



WISCONSIN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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MEMBERSHIP APPROVES CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND ELIGIBILITY RULES

Liberalizing Summer Contact Rules Fail; Five-Division Basketball Model Highlights Discussions

STEVENS POINT, Wis. – The membership of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association ratified a number of amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Eligibility at its Annual Meeting held at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center yesterday.

Of the nine amendments related to the Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Eligibility up for membership vote, seven passed into membership rule effective May 21.

Two of the approved are Constitutional in nature. The first addresses the placement of programs into divisions when schools consolidate. The combined previous year's enrollments of the consolidating schools will be calculated to determine divisional placement for all the current year's Tournament Series. The measure passed 322-7.

The other amendment to the Constitution stiffens the sanctions on member schools that voluntarily withdraw from a conference for one sport only. The amended language removes a school from its conference in all WIAA-sponsored sports for two years. The amendment passed 315-14.

The one amendment affecting the Bylaws received approval by a 324-8 vote. It alters and formalizes the policy enacted in 2009 by the Board of Control that addresses interscholastic athletic events scheduled when schools close because of infectious and communicable diseases. A tournament contest can now be rescheduled to the earliest possible date when school reopens and the contest can be completed prior to the next scheduled round of the tournament. If a contest can't be rescheduled and a forfeit is issued, the team/individual most recently defeated will advance. Regular season events can be rescheduled if possible within the respective sport's season regulations.

The fate of six amendments to the Rules of Eligibility were determined. The first, by vote of 317-12, eliminates "contribution to victory" appeals during the Tournament Series for the use of an ineligible player in order to prevent disruption of the tournament schedule.

Another amendment, approved with a 319-13 vote, clarifies acceptable conditioning and weight training activities within the open gym provisions. Acceptable activities are limited to supervision by school personnel, instruction on safe and appropriate use of equipment, and useful training regimens and rationale. In addition, weight and conditioning programs must be publicized and accessible to all interested students on a voluntary basis.

The third amendment approved into the Bylaws adds the requirement of the Athletic Emergency Form to be completed, submitted and on file with the school prior to a student's practicing or participating in interscholastic athletics. That proposal received overwhelming support by the membership with a 321-8 vote.

The fourth amendment to the Bylaws prohibits ineligible athletes from being in uniform at WIAA Tournament Series events or participating in tournament award ceremonies. The members approved that action by a 312-19 vote.

The two amendments related to summer coaching contact failed. The membership rejected a measure that would allow unlimited coaching contact during the summer as long as involvement was not school sponsored. That failed by a 210-107 tally. In addition, the amendment identifying the Friday before Memorial Day as the starting date of the "summertime" period and have it extend to the start of school in the fall was voted down 204-131.

Other notable discussion included information on the Interscholastic Licensing Company, the proposed five-division basketball plan, sportsmanship and relief for the three games in 10 days schedule at the end of the football season. The WIAA oversees interscholastic athletic programs for 506 senior high schools and 103 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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