High School in Kentucky to coach and teach for \$90 a month, but was hoping to land a position that paid a little more. Greene considered

rejecting the job, but his brother interceded. Alton reminded him that he had to start somewhere. Lofton accepted the offer and headed south.

“There were only three teachers in the whole school, and two of them were named Green,” he chuckled, reminiscing. “The principal was called Mr. Green No. 1 (no “E”). I was Mr. Greene No. 2. We taught just about everything. I taught the 8th and 9th-grade subjects – biology, math, English.

“We played basketball in an old ramshackled barn. The floor was like a wood floor in a house – kind of wavy. You had to be a good dribbler to get down the court. We had two wood stoves in the gym. Some of the fans would keep the fire going in the stoves while watching the game.

“We had a pretty good team – played a lot of ball games. We won 11 and lost 14. Of course we had no bench strength. I remember one kid left be-

cause he had to help his family out on the farm.”

With the onset of World War II, the coaching ranks across the nation were depleted. It opened the door for Greene's return to Michigan.

He landed in New Buffalo in the fall of 1941 as varsity cage coach of the Bisons. Greene led the team to a 5-12 mark in his first year, then a 12-5 record one year later. He moved to River Rouge for the 1943-44 school year and stayed for 41 years.

He found a program that was pretty dilapidated, though the Panthers had advanced to the Semifinal round in 1939.

“It was just a matter of getting things organized,” said Greene. “We had some good ath-



Greene (left) shares a moment with former Coldwater Coach Floyd Eby at the 1999 MHSAA Finals. Eby's squad defeated River Rouge in 1949, the first year Greene led his troops to the title game, employing a brand of basketball that Rouge would adopt in future years.

letes.”

He nurtured the entire program, coaching the sport at junior high, freshman, junior varsity and varsity levels for a time.

Greene cites his college mentor as the greatest influence on his coaching style. “Diddle was a football teammate of Bo McMillin at Centre College. He was my biggest influence. But I was also influenced by two others in particular. I went to two or three

– continued next page

clinics where Bud Foster, the basketball coach at Wisconsin spoke. I was really impressed. And, of course, John Wooden from UCLA – the manner in which he carried himself – I was deeply impressed with him.”

Despite the fact that Greene missed a year and a half while in the Army, his squads matured quickly. Rouge advanced to the Final



1954 River Rouge Champions.

round of the Class B tourney in the spring of 1949. Al Driscoll scored a Finals-record 24 points, but it was not enough as the Panthers were defeated by Floyd Eby's Coldwater squad, 49-42. The media suggested an eight of 25 performance at the free throw line was the reason for the loss. Greene, however, focused on something other than the poor performance at the charity stripe. Eby's team defense left an indelible mark on Greene and, for years to come, Rouge basketball.

“He sold me on the man-to-man press,” declared the coach who would become known across the midwest as one of the finest teachers of the defense. “We installed one starting that next year. I figured that if they could do it, we could.”

The Panthers returned to the title match in 1951 with an undefeated squad. But again disappointment came as Rouge dropped the contest to St. Joseph, 39-33.

“We lost that one on one of the most controversial calls in the tournaments up to that point,” stated Greene, still doubting the referee. “Our guy got called for a charge near the end of the game.”

In 1954, the Panthers returned to East Lansing with a team christened the “Mighty Mites.” Averaging 5-9 1/2, Rouge tripped up Ludington and its 6-6 all-state center Pete Tillotson in the Semifinals on Friday, 54-52. On Saturday, they pressed, pestered and ran past a big Holland Christian team, 56-53. Greene and the Panthers had their first title. Jack Belken and Blanche Martin led the victors in the contest.

They repeated in 1955, and grabbed another title in 1959. Back in the suburbs of Detroit, they were the toast of the town.

“The Rouge people really supported us,” said Greene. “The Department of Public Works carried around big signs on their trucks with various say-

ings, like ‘On to Lansing.’ Service clubs would help us, donating money to rent buses (so the fans could travel to the final rounds of the tournament). It was quite a community effort. We would have 10 to 12 buses go up there for the games.”

The Panthers earned an unprecedented five consecutive Class B crowns from 1961 to 1965.

Players like Kenny Wilburn, Frank Price and Willie Betts – the first player to appear on four consecutive MHSAA champions – led the team during those years.

“The pressure was something else,” recalled the soft-spoken coach. “Every one wanted to knock us off. Fans expected you to win. It wasn't an easy route. But we had some wonderful kids during those years. They came out to play. We emphasized, and they understood, you don't look ahead. You prepare for the game at hand.”

Rouge posted four consecutive titles from 1969-1972. The 1972 win over Muskegon Heights – the 12th crown for Greene's Panthers – was nothing short of a miracle. The title, in the words of Detroit writer Joe Falls, had “become almost their divine right each March.”

Trailing the Tigers 64-57 with 58 seconds remaining on the clock at Jenison Fieldhouse, it appeared to be over. The Heights had lost to Rouge in the 1971 Final. It was revenge time for the Tigers.

The comeback started innocently, with 45 seconds remaining. Ralph Perry's easy layup cut the margin to five. Fouled on the play, Perry missed the free throw, but teammate Byron Wilson pounded home the rebound and the Panthers trailed by three. Still the game still seemed out of reach as the Heights controlled the ball. But an errant inbound pass kept the dream alive. Leighton Moulton sank a 22-foot jumper with 23 seconds remaining, and the score was 64-63. The Tigers were called for traveling on the change of possession and Rouge had its chance.

Moulton, the leading scorer in the contest, was again called upon. He drove toward the basket and was fouled before the shot.

“The clock read: 0:02. If Moulton missed the first, it would have been all over,” wrote Falls in the

Detroit Free Press, capturing the scene in characteristic clarity. “All of it rested on his lean, lithe shoulders...and the delicate touch in his finger .

“He stepped to the line while the crowd quieted. The pressure was immense. Moulton looked up, let it go—and swish.

“Now utter bedlam. Moulton broke toward the center of the court, thrusting his fist into the air. He jumped and danced and was mobbed by his teammates...He'd tied it. Rouge could do no worse than go into overtime.”

“But now he had another chance—the chance to win it. He made the most of it by dropping in his second free throw ... That's when the tears started coming out of Lofton Greene's eyes, if you can imagine that.”

Greene remained at the helm for 12 more years. His squads returned to the Finals in 1976, losing to Flint Beecher. The Panthers scored trips to the Quarterfinals in 1980 and 1981, losing both years to Ron Tarrant's Willow Run

teams. Following the 1983-84 season, Greene retired from duties at Rouge.

“The last year or two, the school got into financial trouble, and our junior high programs were shut down,” said the coach. “I thought maybe it was time to get out.”

Recruited by various colleges and universities over the years, Greene finally moved to the next level, accepting the head basketball position at the University of Michigan at Dearborn. He remained for three years, coaching “with no success.”

“We had no scholarships to offer,” uttered Greene. “There are no dorms, so the kids had to commute. Most of the good prospects (in the area) wanted to go away from home. We played in the Great Lakes Conference against schools like Saginaw Valley, Grand Valley, Wayne, and Hillsdale. They were too strong for us. The situation was not conducive to winning.”

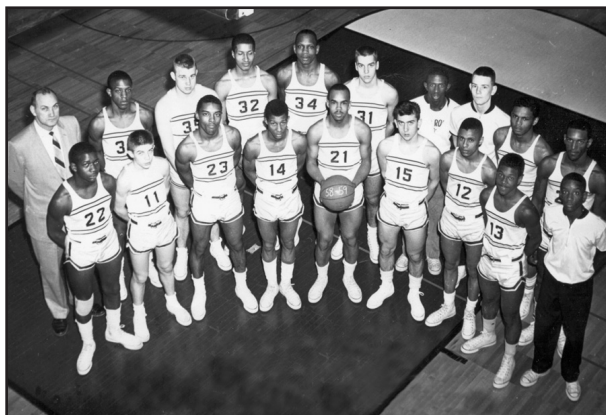
The coach sat out one year and found that he missed basketball.

“My wife said I should referee,” continued Greene. “I told her that I couldn't keep up with the kids, so she suggested that I coach again. I thought that coaching in the junior high would be fun. “

“I had moved to Dearborn Heights Robichaud,” said Tarrant, “and I was looking to get my staff together. I really didn't think about Lofton – he had retired. We had become friends over the years, but I guess I didn't think that he would be interested. He called one day, and asked how I was doing with coaches. I told him I had a couple spots to fill. He asked, ‘Well, what would you think of me.’ He said he was bored and looking for something to do. So he coached our freshmen for a number of years. Later, I asked if he would join me as an assistant on the varsity.”

“He's a basketball-aholic,” added Tarrant, who retired from coaching following the 1995-96 season. “Lofton really doesn't say much, but when he does, it makes complete sense.”

“I used to pick his brain all the time,” stated Monte Dennard, a former assistant to Tarrant, now handling the squad at Robichaud. “He's a walking encyclopedia. With a guy like that, you got to sit back



1959 River Rouge Champions.

and listen and watch.”

