

WRESTLING COMMITTEE MEETING

East Lansing, January 21, 2015

Members Present:

Aaron Babicz, Livonia
Steve Baker, Grand Ledge
Mike Bakker, Fenton
Delbert Craven, Sault Ste. Maire
Chris Dunham, Battle Creek
Nate Ethridge, Remus
Bruce Foster, Wyoming
Mike Garvey, Kalamazoo (MIAAA)
Mike Goggins, Hastings
Scott Hall, Blissfield
Jerry LaJoie, Gaylord
Don Markel, Cass City

Scott Marry, Hudson
Brian Martel, Mason
Major Mickens, Roseville
Chris Miller, Gobles
Ken Mohney, Mattawan
James Richardson, Grand Haven
Brian Southworth, Decatur

Guest:

Bob Taylor, Stevensville

Staff:

Mark Uyl (Recorder)

The 2014-15 MHSAA Wrestling committee met to review wrestling issues and the tournament series. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision making process, charge of the Wrestling committee and a review of Representative Council action from last year which included changes to Regulation II, Section 10 (A) 18.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Health & Safety Topics: A lengthy conversation took place regarding communicable skin conditions. The committee was clear in supporting a longer online rules meeting that included enhanced training on skin conditions for both coaches and officials. There was support for specific protocols for schools to follow when handling the return to competition of a wrestler that had a communicable skin condition. Additional information regarding mat coating solutions will also be provided as problems seem to be more prevalent as mats get older with more cracks in those surfaces. A brief review of the concussion protocols took place with strong group consensus that current rules and protocols have been good for wrestling.

NF / TrackWrestling Discussion Topics: The committee, along with most of the input received from member school coaches, continues to favor keeping the current weight classes used in Michigan (103-285). The consensus of the group was to continue using the Michigan weight classes moving forward and not adopt the NF weight classes. There was strong support to move all facets of the Individual Wrestling tournament to TrackWrestling and its various seeding and bracketing tools.

Home Weigh In: The annual conversation took place regarding the positives and negatives of the home weigh-in allowance for regular season competition. The two main concerns continue to be that principals are not taking an active role in the home weigh-in process and school coaches are not properly following the published protocols. Simply put, the committee believed that the good elements of Home Weigh-In continue to far outweigh the negatives.

Final Venues and Formats: The committee reviewed the current Final venues in Battle Creek and Auburn Hills, along with the format that each event uses. There continues to be very strong support in particular for the location and venue of the Palace.

Out-of-Season Coaching: Conversation took place on the current out-of-season coaching rules along with new ideas (contact days) that are currently being discussed across the state. The committee was provided the timeline of further study by leagues and conferences relative to the current rules and new ideas being discussed. There was not great support for a change to contact days.

Team Tournament Seeding Plans: There continues to be support from committee members to revisit proposals that would separate the top teams at the District level to identify the top 16 teams in different Districts, with no more than 2 of these schools in any one Regional. MHSAA staff will work with committee members in bring forth a more concrete proposal for discussion and possible action at the committee's next meeting.

Sub-Varsity & Middle School Issues: A brief report was given on eligibility for wrestlers with a waiver at the sub-varsity level in non-team scoring matches along with an update of the work of the Junior High / Middle School Task Force with a possible change to the MHSAA Constitution regarding 6th grade students. The committee was intrigued with allowing 6th grade students to participate in a non-cut sport such as wrestling and was interested in future post-season competition at this level, as well.

Correspondence & Additional Items: Three items of correspondence were reviewed that dealt with girls-only wrestling, the lack of regular season home dual meets for schools under current league schedules and the addition of a 5th Regional qualifier to the Individual Final meet. Committee members also discussed the new NF WR rule note 11-1-4 that requires wrestlers to make weight at the same weight class for team competitions held on consecutive calendar days, such as the Team Final tournament. The committee also expressed a concern for a small number of students repeating the 8th grade in hopes of maximizing their age during their four years of high school eligibility.

WRESTLING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Require schools to enter all regular season match data online via TrackWrestling for seeding and tournament administration for all levels of the Individual Wrestling tournament series. TrackWrestling would be used to automatically seed each level at the District, Regional and Final tournament rounds, eliminating seed meetings at the District level and replacing the formulas currently used at the Regional and Final levels (18-0).
2. Allow the 5th place wrestler at each Individual Regional site to advance to the Individual Final meet, expanding each Final bracket from 16 wrestlers to 20 wrestlers. Top seeded wrestlers would receive first-round byes (17-0).
3. Based on the new NF WR rule 11-1-4 note, eliminate the second day weigh-in at the Team Final tournament. The recent MHSAA addition of the second weigh-in becomes moot with the new NF WR rule note in 11-1-4. The one weigh-in on Friday would be used for all three rounds of competition at the Team Finals (16-1).