

Sports

Chris McCosky, editor/591-2312

Thursday, October 31, 1985 O&F

(F)10



C.J. Risak

Don't turn MHSAA into a political mess

EVER LOSE A GOLF ball in a water trap? You know right where it went in, within arm's reach, but the water's stirred up and muddy and you can't see it. So you poke around with your nine iron for a while and the water keeps getting muckier, and soon there's no hope of ever finding it.

Had you waited until the water cleared, you probably could have plucked it out with ease. Forget it now.

I present this brief story on behalf of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). It seems there are people who want to effect some changes within the organization that oversees the state's junior high and high school interscholastic athletic competition.

Fine and dandy, I wouldn't mind making some changes in the MHSAA myself. For instance, I still see no reason for the regional set-up for the football playoffs. Why not just take the top 16 teams per class according to computer ratings, instead of dividing the state into four regions and taking four teams from each?

AND THE APPEAL process for decisions made by the MHSAA, which does exist, should be more widely publicized. The hearings also should be conducted by impartial third parties.

Those are but a few of the changes I'd like to see. Some of my ideas will never see the light of day, I'm certain. But that's OK. I know some people out there wouldn't be in favor of everything I propose (the dummies) and I'm not going to hold it against them.

Now, here's something I'm not in favor of. A state senator representing Ann Arbor, Lana Pollack, is gunning for the MHSAA. She wants changes made in the structure. Her belief is that the MHSAA's representative council does not truly represent the people of the state.

"I am not saying the MHSAA has not done a good job," Pollack said Tuesday, "or that the state should take over its operation. I have a problem with a private organization overseeing a public school function. I think it has to be made accountable."

Pollack said her concerns are not only with the MHSAA but with any private organization that governs a public institution, an institution that could, conceivably, be discriminatory.

FOR EXAMPLE, if the MHSAA ruled that parochial schools must compete in a separate state football tournament, no state organization could forbid it. Only two sources could prevent such a development: the school districts that are members of the MHSAA and the courts.

Such a development isn't likely, but you get the picture. Pollack believes there is no one the MHSAA must answer to.

She suggests following one of two options to make the MHSAA "accountable." Either amend the state school code, which currently says that a school district can join any interscholastic organization that has the state superintendent of public education as a member of its board, or pass a law forbidding school districts from joining a discriminatory organization.

Think about that for a moment. What Pollack wants is the state government to have a say in what the MHSAA does, a position of authority, so to speak. If the school code cannot be changed, pass a law.

NOW POLLACK'S intentions may be good. She's fears that girls sports aren't getting fair representation. She wants to ensure prejudice doesn't infiltrate the MHSAA. What she wants is to establish a series of checks and balances overseeing the MHSAA.

That may sound fair and good and in line with all that's just in our U.S. of A., but in fact it would only make matters worse. I've been around long enough to see what government intervention can do. Good intentions are often lost in the shuffle.

Every week the MHSAA and its executive committee must rule on dozens of problems regarding eligibility and rules clarifications. The appeal process to challenge those rulings is spelled out in the MHSAA handbook and includes two hearings, in front of a hearing officer and, if appealed further, before the representative council.

Imagine what would happen if a state government official stepped in somewhere during this process to put in his two cents worth. I'll tell you what would happen — chaos.

