

2023 MHSAA VOLLEYBALL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, December 7, 2023, 9:30 a.m. – East Lansing

MEMBERS PRESENT

Eric Albright, Midland (MIAAA, Rep. Council)
Fred Bryant, Cadillac
Stephanie Caruso, Detroit
Kaylee Fracker, Greenville
Gabe Frisbie, Bay City
Rich Kieft, Dansville (Guest/MATS)
David Kool, Grand Rapids
Jean LaClair, Bronson (MIVCA)
Luke Reynolds, Marlette
Tiffany Roberts, Flint
Tracy Sterling, Colon
Ed Uhrik, Fenton
Jason Vogel, Kent City
Mike Watson, Birmingham
Lauren Wetmore, Gladwin

MEMBERS ABSENT

Megan Greenberg, Dansville
Penny McDonald, Big Rapids

MHSAA STAFF

Andi Osters (Recorder)

The 2023-24 MHSAA Volleyball Committee met in the John E. “Jack” Roberts MHSAA building to review volleyball topics and the tournament series. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision-making process and the charge of the Volleyball Committee. Agenda items were compiled from correspondence, staff, committee members, and the volleyball coaches association.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

FALL UPDATE MEETING SURVEY REVIEW

As part of its annual fall Update Meeting tour and AD In-Service program, a survey was conducted with administrators across the state. All survey responses were presented to the committee, with discussion focused on six specific questions; including 50/50 raffle options for tournament hosts, NIL opportunities for high school athletes, additional divisions in sports sponsored by more than 550 schools, winter calendar options, and emerging sports.

SEEDING AND MPR IN 2024-25

MHSAA staff presented data related to the 2023 regular-season entry of schedules and scores for varsity volleyball teams on MHSAA.com’s ScoreCenter. During the 2023 season, approximately one-third of teams entered 90% of their regular-season schedule on MHSAA.com. Larger schools entered, on average, just over half of their contests. Smaller schools fared better, entering most of their games and scores on the website. Athletic Directors would like tournament hosts to send copies of results directly to schools to facilitate score entry for multi-team events. For the 2024-25 season, when MPR will be used to seed the top two teams in each volleyball District, it will be critical for coaches and athletic directors to be more diligent about entering their regular-season results.

LIVE STREAMING OF MHSAA TOURNAMENT EVENTS

Committee members expressed interest in mandating that tournament hosts be required to live-stream all tournament contests on the NFHS Network, especially at the Regional level and beyond. The Volleyball Site Selection Committee convenes in May to determine sites and will consider this during that process.

MHSAA FINALS VENUE

Kellogg Arena in Battle Creek continues to serve as the host of the MHSAA Volleyball Semifinals and Finals, assisted by the Calhoun County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Capital improvements to the arena in the past three years include new blue sport court flooring, dual LED scoreboards, improved branding and logo displays, increased way-finding signage, and expanded staffing on-site. The attached hotel property is slated to open in August 2024, with new eateries connected to the arena.

EMERGING SPORTS

The committee reviewed and discussed correspondence related to boys volleyball, and its growth among MHSAA member schools since 2018. Reports from three committee members with boys volleyball programs at their respective schools were heard. Staff led a brief review of Title IX specifications related to boys and girls participation opportunities across MHSAA tournament sports. The committee agreed that given the proven and significant growth of the sport, boys volleyball should be added as an MHSAA tournament sport in 2025-26. Sentiment among committee members favored other emerging sports in this order: girls flag football, girls field hockey, followed by water polo.

MULTI-TEAM TOURNAMENTS

The length and variance in the formats of multi-team weekend tournaments continue to create conflict between officials, assigners, and schools. While flexibility in scheduling is important, the committee emphasized the need to communicate best practices when building events. The market sets some of these parameters naturally, but consideration of the number of teams participating and the number of available courts should be given.

OFFICIATING MATTERS

After a review of email and mail correspondence, two issues related to volleyball officiating came to the forefront for discussion. First, the committee generally supported electronic headset usage by R1 and R2 officials, as it allows officials to communicate more effectively, affords good training opportunities, and aids in speeding up the pace of play. Secondly, registered officials in volleyball and swimming are now permitted to wear bright blue short-sleeved shirts, in addition to the default uniform of white short-sleeved shirts. Some officials desire to wear a long-sleeved option in these colors, which is not currently permitted. These two items will be passed to the MHSAA Officials Review Committee for discussion.

Discussion also occurred on maximum competition limits, regular season scheduling of varsity and junior varsity dual matches, Hudl video, and current equipment and ball contracts.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, add boys volleyball as an MHSAA tournament sport. (13-0)