In 1997, Greene shopped around, and landed at Wyandotte Roosevelt.

“He had heard that I was looking for a 9th-grade basketball coach,” explained Mason Grahl, athletic director at Roosevelt. “As a high school kid in Wyandotte, I used to go over and watch Rouge. I felt he could help my younger coaches. I was tickled to have him coaching for us.”

Greene now shared a lifetime of basketball knowledge with kids that were toddlers when he was coaching at Rouge.

“I'm sure the kids didn't know about him, although some of their parents probably recall his days as a head coach,” said Grahl. “We talked to the kids and coaches and discussed his background. The kids like to have him around. He's low-key. They're not in awe, but they do like to show off for him.”

At the 1997 regular-season finale at River Rouge's Buck Weeber gym, school officials hoisted jersey No. 12 to the rafters. The number is now officially retired – honoring the school's 12 MHSAA cage crowns and the legacy of Greene.

— Ron Pesch, MHSAA Historian

Leap of Faith

Confidence, Belief Among Top Traits of Favorite Coaches

MHSAA Student Advisory Council members name coaches who have had the most positive impact on them and identify the traits that make them so influential. Transferring belief and confidence to these student-athletes is a common theme, as is the ability to make the sport enjoyable.



Zack Nine, Pinconning

“Christy Morand (cross country) and Lenny Pomaville (track & field) are two of the most influential people in my life. They both put a lot of faith in me and are never harsh when they criticize. They are inspiring, bond with the teams and always comfort me after a rough week.”

Carly Joseph, Pontiac Notre Dame Prep



“T.J. Kulick (cross country) gave me a lot of confidence both as a runner and as a leader in school. Even when I was injured and not able to run on the varsity team, he always noticed the progress I was making and encouraged me not to give up.”

Kristen Law, Bloomfield Hills Andover

“Steve Herdoiza (tennis) helped me to enjoy playing tennis by giving me encouragement. Dave Barrett (golf) got me started playing golf the summer before my freshman year. It’s a sport I probably would never have taken up if not for him. He makes it fun, and I look forward to each practice.”



“Steve Wolvin (football) has the perfect contrast of love and fear. He puts fear in your eyes, but at the same time, you know he loves you. I believe this contrast is the best possible influence you can find. If you have someone who can criticize you, and at the same time love you, it is inspiring.”



Thye Fischman, Vandercook Lake

Matt Freeman, Owosso

“Greg Freeman taught me how to play the great game of football the right way. He taught me to be a good man on and off the field. My middle school basketball coach Julie Croy explained that winning is what we prepare for. No one trains to lose, so train to win all day, every day. Winning is a year-round mentality.”



Kersten Mead, Saginaw Swan Valley

Abby Radomsky, Kalamazoo Hackett

“My dad, Alan Radomsky, has always pushed me to do my best, and since he’s my dad I think it means more to me. He introduced me to golf and has definitely added to my love for the game. Because I have him for a coach, I think he’s influenced me in ways other student-athletes can’t experience.”



“Cheri Dobschensky has had a huge impact on my personal life. Cheerleading is all about pushing yourself harder to achieve new goals. I would not have half of the tumbling and stunting skills I have if it wasn’t for her. She has brought us the best of the best in terms of gymnastics, and she’s like another mom to me.”





"Volleyball coach Amy Falk is my mom, so she clearly has influenced me as a person in a lot of ways. As a coach she has always been willing to open the gym at any time for anyone. Skill-wise she has been helpful with spiking and serving. My middle school basketball coach, Jeff Harthun, worked with me all summer for three years on post moves and has always told me what I can improve upon, or what I should have done. As a person, he was always there to help me with school."



Elle Lehman, Portland St. Patrick

"My softball coach Chris Battley has never doubted my ability even at times when I have. He taught me to never doubt myself or my abilities, and others would not either. Basketball coach Al Schrauben has a legacy at St. Pat's for winning championships, and what he has accomplished makes us want to accomplish the same thing."

Hayden Smith, Hamilton



"Football coach Chris Myers has made me feel welcome, beginning with the days when he allowed me to be a waterboy when I was younger. JV basketball and assistant football coach Brandt Haverdink is very caring and committed to making our teams stronger. He sacrifices a lot of time away from his family."



Madeleine Martindale, Lake Orion

"My middle school track coach, Coach Zoolkowski, was very encouraging and helped each athlete equally. He really inspired me to try pole vaulting because he believed in my potential."



Kyle Short, Rockford

"Football coaches Ralph Munger and Joe Schwander (now at Belding) both have made me a much stronger person by providing life lessons on a daily basis that I can take off the field and apply later in life."

Coby Ryan, Manistique



"JV basketball coach Todd Kangas taught us to persevere and work hard, which is useful in sports and life. Freshman coach Dave Winkel continued to coach us and have faith in us even during bad times. He positively supported all of us."

Taylor Krumm, Walled Lake Central



"Ski coach Tim McBride

really pushed our team last year and helped keep people on track toward their goals. We wanted to place in the top five at states, and with his dedication and intensity, it helped the racers to feel that way as well."

"Grandville hockey coach Joel Breazeale and travel coach Dave Rost have had the most positive influences on me."



Ryan Fischer, Grandville



"My wrestling coach and father, Pat Lamb, is always pushing me to be the best I can be. Howard Madsen is a hall of fame baseball coach at Rogers City who preached that fundamentals are keys to success."

Boys Basketball Finals Format Undergoes Change

Risk Minimization Initiatives also Highlight Fall Representative Council Meeting

A change in format for the Boys Basketball Finals highlighted actions taken by the MHSAA Representative Council during its annual Fall Meeting, Nov. 30 in East Lansing.

Mirroring closely the format of the Girls Basketball Finals, the Boys Finals will move this season from three to two sessions. The first session will tip off with the Class D Final at 10 a.m., followed by the Class A championship game. The second session will begin tentatively at 4:30 p.m. with the Class C Final and conclude with the Class B title game.

Previously, the Class A and B Finals were separate sessions, with the Class A Final tipping at 4 p.m. and Class B at 8 p.m. The change will make for a shorter day for spectators wishing to attend all four games, and also allow them to do so by purchasing tickets for two sessions instead of three.

“We believe the more concentrated day of basketball will entice high school fans to make a day of it, while alleviating some of the late-night travel concerns which might have deterred people from attending the last session of the day in recent years,” said MHSAA Executive Director Jack Roberts. “And, they will be able to do so at a slightly reduced cost. It’s a win-win for statewide basketball fans, and, in turn, for the participants.”

The most prominent discussion points at the Fall Meeting were risk minimization for athletes and



Prep basketball fans in Michigan will get more buckets for the buck at the 2013 Boys Finals, which move from three sessions to two at a cheaper all-sessions ticket price.

possible strategies for making school sports safer. Among topics discussed were: raising expectations for coaches’ participation in online safety courses and schools’ management of heat illness; the possible restructuring of practice policies in regards to hot weather; and game rules revisions to enhance safety, especially in football, soccer and ice hockey.

The Council reviewed its previous actions on those topics, including discussions in December 2011 that led to the inclusion of health and safety content in online rules meetings. Council members considered a model policy for managing heat and humidity, and also a number of ideas collected during Fall Update meetings with administrators throughout the state.

Suzanne Martin, Fred Smith Earn Honors

Former MHSAA Assistant Director Suzanne Martin and current MHSAA Representative Council member Fred Smith were recently honored for their dedication and contributions to interscholastic athletics.

Martin, who worked for the MHSAA from 1977-2002 and helped to develop and advance the sport of competitive cheer in Michigan, was honored by the Competitive Cheer Coaches Association of Michigan with its annual Service Award in November.

Martin is also a former recipient of the MHSAA’s Women In Sports Leadership Award, being honored in 2001. It was Martin who developed the WISL Conference, the nation’s first, largest and longest-running conference to promote the role of females in interscholastic athletics.

Smith, Buchanan High School Athletic Director, received the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association’s Frank Kovaleski Professional Development Award in December. A member of the MHSAA Representative Council since 2004, Smith has been a teacher, coach and administrator in the state for 32 years.

He is in his sixth year at Buchanan, after heading the athletic department at Comstock High School for the previous 16 years. Active at the state level in many capacities, Smith also served on the NIAAA Hall of Fame Committee, and has directed leadership classes in eight states and at numerous national conferences.



Suzanne Martin



Fred Smith

Battle of the Fans Back for Encore Performance

Looking to build on the hugely successful “Battle of the Fans” launched during the 2012 basketball season, the MHSAA is again seeking the most spirited and sportsmanlike cheering section in the state this winter.

Sportsmanship is an important part of educational athletics, and student cheering sections can be a key factor in having a festive high school event. Conducted by the MHSAA Student Advisory Council with supervision from MHSAA Staff, the contest focuses on student sections which contribute to a fun and positive experience.

Schools are encouraged to submit videos of student sections making noise on game night. The intent is to collect videos which reflect enthusiasm and togetherness within cheering sections. The MHSAA wants to witness cheers that pump up the atmosphere without disrespecting anyone involved in the sporting event.