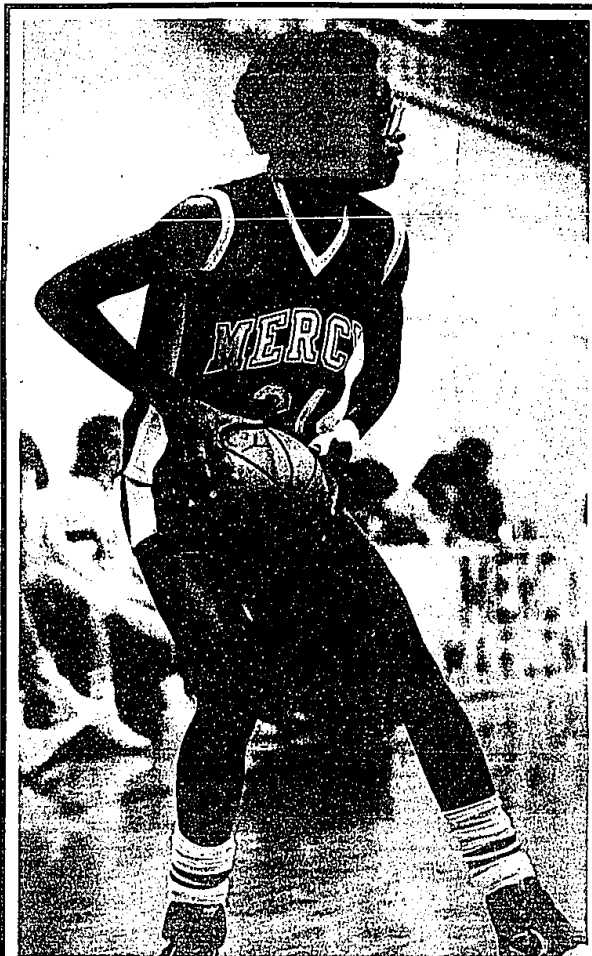
THE MHSAA doesn't make many favorable decisions. But name an umpire that gets cheers. That's all the MHSAA is anyway, a judge who must make a decision others would. And often that decision is going to hurt some feelings.

But putting the state government in a position of authority would only make a murky situation murkier. Soon the bureaucracy would overshadow the purpose.

"The MHSAA has been very successful being run as a small business," said Jack Cotton, former athletic director for the Farmington public school system and a past president of the MHSAA representative council. Cotton is currently chairing a committee for the MHSAA studying Pollack's proposals.

"As it's currently funded and run, the MHSAA doesn't cost the school systems a thing," he added. God knows that would change if the government got involved. Make some changes in the MHSAA, establish a court of appeals or change the procedures regarding at-large and elected members to the representative council.

But don't let politicians get mixed up in this. The water's cloudy enough.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Trick or treat?

That's what Terri Ford and the rest of the Mercy basketball team will be asking Thursday night as they battle Livonia Ladywood in a Halloween showdown at Brother Rice.

Mercy needs a victory to earn a tie for the Central Division title.

Mercy girls for Ladywood battle

The Farmington Hills Mercy basketball team could not be accused of looking past Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher Tuesday night.

Although the second confrontation with Livonia Ladywood loomed large, the Marlies weren't distracted, pounding their Catholic League foes 65-39.

"I think it was a great win," Mercy coach Larry Baker said. "We weren't looking past Gallagher, but I think this game provided a good springboard for Thursday's game."

Mercy and Ladywood will tangle at Brother Rice High School Thursday. At stake, for all intents and purposes, is the Catholic League Central Division title.

"The key in that game will be for us to play at a high level of intensity for four quarters," Baker said. "We can't just turn it on in the fourth quarter like last time."

Last time, Ladywood beat Mercy 64-63.

Another key will be how Mercy matches up with Ladywood's inside players. And if Tuesday night was any indication, Baker can be at ease.

Misty Doczynski, 5-10 senior, scored 17 points and grabbed 10 rebounds against a huge Gallagher team. Terri Nalodka, Mercy's other inside player, added nine points.

Three other Marlies chipped in with eight points.

Gallagher (4-5 in the league, 9-6 overall) led 16-13 after one quarter. Mercy outscored them 19-6 in the second quarter and 20-4 in the third to

take command. Jean Wassenberg triggered the third quarter explosion with six points.

Joan Rieger led Gallagher with 21 points.

Mercy will go into Thursday's showdown with an 8-1 conference record. Ladywood, who defeated Regina in overtime 68-64 Tuesday, is a perfect 9-0. Mercy is 12-3 on the season.

