



WISCONSIN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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BOARD MODIFIES FOOTBALL-ONLY REALIGNMENT PLANS; APPROVES OTHER ACTION ITEMS

STEVENS POINT, Wis. – The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Board of Control modified Executive Staff recommendations for a pair of football-only conference realignment plans and approved three other notable items requiring a Board vote at its April meeting today.

One modification of an Executive Staff football-only realignment recommendation involves the current members of the six-school Wisconsin Valley Conference and the 10-school Fox Valley Association. The Board's modification will combine the WVC and FVA to form one, 16-team league containing two separate eight-team divisions, which are to be determined by the schools of the newly formed football conference.

The second football-only conference realignment plan modified by the Board affects the members of the CloverWood, Dairyland, Great Northern and Marawood conferences with implementation in 2011. The plan moves McDonell Central from the Marawood to the CloverWood, Augusta from the CloverWood to the Dairyland and Tomahawk from the Great Northern to the Marawood.

The Great Northern Conference released Northland Pines and Tomahawk from its football schedule effective in 2010, making it a five-team league this fall. In 2011, Merrill and Ashland are both scheduled to become members of the Great Northern Conference for football only. Until then, Merrill will compete in the Wisconsin Valley Conference with all sports beginning this fall, and Ashland will play an independent football schedule in 2010.

WIAA membership rules require reconsideration of any realignment recommendation that is modified by the Board. Therefore, the first consideration for the modified realignment models is scheduled for the May 14 Board meeting with second consideration scheduled for the Board meeting on June 24.

The Board of Control also approved a recommendation from the WIAA Sports Medical Advisory Committee to immediately rescind the requirement for athletes to wear a pole vault helmet during competition and make use of the helmet optional.

Several years ago, the Sports Medical Advisory Committee reviewed the high risk of serious head injury sustained in an off-target landing in pole vaulting. Subsequently, the landing pad area was expanded significantly, and an additional safety measure was added requiring pole vault athletes to wear a helmet. Research since that time has shown the expanded landing pad provides significant benefit, while the helmet does not. Use of a helmet will now be at the discretion of the athlete and his/her parents.

In other action, the Board approved all applications for winter cooperative team arrangements for the 2010-11 season. It also supported the Executive Staff initiative to add text to the membership enrollment forms that states the Tournament Series is the collective property of the membership and not of any individual member. The language also asserts the Association's right to promote and advance the membership's interests with exclusive arrangements; appropriate proprietary pursuits, use of images identifying students, school personnel and member school marks; and restrictive policies to prevent commercial unauthorized exploitation of the tournaments.

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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