Entries are judged on the following criteria:

- Positive Sportsmanship
- Student Body Participation
- School Spirit
- Originality of Cheers
- Organization of the Group
- Student Section Leadership
- Overall Impression/Fun

Videos are between 90 seconds and three minutes long, and each video contains two components. First, all must include at least 30 seconds of a student (or students) explaining how their student section embodies the elements listed in the judging criteria and why it should be named as the top student section in the state. Second, the clip must include at least 60 seconds of the student section in action. Sportsmanship is a key component to having one of the top student groups in Michigan.

Videos are uploaded to YouTube, and the link is then emailed to the MHSAA, which has created a YouTube playlist highlighting all of the videos.

All videos were posted by mid-January, and the MHSAA Student Advisory Council selected this year’s finalists. Reigning champion Frankenmuth along with Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard, Buchanan, Vandercook Lake and Zeeland East were selected as finalists for this year’s “Battle of the Fans II.”



The inaugural Battle of the Fans contest was captured by Frankenmuth, which showed up with its usual spirited throng of students on the annual “German Night.”

Members of the Student Advisory Council and MHSAA staff then visited all five finalists on a home game night. MHSAA Staff shoots and edits additional video, and meets with the school’s student leaders. Videos and stories can be found on the MHSAA’s Second Half website, and links appear on Twitter and Facebook for other students to see.

The MHSAA Student Advisory Council determines a winner based on the judging criteria and

also conducts a vote using a Facebook poll to help in their decision-making. They do not use the actual number of votes on Facebook; rather they will use the number of votes in comparison to the size of the school. For example, 500 votes for a school with 1,000 students is better than 500 votes for a school with 2,000 students.

The winner will be announced on Feb. 22, and will be invited to the Class B Boys Basketball Semifinals at the Breslin Center on March 22 to be recognized with a championship

banner. The MHSAA also will play a compilation of all five finalist videos on the Breslin Center HD scoreboard during the Girls & Boys Basketball Finals in March.

“Battle” Initiative Earns Statewide Recognition

This past fall, the MHSAA was honored for the second consecutive year with a “Diamond Award” from the Michigan Society of Association Executives for the best social media campaign. The 2011 honor recognized the “Battle of the Fans” initiative of the MHSAA Student Advisory Council, with coordinating efforts of MHSAA staff, especially Andy Frushour, Andi Osters and Geoff Kimmerly.

The campaign generated discussion about sportsmanship by hundreds of students, and videos watched by thousands.

To follow this year’s contest, scan the code at right.





Officiate Michigan Day Set to Kick Off Annual NASO Gathering

The largest-ever gathering of sports officials in the state of Michigan will take place Saturday, July 27, at the DeVos place in Grand Rapids.

Take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime experience, jam-packed with motivational speeches and educational breakout sessions tailored to suit every official's needs. The "state days" preceding the National Association of Sports Officials Summit have become a staple of the event in recent years. Last July in Portland, Oregon, 750 officials attended the unique gathering. Michigan could see numbers in excess of 1,000.

"We anticipate hosting the single-most impressive gathering of officiating knowledge ever to convene; certainly in Michigan, and perhaps nationally," said MHSAA Assistant Director Mark Uyl, who coordinates the Association's contest officials and also serves on the NASO Board of Directors. "The lineup for this event reads like a 'Who's Who' in officiating circles from a variety of sports. To have them all in one place for a concentrated time period is something our officials will want to take advantage of. It's a celebration of officiating, really, and the byproduct is an invaluable day of lessons, education and networking."

Mark your calendars for July 27, 2013. The MHSAA will contact registered officials with registration details as the event draws near.

2013 Officiate Michigan Day Schedule

July 27, 2013 – DeVos Place, Grand Rapids

7:30-9 am	Registration & Vendors
9:15-9:50 am	Opening General Session
9:50-10 am	Break & Visit the Vendors
10-11 am	Sport Breakout Session 1
11:10-12:10 pm	Sport Breakout Session 2
12:10-12:30 pm	Vendors & Lunch
12:30-1:30 pm	Lunch Workshops
1:30-1:45 pm	Break & Visit the Vendors
1:45-2:45 pm	Sport Breakout Session 3
2:55-3:55 pm	Sport Breakout Session 4
4-4:30 pm	Closing General Session



Grand Rapids will shine brightly in July when Officiate Michigan Day and the NASO Summit hit town.

NASO Adopts Social Media Guidelines

NASO's Board of Directors adopted the following social media guidelines for use by officials and organizations:

- Consider social media communications as **public at all times** – even if created with private intentions. If you are going to use social media in any form, consider your communication may be read by anyone at anytime.
- You **represent the officiating industry**, your associations, your assigners and your partners. Act accordingly.
- Promote officiating in a positive light and with a general feeling of pride and professionalism. **You are an ambassador** for officiating.
- You have a unique access to information. The same ethical restrictions that apply to any form of public speech also apply to social media. It is inappropriate to communicate specifics about your assignments, other officials, conferences/schools, coaches, players or any related personnel.
- Do not engage in specific play and or ruling evaluation/commentary, whether it be of a game you worked, one that you witnessed or in general about the impact of officials in any sporting event.
- Communications among officials for learning purposes should be done privately and not through the use of social media. **Be mindful that email and other forms of direct communication can be made public.**
- Be very sparing in the sharing of your personal information, including photos. Adjust security settings accordingly. Report fake profiles or posts to the appropriate authorities/governing bodies in a timely fashion.
- Follow specific conference, school and/or governing body social media policies.

WMVOA Awards Scholarships to Area Students

The West Michigan Volleyball Officials' Association recently granted \$1,500 scholarships to each of the following seniors, bringing the total count to 89 since beginning the program.

MYRLINE BRUNO and her family are Haitian refugees residing in Wyoming where she will graduate this year from Wyoming Godwin Heights High School. In addition to spending more than 100 hours volunteering in her community, she played volleyball for four years, basketball for three and soccer for two, where she was named to the all-conference team. She was nominated as the school's outstanding female athlete and is also a member of the National Honor Society. Her GPA is 3.5 and she wants to be engineer or work in the medical field.

KELSEY KRUIS and her family reside in Grand Rapids where she will graduate this year from Grandville Calvin Christian High School. In addition to spending many hours volunteering in the community, she recently worked with a group raising money for books and laptops and had the honor of delivering them to Uganda last summer. Kelsey played volleyball, basketball, tennis and received all-conference honors in tennis, along with an all-state honorable mention. She has been on the school's honor role three times and is student council vice president. She also plays in the pep band. Kelsey has a 3.96 GPA and wants to study psychology so she can work in inner city schools or hospitals.

MALLORY ROBINSON lives in Grand Rapids where she will graduate this year from Grand Rapids Creston High School. Mallory is CPR certified and works with food pantries in the area, as well as working with the blind at summer camps. She attended biotechnology and CSI camps at Ferris State University and interned at Grand Valley State University in the organic chemistry lab. Mallory is also involved in Michigan Youth Government. Mallory plays tennis and volleyball and received all-conference honors in tennis. She is in the National Honor Society, serves on the student council and was recently named the student of the month. Mallory has a 3.78 GPA and plans to study at Cornell University either in behavioral neuroscience or human development.

LIBBY WALTERS lives in Hudsonville where she will graduate this year from Hudsonville Unity Christian High School. Libby works with several local ministries and has been meeting with two special needs boys for many years. She is involved with her church groups, including Young Life and teaches Sunday School. Libby has been involved with 4-H Club where she raised and showed hogs. She volunteers at Spectrum Hospital and works at her family's greenhouse business. Libby played volleyball and soccer, and also ran track. Libby's GPA is 3.54 and she will be pursuing a nursing degree after graduation.

Correctable Error



In the 2012 Fall issue of *benchmarks*, **Barb Beckett** was erroneously omitted from the list of former MHSAA Norris Award Winners. Barb, of Traverse City, is pictured here along with Karl Newingham at the 2000 Awards Banquet, the only year in which two distinguished members of the officiating community were honored. The two are flanked by MHSAA Executive Director Jack Roberts (left) and former Executive Director Vern Norris (right), for whom the award is named.

Rules of the Games

Sharpen your skills with the following rules questions for the following winter sports. Answers appear on the next page.

Basketball

- A legal dribble is ball movement caused by a player in control who:
 - Allows the ball to come to rest in one or both hands then pushes to the floor.
 - Bats or pushes the ball to the floor once or several times.
 - Cups the ball with the hand beneath the ball, then pushes it to the floor.
- Defender B intentionally slaps the backboard while a try or tap is in flight. Which of the following are true? There may be more than one answer.
 - Goaltending. Award A the basket.
 - Technical foul on B.
 - Two free throws and the ball out of bounds to Team A.
 - All of the above.
- Which of the following is not a correctable error?
 - Erroneously counting or canceling a score.
 - Failing to award a merited free throw.
 - Allowing an illegal substitute to participate.
 - Permitting the wrong player to attempt a free throw.
- A1 has the ball and the possession arrow. On the inbounds attempt, B1 kicks the ball. Which of the following are true? There may be more than one answer.
 - The possession arrow goes to Team B.
 - Team A gets the throw-in at the spot nearest the kicking violation and keeps the arrow.
 - The throw-in was completed when B kicked the ball.
 - All of the above.



