

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
SWIMMING & DIVING COMMITTEE MINUTES
East Lansing, February 7, 2019

Members Present:

Michael Bakker, Fenton (MIAAA)
Connie Cantrell, Mason
Ben Farkas, Holland
Brian Foust, Plymouth
Erik Johnson, Houghton
Brad Jones, Fenton (MISCA)
Maureen Murrett, Ann Arbor
Chris Riker, Portage
Jon Studley, West Branch
Eric Talsma, Hamilton
Michael Venos, Bloomfield Hills

Guests Present:

Mitch Smelis, MATS

MHSAA Staff:

Andi Osters (Recorder)

The 2018-19 MHSAA Swimming & Diving Committee met in the John E. "Jack" Roberts MHSAA building on Feb. 7, 2019, to review topics involving swimming and diving and MHSAA Championships. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision making process and charge of the Swimming & Diving Committee. Agenda items were compiled from correspondence, staff, committee members and the coaches association.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

INCLUSION OF PARA-ATHLETES AT MHSAA FINALS MEETS

The committee reviewed a proposal to include paralympic events at each division of the MHSAA Boys and Girls Swimming and Diving Championships that would contribute to overall team score. Staff presented correspondence related to the proposal, including a timeline of communication, research and accounts of meetings held with constituents. The current status of paralympic swimming in neighboring states was discussed, along with current swimming events offered exclusively to para-athletes by Michigan Swimming and Special Olympics Michigan, among other groups. It was noted that student-athletes with ambulatory, cognitive, hearing and visual impairments are currently participating in high school swimming without exception or limitation, but typically do not score points for their respective teams at MHSAA Championship meets. Committee members engaged in deep discussion about the philosophy of high school swimming, citing that the majority of student-athletes currently benefiting from participation on teams do not achieve qualifying times for MHSAA Final meets. Considering the low percentage of student-athletes who do qualify for Championship meets, the vast majority of high school swimming participants will never score points at an MHSAA Championship, yet still benefit significantly from the competition and fellowship that exists during the regular season. Coaches on the committee agreed that emphasis in high school swimming cannot simply focus on scoring points at the end of a season; it must be focused on the continued improvement of the individual swimmer throughout the season. Additionally, questions persist about (1) participation numbers, (2) water safety and (3) judgment of strokes for para-athletes. The committee did not advance the proposal.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF MHSAA CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

MHSAA Championship meet officials are provided with a document that outlines their responsibilities and a general timeline for Preliminary and Final heats. The committee requested the same document be provided to Meet Managers and table workers to streamline processes and make each site more consistent in administration of the meet.

EXHIBITION HEATS

Committee members discussed the prevalence of non-scoring exhibition heats and noted that most leagues have developed a compensation algorithm or prescribed pay-scale for payment of officials who work additional heats. The allowance of exhibition heats encourages participation and permits additional qualifying opportunities for swimmers.

DIVING JUDGE PANELS

A 7-judge panel is required for MHSAA Diving Qualification Meets. Meet hosts have noted that some coaches in attendance of these meets refuse to participate as a panel judge. In order to provide a fair, equitable and more unbiased panel of judges, the committee recommends that each diver entered in the meet provide the name of an MHSAA coach. Prior to the start of the meet, a random draw of these coaches will be conducted by meet management to determine the 7-judge panel.

DISCUSSION ITEMS – NO ACTION

1. USA Swimming observers at MHSAA Championship meets.
2. Emphasis on proper point deductions for diving crow-hops and oscillations.
3. Changes to Tournament Divisions after PDF is posted to MHSAA.com.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MHSAA STAFF

1. Request Final Officials Recommendations from (a) League and Conference representatives and (b) local approved assigners.
2. Reiterate interpretation for weather-related postponement protocol regarding required dive for each week of the season.
3. Continue to emphasize swim suit coverage to coaches.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Divers who enter into MHSAA Qualifying Meets shall provide meet management with the name of an MHSAA Coach who will serve on the diving panel of judges. Coaches may not abstain from the pre-meet random draw to determine the 7-judge panel.
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