

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

BASEBALL COMMITTEE MEETING

East Lansing, January 25, 2023

Members Present:

Eric Albright, Midland
Ben Botti, Decatur
Perry Deliyanne, Horton
Brian Gordon, Royal Oak
Kris Herman, Glen Lake
Jeff Kosal, Croswell
Nate Maury, Houghton Lake
Mike Morris, Troy
Karl Schmugge, Saginaw

David Sidenbender, Niles
Brandon Trefil, Fulton
Tom Ward, Ann Arbor

Guest:

Kevin Fleming, MATS

Staff Members Present:

Brad Bush
Mark Uyl (Recorder)

INTRODUCTION

The 2022-23 Baseball Committee meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision-making process, membership rotation and charge of the committee. Agenda items were compiled from correspondence, staff, committee members and the coaches' association.

Minutes of the 2021-22 meeting of the Baseball Committee were reviewed and it was noted that there were two recommendations approved by the Representative Council during the 2021-22 school year which addressed District Quarterfinal dates and separation of the Baseball and Softball Site Selection Committees.

NFHS & MHSAA BASEBALL RULE ITEMS

An update was provided on the 2023 NFHS Baseball rule changes for this spring along with items for the rules meeting. A long conversation took place on the Michigan rules that deal with pitch count requirements, processes and penalties. A good debate took place on whether or not to require online submission of pitch count data by noon the day after each game. Additional discussion took place on sportsmanship issues, specifically unsportsmanlike acts and words being directed toward the opposing team pitcher along with concerns in some parts of the state with the visiting team bringing in audio equipment for "walk-up" music that is being played from that visiting team dugout. These items will all be addressed in the 2023 Baseball Rules Meeting presentation.

MHSAA TOURNAMENT

Dialogue took place about the current MPR process that is used in multiple sports to separate the #1 and #2 seeds, based on MRP, in the District bracket. Differing viewpoints were expressed in support of MPR being used in baseball while others supported a "seed meeting" approach as is used in tennis and wrestling using data, head-to-head results and coaches discussion. The committee made no recommendation to the Representative Council but baseball schools will be encouraged to report results at MHSAA.com so preliminary data can be provided in demonstrating what MPR could do in future seasons in separating the top two seeds in the District bracket. The MHSAA Baseball Committee meeting will be scheduled for November of 2023 so data can be reviewed and presented to the Representative Council in December for possible action prior to the 2024 spring season.

The committee also discussed the site selection process, issues with late tournament opt-outs and expansion of the available Pre-District dates. Representatives from the MHSBCA

also provided feedback and input on the current trophy allowances and process at all Quarter-final sites and encouraged staff to consider adding a “trophy” game to the first round of the Regional tournament.

UMPIRE ISSUES

An update was provided on the decline in the number of umpires with possible recruiting, retention and training concepts being discussed. The MHSBCA provided several ideas and suggestions which will be reviewed and implemented where appropriate by MHSAA staff. It was noted that poor sportsmanship and the high equipment and uniform costs of starting as a new umpire were significant hurdles in reversing this low-number trend.

HEALTH & SAFETY

An overview of the pitch count regulations was provided, along with concerns about the health and safety of pitching arms at all levels. The group supported the continued use of the pitch count approach, and wished that other non-school levels of baseball put as much emphasis and focus on the protection of pitchers from overuse injuries as what is currently being done by MHSAA member schools.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Other items discussed included coach-player contact days, current travel rules, Spring Break trips and possible extra-hitter allowances at the subvarsity level.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. For the 2024 season, require all schools to submit information at MHSAA.com by noon the day after each game that includes the names of all individuals that pitched the previous day along with the number of pitches thrown in that game or those games. (11-0).