- Legal, if the coach submits a new Round 3 Routine Description Form with the updated changes.
 - Legal, there is no need to update the Round 3 Routine Description Form.
 - Illegal, a coach may not change Round 3 at any time.
 - None of the above.
- A coach submits a completed Round 3 Routine Description Form and the performance does not match the routine described in substance and sequence.
 - Legal, a Round 3 Routine Description Form does not need to match the routine in substance and sequence.
 - Illegal, a coach may not change the Routine Description Form at any time.
 - Illegal. A four point penalty for improper sequence of choreography would be received.
 - None of the above.



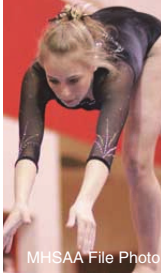
- A competitor performs a tumbling skill with two rotations.
 - Legal, a tumbling skill may have two rotations.
 - Illegal, a tumbling skill may only include one rotation.
 - Legal, a tumbling skill may have many rotations as can be possibly done.
 - None of the above.

Gymnastics


- On vault, a gymnast calls a round-off entry vault without her coach present as a spotter. The judges refuse to allow her to compete until her coach is present as a spotter.
 - Correct, all round-off entry vaults require a spotter to be present.
 - Incorrect, there are no vaults that require a spotter to be present.
 - Incorrect, if a coach is watching the vault, that is all that needs to be done.
 - Correct, all vaults need a spotter.
- On bars, a gymnast does a swing forward; counter flight backward to straddle over the low bar. The judges deduct 0.3 for an extra swing.

Competitive Cheer

- Fourteen girls compete in Round 1. A competitor is injured or becomes ill. The coach puts in a substitute for Round 3 who is unable to perform the same routine as the injured/ill competitor and the routine is changed for this new competitor.

- a. Correct, additional swings do not receive deductions in gymnastics.
 - b. Incorrect, in order to perform a counter flight backward over low bar, the gymnast usually must swing forward first.
 - c. Neither of the above.
- 
- MHSAA File Photo
3. On beam, a gymnast receives credit for a dance series for a tuck jump, step split leap.
 - a. Correct, any landing to another element is considered connected.
 - b. Incorrect, a one-foot landing, close to two-foot takeoff is permitted in directly connected series. However, a two-foot landing cannot be directly connected to an element with a one-foot takeoff.
 - c. Neither of the above.

Ice Hockey

1. A player who leaves the team bench during an altercation, but does not join in the altercation, shall receive what ruling?
 - a. Minor
 - b. Misconduct
 - c. Game DQ
- 
- MHSAA File Photo
2. A player hitting an opponent from behind into the boards or goal frame is a flagrant violation and will result in what penalty?
 - a. Minor
 - b. Misconduct
 - c. Game DQ
 3. Two skaters plant themselves on the back side of the goal crease, one in the crease—one just outside of it, now they change position as the puck moves to their side of the ice. No contact is made with the goaltender and the goaltender is not visually impaired from playing the puck. What is the ruling?
 - a. Immediate whistle and faceoff.
 - b. If a goal is scored it is disallowed
 - c. Play continues, no whistle or stoppage.

Wrestling

1. Defensive Wrestler B stands and is able to turn toward the opponent; at the same time Wrestler A is able to lock around the upper body of B in a bear hug situation. As B struggles to get away, A drops and initiates a double leg takedown with hands locked. As soon as they hit the mat, A moves up on B and initiates a pinning situation.
 - a. Technical Violation for Locked Hands
 - b. Legal maneuver as Wrestler A is allowed reaction time after coming to the mat.
 - c. None of the above
2. A wrestler reports to the weigh-in with a prosthesis for the District tournament. As the official, you should:
 - a. Inform the wrestler that he/she may not participate as a prosthesis is never allowed in competition.
 - b. Inform the wrestler that he/she may participate wearing the prosthesis if it has been approved by the MHSAA and he/she weighs in with it.
 - c. Inform the wrestler that he/she may participate wearing the prosthesis if it has been approved by the MHSAA. The wrestler is not required to weigh-in with the prosthesis
3. The dual meet has now reached 135. School A must send their wrestler to table first, and Smith (who can legally wrestle at 135) reports for School A. School B then sends Jones to the table, which now causes School A's coach to pull Smith and send Thomas to the table instead to wrestle at 135.
 - a. This is legal as School A can make this change until the wrestler's shake hands.
 - b. This is not allowed; Thomas is disqualified and 135 is forfeited to School B. Thomas cannot wrestle at any weight class during the rest of that dual meet, and any subsequent dual meet the rest of the day.
 - c. This is not allowed; Smith is disqualified and 135 is forfeited to School B. Smith cannot wrestle at any weight class during the rest of that dual meet.

Basketball Answers: 1. b. (4-15-1); 2. b., c. (10-3-4); 3. c. (2-10-1); 4. b. (4-42-5; 6-4-4, 5)

Cheer Answers: 1. a. (Case Play – Number of Competitors); 2. c. (Case Play – Choreography); 3. b. (Case Play – Tumbling)

Gymnastics Answers: 1. a. (6-2-2); 2. b. (7-3-4); 3. b. (8-2-3)

Hockey Answers: 1. c. Game DQ (6-27-1); 2. c. Game DQ (6-7); 3. c. (6-23-4)

Wrestling Answers: 1. b. (7-3-3); 2. b. (MHSAA Wrestling Guidelines); 3. c. (6-2-2)

MHSAA Offers Assistance With Health Resources

The Fall 2011 issue of *benchmarks* focused on health and safety in interscholastic athletics, particularly from an athletic training standpoint.

A comprehensive survey revealed that 80 percent of 346 responding schools did not employ a full-time athletic trainer, and that 61 percent did not have a part-time trainer in the building either.

To help fill the void, the MHSAA provides access to numerous resources on the Health & Safety page of MHSAA.com, and disseminates annual informational campaigns concerning athletic training and risk management to all member schools.

For example, preseason heat-related illness prevention guides are posted to the Association web site each year, and concussion recognition and return-to-play protocol information is abundant. Rules meetings for each MHSAA sport include more than 20 slides on concussion awareness. Several free online courses – from the National Federation of State High School Associations to the University of Michigan Health Systems – addressing such matters may also be accessed through MHSAA.com

“There are some valuable resources there,” said Allegan athletic director and tennis coach Gary Ellis. “I have printed some of it and given it to my coaches. The MHSAA should continue to bring attention to these issues and provide information. The move toward including health and safety as part of the online rules meetings is a good thing.”

Regina athletic director, basketball and softball coach concurs, particularly when it comes to hydration and concussion issues.

“I am glad that the MHSAA has taken such a strict stance on the issue of concussions. I also feel the reminders about water breaks for the athletes in the fall are very pertinent,” Laffey said. “I think it is essential that the coaches remind the athletes of

“We see these girls all the time and can tell if their practices are suffering, if they’re losing weight, all of their non-verbal actions.” – Brenda McDonald, Kenowa Hills

good eating habits. We also stress drinking water as opposed to the energy drinks that are so available nowadays.”

Additionally, the MHSAA Coaches Advancement Program (CAP) offers the following courses: “Sports Medicine and First Aid;” “Strength and Conditioning: Designing Your Program;” and “Healthy Living.”

All of these resources are in place to assist coaching staffs with a vital component of their everyday duties. Reality dictates that athletic trainers will not be present at most venues and events. Coaches must take the lead.

“We regularly have preseason meetings to discuss such issues,” said Rockford hockey coach Ed Van Portfliet, whose school also has the benefit of a full-time trainer. “We reinforce proper nutrition, design workouts which aim to prevent injuries, and educate students on the correct way to train.”

In season, athletes see their coaches more than any other authority figure except, perhaps, their parents. As such, coaches often can be the go-to people when athletes have questions concerning their health.

“The coach should be knowledgeable and be able to present clear information to athletes on health and safety,” said Tamara Benjamin, girls

Full-time athletic trainers cannot be present at all scholastic sports venues. It is important for coaching staffs to take the lead in issues such as proper hydration.





Hockey Weekly Action Photos

Sports such as wrestling have specific guidelines for weight management, and extensive programs related to skin disease and proper hygiene.

cross country coach at Middleville-Thornapple Kellogg. “We see them daily for an extended amount of time. We need to have these discussions with them.

“Plus, we do have a full-time trainer as well as local doctors and physical therapists who assist our trainer and athletes.”

At Grand Rapids Kenowa Hills, where Brenda McDonald coaches the gymnastics team in a co-op with Grandville, the part-time trainer is present to “tape ankles” prior to practices, but then McDonald is on her own.

“If I see improper eating habits, whether too much or too little, I first address the team to talk about proper nutrition,” McDonald said. “If it’s still happening, I will sit a student down individually and make a healthy eating plan. I have sat out a gymnast for anorexia and bulimia, and still to this day, talk to her about her health, eight years later.