W.L. CENTRAL 44, N. FARMINGTON 38: The Raiders (7-6 in the Western Lakes, 9-4 overall) couldn't stop Pam Fitzgerald (21 points) and thus couldn't stop Central.

Heather McPhillips led North with 15 points and Ann Howard added 10.

The Raiders cut the lead to three points with 40 seconds left in the game, but Central held them off.

Central, 10-3, trails Lakes Division-leading Salem by two games with three league games left.

SALEM 45, FARMINGTON 19: Sophomore Dena Head scored 17 points and grabbed 13 rebounds to lead Plymouth Salem (12-1).

Lisa Edwards led Farmington (1-12) with seven and Stacy Swander added six.

CHURCHILL 64, HARRISON 21: Amy Weber's 18 points triggered the Charger's win. Jennifer Hughes played another strong game for the winless Hawks, pumping 10 points.

Churchill is 8-5 in the Western Lakes.

Falcons grab regional title

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Being healthy is a big factor in running cross country.

Farmington's boys weren't completely at full strength, but they had enough to capture their first Class A regional title since 1974 Saturday in the Section I meet at Royal Oak Kimball.

Meanwhile, Livonia Stevenson's girls were at their peak for the first time this season, winning their first regional crown since 1978.

Captain Jerry Young, whose team has been ranked among the state's top 10 most of the season, was elated with the results.

"Our No. 3 runner Bryan Lawton was out with the flu," said Young. "And anytime you can do that (win a regional), you've got to be real happy."

Farmington's one-two punch of Chris Inch and Al Stebbins lived up to their reputations in the 3,000-meter race, finishing one-two with times of 15:54 and 16:04, respectively.

The Falcons' next man was Ken Dunneback, who gave his team a lift by finishing 18th overall in 17:07. Teammates Matt Walter and Ron Smedley took 29th and 30th, respectively, as Farmington scored 80 points. (See statistical page).

"Chris and Al couldn't run any better," Young said. "They will give us those low numbers at the state meet."

THE STATE CLASS A meet begins at 12:30 p.m. Saturday at the Flint IMA Brookwood Golf Course.

"Holly is probably the favorite," said Young, whose team qualified along with Royal Oak Kimball and Hazel Park. "They've run solid all year. And Portage Northern could also be in there, but after that it's a grab bag of teams."

"We'd love to be somewhere in the top 10, but our goal is to be in the top five."

Plymouth Canton, fourth in the team

standings at the regional, qualified two runners for Saturday's individual state meet race — James Swiecki and Scott Moore.

Also qualifying was North Farmington's Kirk Armstrong, who was fourth at the regional. He will be joined by Livonia Churchill's Rob Annett, Farmington Harrison's Chris Hart and Livonia Franklin's Charles Olchanski.

Stevenson, ninth in last week's Western Lakes meet, got healthy in time to win the regional, scoring 83 points to Farmington's 100.

The Spartans this time were at full strength after missing two of its top five runners at the league meet, Michele Economou and Pat Bagley.

"MICHELE WAS sick and out of school that day," said Stevenson coach Paul Holmberg. "And with her out, we didn't have a shot to win (the league)."

"Pat has had sore legs for a month so I decided to save her for the regional."

Stevenson's top five at the regional included Karen Kuphal, sixth place, 20:25; Economou, 10th, 20:53; Lynn Johnson, 20th, 21:33; Bagley, 24th, 21:39; and Michele Forbes, 26th, 21:43.

"Qualifying for the state is always our goal," Holmberg said. "We're in the top 25 now, and we're in good company. This is just icing on the cake."

Farmington, the Western Lakes League champs, will be sending Bonnie Stecker, who was seventh at the regional in 20:25; Nicole Jelley, ninth, 20:38; Leslie Martin, 13th, 21:04; Judy McKeever, 18th, 21:26; and Julie Trunk.

