

Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association

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BOARD APPROVES RECOMMENDATIONS IMPACTING WINTER SPORTS

Approval Given to Appeal of Conference Realignment Plan in North Central Wisconsin

GREEN LAKE, Wis. – The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Board of Control approved a conference realignment appeal and several recommendations that will impact the future of interscholastic athletics in the state at its annual summer meeting Thursday.

After voting down an executive staff realignment proposal that would alter the Wisconsin Valley Conference and the newly formed Great Northern Conference in May, the Board approved an appeal of the earlier vote. The most recent action removes Rhinelander from the Wisconsin Valley and places the school in the Great Northern, and it moves Merrill from the Great Northern to the Wisconsin Valley beginning in the fall of 2010.

The Board ratified two recommendations specific to boys and girls basketball. The first changes the State Tournament schedule. Beginning next March, the Division 3 and 4 semifinals will be transposed. The Division 4 semifinals will be played during the Thursday morning session and the Division 3 semifinals will be played Friday morning. In addition, the order of championship games scheduled Saturday will feature the Division 4 game first, followed in order by Divisions 3, 2 and 1.

The second will allow schools to experiment with playing two 16-minute halves for non-conference games en lieu of the traditional four 8-minute quarters beginning in 2009. The approved plan is an amended version of a Coaches Advisory recommendation requesting two 18-minute halves.

The lone gymnastics recommendation received approval. It replaces existing language prohibiting exhibition performances with language that allows teams to fill open positions if a team does not have five entrants per event without having those competitors count toward the team scores.

The Board approved a hockey recommendation to remove the experimental status of the rule that suspends junior varsity players and programs when the second game disqualification penalty of the season is assessed. The rule was effective on a trial basis during the 2008-09 season.

Approval was granted for three Sportsmanship Committee recommendations that will add language to the Tournament Spectator Conduct Policies in the membership Handbook and the Sportsmanship Reference Guide. The first recognizes an emphasis on respecting the American flag and National Anthem. The second prohibits rushing the playing surface during or immediately following a WIAA Tournament Series contest, and the third requires all music played before, during and after a contest must have approval of school administration.

The Board also approved four recommended edits to the Medical Policies and Procedures Manual and all spring season cooperative team requests.

In addition, the Board received reports on the 2009 Area Meeting topics, as well as potential 2010 Constitutional issues. Area Meeting discussions will include a divisional placement plan for basketball, out-of-season competition and a uniform start date, all-play football, reduced-player football, football-only conferences, girls basketball start date and sportsmanship expectations. Potential Constitutional topics include deleting contribution to victory appeals in the Tournament Series, summer coach/athlete contact in all sports, sanctions for abandoning conferences and requirement of an emergency treatment release form.

The WIAA oversees interscholastic athletic programs for 506 senior high schools and 116 junior high/middle level schools in its membership. It sponsors 25 championship tournament series. For more information, please contact the WIAA office at (715) 344-8580.

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