“We see these girls all the time and can tell if their practices are suffering, if they’re losing weight, all of their non-verbal actions.”

East Kentwood track/cross country coach Dave Emeott agrees.

“The coach is the first stop for all issues related to sport. I think the coach plays a major role because he or she is the one there each day with the athlete,” he said. “By the time an athlete sees a trainer, it may be too late to get the athlete back for the season. I think our trainers play a vital role when an athlete is injured, but our coaches must provide the ounce of prevention.”

In some sports, such as wrestling, there are specific guidelines regarding healthy weight, set forth by the MHSAA Weight Monitoring Program, which leads to greater awareness among that sport’s coaches.

“We have yearly nutritional meeting, skin disease awareness and precautions, weight management guidelines and alpha (body fat) testing,” said Grand Haven wrestling coach James Richardson. “I’ve utilized the MHSAA.com resources, and I have used many local agencies, as skin disease in wrestling continues to be an issue, As coaches, we need to be proactive and educate our student-athletes.”

The coaches can, and do, provide necessary information to make healthy choices. They can also use some help from home. Ultimately, however, it’s up to the students to adhere to programs that will yield desirable results.

“We consistently talk about it, lecture, email, etc., but teenagers in general have horrible diets,” said Portage Central tennis coach Peter Militzer. “We talk about it all year. We seem to have one or two players each season who are pretty strict about what they eat and we try to hold them up as good examples.”

AED Awareness & Action Posters Available

Over the past decade, approximately 30 Michigan school age children have died from sudden cardiac arrest. Studies have shown that early 911, early CPR, early defibrillation and early advance life support can help save lives. Each year, Michigan Schools are invited to take part in an AED Drill Week, a voluntary, grassroots effort to promote the importance of school medical emergency response procedures involving a potential sudden cardiac arrest thereby improving school safety, heightening AED Awareness, and helping to save lives. This year’s event takes place Feb. 4-8.

In truth, one week is probably not enough. As a reminder to emergency procedures, HeartAED has developed AED posters for schools to purchase in quantity and hang in their hallways so procedures are easy to follow when the need arises. Quantities from one to nine posters sell for \$7; 10 or more are \$5 each with all proceeds from sales in Michigan donated to the Kimberly Anne Gillary Foundation.



Visit the Health & Safety page of MHSAA.com or scan the code at left for a library of valuable resources involving athletic health & safety procedures. A link to the posters may be found under “Cardiovascular Resources” on that page.



The Changing Face(book?) of Coaching

The screenshot shows the Hudl.com interface for a football game. The main video player displays a game in progress. To the right, a sidebar lists game footage for the 2012-2013 season, with 'Jackson vs Lumen Christi 8/31/2012' selected. Below the video, a statistics table is visible.

CLIP #	PLAY #	ODK	DN	DIST	HASH	YARD LN	PLAY TYPE	RESULT	GN/LS	OFF FORM	OFF PLAY	OFF STR	PLAY DIR	GAP	PASS ZONE	DEF FRONT	COVERAGE	BLITZ	QTR	
1	3	D	0			3	Extra Pt. Block	TD												
2	4	K	0			-40	KO Rec	Good												
3	5	S	0																	
4	6	K																		
5	7	K	1	10		-20		Touchback												
6	8	O																		

From online video exchange programs such as hudl.com to social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, the face of coaching and communicating with teams is ever-changing. How much is too much, and how are the new tools being used by the old guard?

With increasing frequency, today's coaches are turning to technology to assist in their endeavors, particularly in video review and data compilation, as the number of programs available to them seems to grow on a daily basis.

Among the recent leaders, hudl.com seems to have won the favor of football coaches across the state, reducing video exchange and study to a couple clicks of the mouse.

Several members of the Student Advisory Council report that their football coach uses the web-based program, and even local officials associations are using it for film study.

Similar programs are making it easier for today's coaches to analyze data and compile statistics as well.

"The dispensing of information is much quicker than it used to be," said Marshall bowling coach Sue Hutchings. "We use a scoring software for our stats."

In more "visual" sports such as competitive cheer, online video is now essential.

"Video playback and feedback to athletes has helped the sport ten-fold," said Thorndale-Kellogg coach Abby Kanitz.

In some cases, it's the coaches taking the lead on such initiatives.

"I run the MISCA (Michigan Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association) website and receive

plenty of positive feedback about us posting meet results and top times reports," said Bloomfield Hills Andover coach David Zulkiewski. "I also visit MHSAA.com weekly. Since I run the MISCA website I want to make sure I have accurate and up-to-date information posted."

Technology has also made the world a bit "greener" even in the small corner that is interscholastic athletics. From the required MHSAA rules meetings moving to an online format, to volumes of data now stored on flash drives rather than in file cabinets, coaches are realizing savings in both time and cost.

"The current state of track & field and cross country is so much more manageable than when I began," said East Kentwood's Dave Emeott. "I remember compiling actual papers from all over the state to keep track of the opposition and now thanks to Athletic.net we have this access at the tip of our fingers. These programs have also replaced nights spent inputting data and record-keeping. I am sure I have replaced all that time elsewhere, but it is probably spent with kids and not with data."

With the saturation and availability of these reports around the clock also comes temptation for those who are driven, and even obsessed, with such numbers. Coaches can rank near the top of that list.

"Technology can be extremely helpful and time-saving for coaches and teachers," said Grand

At left, hudl.com provides coaches with a platform for video exchange, saving time and expenses

Haven wrestling coach James Richardson. “But, the disadvantage is the coaches and athletes have a more difficult time getting away from the sport, as we have access to so much information, and others have more access to us. This can lead to too much time being devoted to our sport.”

It also might even take some of the fun out of the actual competition.

“I think the one negative side of technology is the lack of the unknown,” Emeott said. “There was a day when we would enter a meet and not really know how the day would turn out. Now I have most meets scored within ten points the day before we arrive.”

At times, such advance information can also lead to overconfidence heading into competition.

“Currently the MHSAA Final draw is posted online and my players often see it and draw their own conclusions before I have a chance to talk to them about it,” said Allegan tennis coach Gary Ellis. “In the past, I was able to present their draw in the light in which I wanted them to see it.”

Another side effect is the indirect push to play beyond high school.

“There is a lot more social promotion and glamourizing of the athletes,” said Mike Van Antwerp, Holt lacrosse coach. “The recruiting pressure has increased tremendously, which is causing kids to commit earlier and go to great lengths to have a chance at being recruited.”

The world has indeed become a smaller, more familiar place. Not only can students and coaches learn pertinent statistics relating to any given opponent, they can also learn personal information about their competition through the deluge of social media vehicles.



At East Kentwood, track & field coach Dave Emeott says with the abundance on online data available at his fingertips, the results of some meets are almost foregone conclusions.

There is a lot more social promotion and glamourizing of the athletes.” – Mike Van Antwerp, Holt

It is in this realm where the greatest divide exists between coaches and their athletes when the subject of technology comes up.

Several members of the MHSAA Student Advisory Council indicate that their coaches do not use social media to assist with the daily activities involved with their sport, while others are only on a limited basis.

It’s not that the coaches don’t know about Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or the other platforms. More likely, they are all too well versed in the abuses of such mediums by young adults not yet ready to understand the lasting ramifications of a random tweet or damaging photo.

“We have specific rules for use of cell phones at practice, games, in the locker room, etc.,” said Diane Laffey, athletic director and coach at Warren Regina. “We also have a form for parents to sign if they want the coach to be able to text their daughter about practice or game cancellations or changes. We stress that the texting only be for necessary things, and the parents are to give permission.”

Safeguarding against the misuse of handheld devices is becoming as commonplace as handing out uniforms prior to the season.

“By rule, our players aren’t allowed to bring electronic devices to court with them. We restrict cell phone usage at practice,” said Portage Central tennis coach Peter Miltzer. “Players must ‘friend’ the coach on either Facebook or Twitter, and I monitor their activities to make sure their language and behavior meets our standards. We restricted a player’s opportunity to play on varsity last season due to excessive use of crude language and an offensive user name on Twitter.”

“We have specific rules for use of cell phones at practice, games, in the locker room, etc.” – Diane Laffey, Warren Regina

– Rob Kaminski, benchmarks Editor

The Loyalty Rule: Limited Team Membership

There are three parts to the Limited Team Membership Rule (Regulation I, Section 12). Section A deals with **competition** in the same sport during the same season, Section B deals with all-star or national high school championship participation, and Section C an individual student's participation with a team sponsored by a National Governing Body (NGB) or an Olympic Development Program (ODP). This article will deal mostly with Section A as it impacts many students.

Coaches generally prefer the Limited Team Membership Rule. While a few may think that more is always better, many coaches believe that a student is not well served when he or she is pulled in more than one direction and influenced by more than one workout, coaching style, or team allegiance in the same sport during the same season.



The Limited Team Membership Rule impacts the future participation of students in non-school competition in the same sport during the same season. It allows for students to practice with a non-school team, but it intends to restrict them from competing in season. The rule is activated at different times for different sports.