Churchill, fifth in the team standings, boasted the regional champion, Karen Kantor, who was clocked in 19:53. Churchill's Carol Solick, who finished fourth at the regional in 20:19, also qualified for the state individual race.

Other Overland state qualifiers included Donna Chuba of North Farmington, Rachel Mann of Canton, Trish Donnelly of Salem and Meghan Gerig of Farmington Hills Mercy.



Chris Inch
Farmington



Al Stebbins
Farmington



Kirk Armstrong
N. Farmington

Warp's

For inside...outside

FLEX-O-GLASS®

CRYSTAL CLEAR • FLEXIBLE • SHATTERPROOF PLASTIC FILM

SAVES FUEL
Keeps out cold, holds in heat.

Easy to cut, lasting.

Make your own porch enclosures, storm windows and doors.

Reduce your heat bills with America's No. 1 Plastic, FLEX-O-GLASS. DRAFT FREE PROTECTION for your home. Vinyl comfort at a low, low cost.

70¢
Only
Since 1924. Take this ad to your Hardware, Lumber, Building Supply store. Buy 11' FLEX-O-GLASS. Accept no substitutes.

ALABAMA
BIRMINGHAM: 2601 1st Ave. N., 2nd Fl., Birmingham, AL 35203. (205) 382-1111.
MOBILE: 1000 N. 1st St., Mobile, AL 36601. (205) 661-1111.

ARIZONA
PHOENIX: 1000 N. 1st St., Phoenix, AZ 85001. (602) 254-1111.

CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES: 1000 N. 1st St., Los Angeles, CA 90001. (213) 254-1111.
SAN FRANCISCO: 1000 N. 1st St., San Francisco, CA 94101. (415) 254-1111.

FLORIDA
MIAMI: 1000 N. 1st St., Miami, FL 33101. (305) 254-1111.

ILLINOIS
CHICAGO: 1000 N. 1st St., Chicago, IL 60601. (312) 254-1111.

INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS: 1000 N. 1st St., Indianapolis, IN 46201. (317) 254-1111.

KANSAS
WICHITA: 1000 N. 1st St., Wichita, KS 67201. (316) 254-1111.

MICHIGAN
LANSING: 1000 N. 1st St., Lansing, MI 48901. (517) 254-1111.

MINNESOTA
MINNEAPOLIS: 1000 N. 1st St., Minneapolis, MN 55401. (612) 254-1111.

MISSOURI
ST. LOUIS: 1000 N. 1st St., St. Louis, MO 63101. (314) 254-1111.

NEBRASKA
OMAHA: 1000 N. 1st St., Omaha, NE 68101. (402) 254-1111.

NEW YORK
NEW YORK: 1000 N. 1st St., New York, NY 10001. (212) 254-1111.

OHIO
CLEVELAND: 1000 N. 1st St., Cleveland, OH 44101. (216) 254-1111.

PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA: 1000 N. 1st St., Philadelphia, PA 19101. (215) 254-1111.

Texas
HOUSTON: 1000 N. 1st St., Houston, TX 77001. (713) 254-1111.

UTAH
SALT LAKE CITY: 1000 N. 1st St., Salt Lake City, UT 84101. (801) 254-1111.

VIRGINIA
FALLS CHURCH: 1000 N. 1st St., Falls Church, VA 22041. (703) 254-1111.

WASHINGTON
SEATTLE: 1000 N. 1st St., Seattle, WA 98101. (206) 254-1111.

WEST VIRGINIA
CHARLOTTE: 1000 N. 1st St., Charlotte, NC 28201. (704) 254-1111.

WISCONSIN
MILWAUKEE: 1000 N. 1st St., Milwaukee, WI 53201. (414) 254-1111.

WYOMING
CHEYENNE: 1000 N. 1st St., Cheyenne, WY 82001. (307) 254-1111.