- For teams sports except hockey, the rule takes effect when a student practices, including tryouts, with his or her school team.
- In tennis, the rule is activated on the first day that practice is allowed for any student, regardless of when that individual student begins his or her practicing.
- For the individual sports (except tennis), and hockey, the rule activates upon the student's first competition in the sport.

What is also significant about this rule is that in the individual sports (bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, alpine skiing, swimming, tennis, track & field or wrestling), a member of a high school team may participate in a maximum of two non-school competitions in that sport while not representing the school. This would allow for a top-notch golfer to enter two non-school competitions, or high

school cross country or track participants to run in local 5K races.

The penalty for violating the first section of Limited Team Membership Rule is that once discovered, the student may not participate for a minimum of the next three days of competition to a maximum of the remainder of that season in that school year (two days of competition at the middle school level). Generally, a violation occurs because the student or parents were unaware and thus, the minimum is applied without any impact on past eligibility. Should it be discovered that a student knowingly violated the rule, that student could expect ineligibility for the remainder of that sport season.

The Limited Team Membership Rule is an attempt to maintain some perspective for students' participation during their season. Some states do not allow participation in any sport during their season. Other states restrict practice and competition. We think the MHSAA rule strikes a reasonable balance and does not encourage non-school pro-

The Limited Team Rule allows those in individual sports such as swimming a maximum of two non-school competitions during the school season.

gramming during the season that would possibly cause a student to participate in so much activity that it was a hindrance on academic pursuits –after all these are students and young people first, athletes later.

Section B of the rule is more well-known than Section A. Section B is the prohibition on participation in an event which is called all-star or which purports to be all-star, or events which are national high school championships. An all-star event is a program that is generally not open to every student, based upon selection and performance during the high school season. This portion of the rule activates after a student represents any MHSAA member school in competition in a sport which the MHSAA sponsors. So while a 6th grader may attend an all-star event out of state, once a student participates in a competition in an MHSAA sport, that student should exercise caution with events of this nature. The penalty for participation in all-star or national high school championship events is one school year of ineligibility.

Philosophically, the Representative Council has followed the lead of its member schools in not broadening this regulation. While there may be some benefit to one individual student's participation in an all-star or national high school championship event, the fact that all students and all schools would aspire to this level is of concern. Some see school sports as out-of-synch with the mission of schools as it is – some say sports are overemphasized– and in some places they would

be right. Look what some do to achieve league and MHSAA titles and look what some do to be among the 1 percent who play sports after high school. Imagine what might occur without the rule. Without this restriction, we would have all-star competitions sponsored by hoards of businesses, and other organizations seeking income at the expense of young peoples' participation. While it could be good for the economy, in that a whole new industry would bloom in our state, it would be bad for so many students and schools as the scope and perspective would change to benefit the many to benefit the few, or the potential few.

There are plenty of events and programs beyond school sports that are national in scope that individual students may connect to that are not all-star or national high school championships but allow for individual students to expand their sports opportunities if they wish to.

Part C of the Limited Team Membership Rule also allows for the high caliber student-athletes to be involved beyond our state borders to participate

without a loss of interscholastic eligibility as a member of a national team sponsored by the National Governing Body for that sport or for participation in an Olympic Development Program (ODP). Because there are many organizations that seek to involve top athletes but do not meet the criteria, we caution coaches, administrators and students to be sure to connect with MHSAA staff well in advance of any planned participation with a national team or an ODP. In each of these cases, the school principal must approve in writing to the MHSAA the student's participation at least 30 days prior and that the student must make arrangements to complete missed academic work. Students who participate in an ODP may not miss MHSAA tournament competition in that student's sport.

Bottom line: the Limited Team Membership Rule brings to the forefront not only loyalty, but a valued double-check of the scope and perspective that high school sports must possess.

– Tom Rashid, MHSAA Associate Director

MHSAA Representative Council

Dave Derocher**

Athletic Director
Reese High School
Class C-D — Northern Lower Peninsula

James Derocher**, President

Superintendent
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Ken Dietz*

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Scott Grimes**, Vice President

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Yale Public Schools
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Junior High/Middle Schools

Orlando Medina**

Athletic Director
L'Anse Creuse High School
Appointee

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Private and Parochial Schools

Steve Newkirk**

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Clare Middle School
Junior High/Middle Schools

Peter C. Ryan**

Athletic Director
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Class A-B — Northern Lower Peninsula

Fred Smith**

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Paula Steele*

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Perry High School
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John Thompson**

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

Al Unger*

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

Alvin Ward*

Administrator of Athletics
Detroit Public Schools
City of Detroit

*Term Expires December 2013

**Term Expires December 2014

2012-13 MHSAA Budget

The following budget for operation of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc., for the 2012-13 school year was considered and approved at the May 2012 Representative Council Meeting.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	\$ 2,960,280
GENERAL PRINTING	140,500
GENERAL OFFICE EXPENSES	1,345,482
GENERAL MEETINGS	77,350
COACHES & OFFICIALS	402,225
STUDENT SERVICES	94,000
BASEBALL TOURNAMENTS	210,000
BASKETBALL TOURNAMENTS	1,075,000
BOWLING TOURNAMENTS	67,000
COMPETITIVE CHEER	105,000
CROSS COUNTRY MEETS	112,000
FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS	1,100,000
GOLF TOURNAMENTS	40,000
GYMNASTICS MEETS	23,000
HOCKEY TOURNAMENTS	250,000
LACROSSE TOURNAMENTS	42,000
SKI MEETS	19,000
SOCCER TOURNAMENTS	205,000
SOFTBALL TOURNAMENTS	210,000
SWIMMING MEETS	72,000
TENNIS TOURNAMENTS	85,000
TRACK MEETS	225,000
VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENTS	250,000
WRESTLING TOURNAMENTS	460,000
BROADCASTING	5,000
REVENUE SHARING	125,000
TOTAL BUDGET FOR 2012-13	\$9,699,837

Out-of-State Travel Form Required

The tradition of taking a team on a “spring trip” for practice only is a separate issue from sanctioning a competition (see Sanction guidelines on next page). Any school which conducts practice sessions out of state at a site more than 600 miles round-trip must submit to the MHSAA office a Travel Form for Out-of-State Practice at least 30 days in advance of departure. This does not allow schools to compete in a scrimmage, practice or competition with a team from another school.

The following interpretation was adopted at the May 2004 Representative Council meeting and became effective for the 2004-05 school year:

“When a school-sponsored team, or group of students which resembles the school team, intends

to conduct practice sessions out of state at a site more than 600 highway miles round-trip from that school, the Travel Form for Out-of-State Practice is required. For the purpose of this Section, it shall be considered a practice for a school team if a school coach in that sport is present with any number of players from that school's team, other than his/her family members.”

MHSAA catastrophic insurance does not cover such events.

The form can be found on the MHSAA Website. Pursuant to action of the Representative Council in May 2003, all schools which complete this form will be listed in *benchmarks* at the end of the school year.

Report of Activities of the MHSAA, 2011-12

PUBLICATIONS - *benchmarks* distributed to junior and senior high schools and registered officials; *Officials' Directory* and *School Directory* and calendars prepared; *Association Handbook* distributed to junior and senior high schools; rule books distributed to schools and registered officials; blanks and forms were distributed to schools. The *Officials Guidebook* was published online. The *Coaches Guidebook* was published online.

RULES MEETINGS/CLINICS - General meetings and rules meetings (online and face to face) were held in baseball/softball, competitive cheer, football, basketball, bowling, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, golf, wrestling, gymnastics, volleyball, soccer, and ice hockey for coaches and registered officials. The Officials' Awards and Alumni Banquet honored 20-, 30-, 40-, 45- and 50-year officials. Special meetings were conducted for coaches association presidents and league and conference executives. Tournament managers meetings were held in some sports. Meetings were held with representatives of local officials associations. In-service programs for officials assignors and sessions to train the basketball, football, volleyball, wrestling, soccer, baseball and softball trainers of approved officials associations were conducted.

PARTICIPANTS – There were approximately 301,921 participants on interscholastic athletic squads of the 760 member high schools during the 2011-12 school year. The MHSAA membership also included 767 junior high/middle schools.

REGISTERED OFFICIALS – There were 11,229 officials registered in one or more sports during the year. The MHSAA conducted three camps for basketball officials and one for football officials..

UPDATE MEETINGS – Approximately 900 people attended meetings during the fall in Frankenmuth, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Gaylord, Warren, Comstock Park, and Marquette.

CAP SEMINARS – There were approximately 2,000 participants who completed one or more courses in the Coaches Advancement Program at sites throughout the state during the 2011-12 school year.

ATHLETIC DIRECTORS IN-SERVICE – Approximately 800 athletic directors participated in the Athletic Directors In-Service programs at sites throughout the state during the 2011-12 school year.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP EVENTS – More than 500 students attended the Women in Sports Leadership Conference. Regional Captains Clinics were conducted and Sportsmanship Mini-Grants were provided. The sixth class of the Student Advisory Council was appointed. The third “Reaching Higher” experiences were provided to help prepare more than 200 male and female basketball players for their college experience.

COMMITTEES – Approximately 500 different individuals served on the following Association committees during the 2011-12 school year:

Representative Council	Competitive Cheer Judges Selection	Scholar/Athlete
Executive Committee	Cross Country/Track & Field	Ski
Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee	Cross Country Site Selection	Soccer
Athletic Equity	Football	Soccer Off. Selection (B & G)
Awards	Football Playoff Officials Selection	Swimming
Baseball/Softball	Golf	Tennis
Baseball/Softball Umpires Selection	Golf Managers	Tennis Seeding (Boys)
Basketball	Gymnastics	Tennis Seeding (Girls)
Basketball Tournament (Boys)	Gymnastics Officials Selection	Track & Field Standards
Basketball Tournament (Girls)	Hockey	Track Managers
Boys Basketball Officials Selection	Hockey Officials Selection	Volleyball
Girls Basketball Officials Selection	Junior High/Middle School	Volleyball Off. Selection
Board of Canvassers	Lacrosse (Boys)	Wrestling
Bowling	Lacrosse (Girls)	Wrestling Head Referees
Classification	Officials Review	Wrestling Managers
Competitive Cheer		Wrestling Off. Selection

2013-14 MHSAA Committee Membership Nominations

A procedure has been adopted and recently refined by the Representative Council to select MHSAA committee members. In the early spring of 2013, all superintendents, principals, athletic directors, coaches and board of education members who desire to serve on MHSAA committees may submit their names for nomination. This is a summary of the make-up and responsibilities of MHSAA standing committees:

SPORT COMMITTEES

Baseball/Softball, Basketball, Bowling, Competitive Cheer, Cross Country/Track & Field, Football, Golf, Gymnastics, Ice Hockey, Boys Lacrosse, Girls Lacrosse, Skiing, Soccer, Swimming & Diving, Tennis, Volleyball, Wrestling

Consist of a balance of administrators and varsity coaches in the particular sport, plus the president of the coaches association for that sport. Responsible for: (a) recommending to the Representative Council changes regarding MHSAA regulations relative to the sport. (b) recommending to the staff procedures, sites, and assignments for the MHSAA tournament in that sport. **Note:** Some sport committees serve multiple functions including officials selection, tournament sites, and seeding.

TOURNAMENT COMMITTEES

Girls & Boys Basketball, Cross Country/Track & Field Site Selection, Track & Field Standards, Volleyball

Consist of administrators responsible for selecting sites and assigning teams for all levels of MHSAA tournaments in the particular sport.

SEEDING COMMITTEES

Girls Tennis Area Seeding Directors, Boys Tennis Area Seeding Directors

Consist of tournament managers and varsity coaches responsible for determining seeded players and their positions in each flight and for assisting tournament managers in conducting the tournament draw.

OFFICIAL SELECTION COMMITTEES

Baseball and Softball, Boys and Girls Basketball, Competitive Cheer, Football, Gymnastics, Ice Hockey, Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Volleyball, and Wrestling

Consist of tournament managers, athletic directors and coaches responsible for selecting officials for most levels of tournaments in most sports.

OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES (Established and appointed by the Representative Council)

- 1. Athletic Equity Committee** - Committee is to meet once a year to recommend to the Representative Council annual objectives designed to encourage participation by more women and minorities in interscholastic coaching, officiating and administrative positions.
- 2. Awards Committee** - This committee meets once as a group and corresponds throughout the year to extend nominations, establish policies and procedures and to nominate and screen candidates for four MHSAA awards: Forsythe, Bush, Norris, and Women in Sports Leadership.
- 3. Classification Committee** - The committee meets annually to study and make recommendations to staff and Council regarding policies and procedures of classifying schools for tournaments and elections.
- 4. Board of Canvassers** - Comprised of a superintendent, two high school principals, one junior high/middle school principal, and one athletic director. Members are responsible for counting the ballots for the election of Representative Council members and members of the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee.
- 5. Junior High/Middle School Committee** - This committee is comprised of junior high/middle school principals and athletic directors to review rules and regulations as they pertain to junior high/middle schools.
- 6. Officials Review Committee** - This committee meets for the purpose of reviewing issues and concerns related to all officials in order to put forth recommendations to the MHSAA Representative Council.
- 7. Scholar-Athlete Committee** - Established to administer the MHSAA Scholar-Athlete program, this committee consists of approximately 80 people to review award applications.

Criteria for Nomination and Selection of MHSAA Committee Members

There are several criteria to consider before completing the Nomination Form:

1. Coaches must be employed by the school and be able to obtain release time from school.
2. The nominee should have at least two years of experience in the position currently holding.
3. Most committees require only a one meeting date commitment at the MHSAA building in East Lansing. Committee meetings are held during the work week.

Appointments to committees are based on the following criteria:

1. Committees should have male, female, and minority membership which reflects the total pool of available personnel.
2. Committees should maintain geographic and class size representation.
3. Some administrators will be appointed to sport committees.
4. The coaches association president/secretary of each sport is appointed to that sport committee, if the person is a school employee. If the President/Secretary is not a school employee, the Association must send a designee who is an administrator, faculty member or board of education member of an MHSAA member school.

Names of nominees will be submitted to the Representative Council for selection.

Over 500 people will be selected from the list of nominees submitted to serve on MHSAA committees.

— USE THE FORM ON THE NEXT PAGE —

MHSAA Committee Membership Nomination Form

Member school superintendents, principals, athletic directors, board of education members and coaches are eligible to be a member of any one of the following MHSAA committees for the 2013-14 school year. If you desire to place yourself as a nominee complete this form and fax it to the MHSAA office by March 31, 2013. THE PRINCIPAL MUST sign this form for it to be considered a valid nomination for athletic directors and coaches. Schools may choose to use this form for more than one nomination. The following form lists the committee and the month in which the meeting will be held. Please print the nominee's name and title (specify boys or girls if a coach) on the appropriate line.

Committee	Meeting Month	Nominee's Name & Title
Board of Canvassers (35)	September	
Athletic Equity (5)	October	
Awards (10)	October	
Boys Tennis Seeding (50)	October	
Girls Lacrosse (130)	October	
Gymnastics (100)	October	
Ski (150)	November	
Baseball/Softball Site Selection (25)	December	
Golf (95)	December	
Basketball Rules (30)	December	
Track & Field Standards (190)	December	
Volleyball Rules (200)	December	
Baseball/Softball Rules (20)	January	
Boys Lacrosse (125)	January & May	
Classification (55)	January	
Cross Country/Track & Field Reg. (70)	January	
XC/TR & FD Site Selection (185)	January	
Football (75)	January	
Junior High/Middle School (120)	January	
Tennis (180)	January	
Wrestling (215)	January	
Competitive Cheer (60)	February	
Scholar-Athlete (145)	February	
Soccer (155)	February	
Swimming & Diving (175)	February	
Bowling (40)	March	
GBB/BBB/GVB Site Selection (135)	May	
Girls Tennis Seeding (90)	May	
Ice Hockey	May	

City/School _____ School ID No. _____

Principal (Signature) _____

RETURN TO MHSAA NO LATER THAN MARCH 31, 2013

Official Report of the Board of Canvassers

East Lansing, September 24, 2012

We, whose signatures appear below, declare the following to be nominees for, or members- elect of, the Representative Council or the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc., as a result of ballots received in accordance with the provisions of Article IV, Section 6 of the Constitution, or as authorized by the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee at its meeting on October 3, 1941.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

NORTHERN SECTION - CLASS A AND B SCHOOLS (#1)

Total number of legal ballots received	35
Peter Ryan, Saginaw Township	35
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	2

Elected by majority of votes – Peter Ryan

SOUTHWESTERN SECTION - CLASS A AND B SCHOOLS (#2)

Total number of legal ballots received.	44
Fredrick J. Smith, Buchanan	44
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	3

Elected by majority of votes – Fredrick J. Smith

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION - CLASS A AND B SCHOOLS (#3)

Total number of legal ballots received	85
Aaron Setlak, Warren-Cousino	27
John Thompson, Brighton	58
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	4

Elected by majority of votes – John Thompson

UPPER PENINSULA - CLASS C AND D SCHOOLS (#4)

Total number of legal ballots received	26
James Derocher, Negaunee	26
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	1

Elected by majority of votes – James Derocher

NORTHERN SECTION - CLASS C AND D SCHOOLS (#5)

Total number of legal ballots received	57
William Chilman, Beal City	26
Dave Derocher, Reese	31
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	3

Elected by majority of votes – Dave Derocher

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL & UPPER PENINSULA ATHLETIC COMMITTEE NOMINATION PROCEDURES FOR 2013-14

The Representative Council has established procedures for indicating the intention to run for elected positions on the MHSAA Representative Council.

- Any individual who is a representative of a member school (administrator, faculty member or board of education member) may submit his or her name to the MHSAA office by March 15.
 - Candidates must have superintendent or principal approval in writing.
 - It is essential that candidates be qualified for the position they seek.
 - If the position is for a representative of a certain area of the state, they must represent a school of the appropriate class (A and B or C and D) in that geographic area.
 - If they seek the position of a statewide at large representative, they must be a faculty or board of education member of an MHSAA member school. This includes administrators but not non-faculty coaches.
 - If they seek the position of statewide representative of junior high/middle schools or private and parochial high schools, they must be faculty (teacher or administrator) or board members for such schools.

- Names submitted will be published on **MHSAA.com** in May, in the fall issue of benchmarks in August, and on the ballot mailed to member schools in September.

Elections will be held in the fall for the following positions:

Class C and D Schools — 2 openings

Southwestern Section
Southeastern Section

Class A and B Schools—1 opening

Upper Peninsula

Statewide At-Large —1 opening

Jr. High/Middle Schools —1 opening

City of Detroit —1 opening

The procedures established for indicating the intention to run for elected positions are the same for the Upper Peninsula Athletic Committee as those stated above for the Representative Council.

Elections will be held in the fall for the following:

Class D U.P. School—1 opening

Class C U.P. School—1 opening

Class A-B U.P. School—1 opening

NOTE: Candidates will first appear on the Administrators page of MHSAA.com in May.

Canvassers – continued

STATEWIDE AT-LARGE (#6)

Total number of legal ballots received	429
Ben Bandfield, Grosse Pointe North	108
Scott C. Grimes, Grand Haven	259
Darren Kecskes, Southfield-Lathrup	30
Andrew Laboe, Kalamazoo	2
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	18

Elected by majority of votes – **Scott C. Grimes**

JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOLS (#7)

Total number of legal ballots received	135
Steve Newkirk, Clare	71
Kevin O'Rourke, Rockford	64
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	7

Elected by majority of votes – **Steve Newkirk**

PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL HIGH SCHOOLS (#8)

Total number of legal ballots received	57
Vic Michaels, Detroit	7
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	0

Elected by majority of votes – **Vic Michaels**

UPPER PENINSULA ATHLETIC COMMITTEE ATHLETIC COACH (#9)

Total number of legal ballots received	30
Mike Berutti, Iron River	11
Daniel Olkkonen, Kingsford	10
Paul Polfus, Carney-Nadeau	9
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	0

No majority – Names of **Mike Berutti** and **Daniel Olkkonen** submitted to schools.

CLASS D SCHOOLS (#10)

Total number of legal ballots received	19
Don Gustafson, St. Ignace	11
Jeff Markham, Baraga	8
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	0

Elected by majority of votes – **Don Gustafson**

BOARD OF CANVASSERS (Signed)

Rick Dorn, Athletic Director, Waterford School District
Vicki Groat, Athletic Director, Battle Creek-St. Philip
Catholic Central High School
Leon Olszamowski, Superintendent, Pontiac-Notre Dame
Preparatory School
Mike Vondette, Principal, Hemlock High School

OFFICIAL REPORT OF SECOND MEETING OF BOARD OF CANVASSERS

Frankenmuth, October 10, 2012

UP ATHLETIC COACH (#9)

Total number of legal ballots received	30
Mike Berutti, Iron River	19
Daniel Olkkonen, Kingsford	11
Illegal or incomplete ballots received	2

Elected by Majority of Votes – **Mike Berutti**

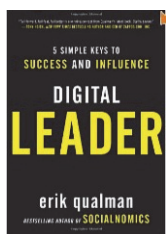
BOARD OF CANVASSERS (Signed)

Leon Olszamowski, Superintendent, Pontiac-Notre Dame
Preparatory School

readings & references

“Suggestive” Reading

“The best of a book,” wrote John Greenleaf Whittier, “is not the thought which it contains, but the thought which it suggests...”



That quote begins the Conclusion of a book for which this sentiment is true: *Digital Leader* by Erik Qualman (McGraw Hill, 2012).

The author provides practical suggestions for working in today’s digital world, supplemented with quotes and tips the reader can and probably will return to reference often.

Digital natives may find the work too simple, but digital immigrants – those trying to understand and avoid missteps in the electronic world which has invaded their work space – will find many of the tips insightful, however obvious they may be to the younger generation.

In fact, however, the generation that uses electronic communications so instinctively would be wise to read this book to discover why its members sometimes offend colleagues and clients, and sabotage their careers by doing what comes naturally.

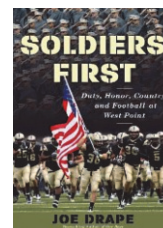
Gridiron Challenge

Here’s a challenge.

Do not read another story about college football in the sports pages of your daily newspaper, either in print or online, until you have read *Soldiers First* (Times Books, 2012). If you’re up to it, don’t read or watch or listen to a single story about anything having to do with major college athletics until you finish author Joe Drape’s latest (see *benchmarks* Vol. 1, No. 1 Winter 2009-10 for review of an earlier work).

Your discovery will be that

there is at least one place – the U.S. Military Academy at West Point – where football does not compete with but complements the mission of the sponsoring institution; where athletic excellence does not compensate for lapses of judgment; where a culture of character development



reigns.

Drape follows the 2011 Army season and provides an inside look at the teams, players and coaches. Even without much drama, Drape’s easy style moves the reader forward without effort.

Read any good books lately? News articles? We’d love to know. Submit recommendations to benchmarks@mhsaa.com.

Annual Business Meeting of the MHSAA, Inc.

Gaylord, Monday, Oct. 15, 2012

Karen Leinaar, Bear Lake High School, MHSAA Audit & Finance Committee

For many years, the MHSAA made its Annual Business Meeting a part of the fall conference of the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, even sponsoring a breakfast at the MASSP conference for several years for this purpose. Since MASSP has moved its conference to a venue where the MHSAA does not conduct events, the MHSAA has attached Annual Business Meeting elements to one of the scheduled Update Meetings. Jack will address program and policy matters in his usual presentation; and as a member of the MHSAA Audit & Finance Committee – which includes President Jim Derocher, Superintendent of Negaunee Public Schools, Secretary-Treasurer Vic Michaels of the Archdiocese of Detroit, Pete Ryan, Athletic Director at Saginaw-Heritage High School, and me – I have this brief financial report.

The MHSAA's finances quantify the hard work of MHSAA Council and staff over the past four years to meet extraordinary obligations during very difficult economic times. Positive results have come from deep reductions in many areas of expenses and innovative diversification of revenue streams. In 2011-12, the result was an operating surplus of \$877,307.

The Expense Budget for 2012-13, which was adopted by the Representative Council on May 7, 2012, is enclosed for your review as Appendix 1. Barring terrible weather for tournaments, a modest operating surplus is anticipated in 2012-13.

With the Council's advice and consent, the MHSAA staff is continuing to search for ways to trim operating expenses and to expand revenue sources, with three major objectives: (1) build resources to be ready for whatever the future provides as the next big problem or project; (2) support the association's personnel, facilities and equipment; and (3) redistribute more funds to more member schools. Fiscal year 2011-12 was another step toward these objectives.



Remembering a Leader and Coach Extraordinaire

Former WIAA executive director Doug Chickering perhaps summed up John Roberts best.

"He was well-respected," Chickering said. "His presence in any environment was always appreciated and he was a man of his word."

Roberts spent 28 years – from Jan. 1, 1957, to Dec. 31, 1985 – as the executive director of the WIAA, leading the organization through the birth of girls sports and the growth of class/divisional play at the state tournament level.

Roberts, 92, died Dec. 16 in Stevens Point, Wis.

When word of Roberts' death reached Chickering on Monday morning, one of his first thoughts was about the early days of girls varsity athletics, which were added in 1971.

"He very much felt that the programs that were made available to boys should be available to girls and he encouraged us all to start to make that happen both as members of the Board of Control, as WIAA staff members and officials of schools," said Chickering, who succeeded Roberts and spent 24 years on the job before retiring in 2009.

Roberts personally knew the value of sports. He played football and wrestled at the University of Wisconsin. As a wrestler, he was the NCAA runner-up in 1941 and Big Ten champion in 1941 and '42.

After a two-year stint in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, he got into education, serving as athletic director and coach at what is now Stevens Point Area Senior High School from 1946-'52. He coached the football team to a 23-1 mark and two undefeated seasons his final three years. He led the wrestling team to the 1949 state title.

Roberts' son, Jack, got a close-up view of his father in action, traveling with him as a kid to watch him speak at sports banquets and later seeing him speak on difficult topics at the national level. In Jack Roberts' opinion, there was no greater figure when it came to growing the sport of wrestling across the country.

The father's influence was so strong that Jack Roberts followed in his footsteps. Jack Roberts is the executive director of the Michigan High School Athletics Association.

"I'm told I idolized Dad when he coached, and know I admired him as a state association executive, and he was my closest male friend ever - even best man at my wedding," he wrote in an email. "He was a great model as a father, husband and leader.

"At his retirement dinner in December of 1985, a spokesperson on behalf of the state's coaches said: 'John, we didn't always agree with your decisions, but we never once doubted your motives.' I can't think of a greater compliment for any man who worked so long in such a controversial line of work."

– Mark Stewart, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

