

Observing Sports

Should MHSA Govern Activities Of 8-Year-Olds?

By GEORGE MASKIN

Under the rules of the State High School Athletic Associations, Michigan preps can't engage in more than nine football games per season.

In basketball, the regular season limit is 26, although it's possible to add a game or two by playing in a holiday tournament and, of course, you can engage in eight or nine more by going all the way in the state tournament.

There are restrictions in other sports, too. Which is the way it should be.

Considering these regulations, we were shocked the other day to discover that boys of eight and 10 are able to play 80 hockey games per winter around these parts and there's nothing to stop them.

What grade school youngsters do, athletically,

doesn't come under the wing of the State Association which looks out only for senior and junior high athletes in the state.

It's assumed that the guidelines set by the State Association should be used down in the grades, where organized teams are in action.

But in the case of the hockey players, they are not members of any school teams. The three Livonia boys and one Plymouth youngster who performed on the team which won over the holidays in Canada are free to play 200 games each season, if they so desire.

They are playing as independents and nothing in the way of state school rules can affect them now -- or when they get older and swing into junior high and senior high activities.

tapping under the strain of so many games?

Our State Association has been rapped at times because it's been too strict. Some have claimed that the Association's decisions which force teams to forfeit victories and even championships and to rule boys ineligible are overly harsh.

But, that's the only way the State Association can be. There can be no favoritism.

Besides, if everybody knows what the penalty is -- and it's the same for the big Class A school and the smallest Class D school -- there is less temptation to try and pull off something which is illegal.

As for the 8-10-year-olds playing 80 hockey

games, or even 30, there's nothing illegal. But it should be, ladies and gentlemen.

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IT'S ASTOUNDING that any manager of a group of eight or 10-year-olds would want his kids to play 80 games per season.

And what about the parents? It strikes us that some selfish adults are leading the boys into a situation that by the time they're 12 or 14 they'll have lost their desires for competition in any phase of athletics.

Why all the pushing? Why's wrong with maybe a dozen games per winter?

That would keep the boys busy enough, considering they spend time on the ice practicing.

Where do the boys have time for proper rest and proper concentration in school, which should be the uppermost item in their young lives... not playing hockey games three or four times per week.

If people who really know about schoolboy athletes -- and we have reference to athletic directors, coaches, principals and others -- agree that limits must be placed on how many contests or meets boys who are 16 to 18 could enter -- those down the line should base their decisions accordingly.

THE TIME MAY have arrived when the State Association will have to branch into the grade schools, or make its rules applicable to them.

The inshoot of a sport like hockey, which isn't played in Michigan High Schools -- or, at least, not very many -- makes it necessary for somebody in authority in the school system to step in and put a halt to boys under 10 playing in 80 games.

Must we first have a tragedy... a boy col-

Star Hurt, Trojans Lose Lead, Game

All was going well for Clarenceville High's basketball team against Bloomfield Hills Andover.

Well into the third period, Clarenceville held a 10-point lead.

But then center Ron LaMontagne, going for a rebound, hurt his ankle. He had to leave the game after scoring 11 points and grabbing 14 rebounds.

Without LaMontagne, the Trojans had nobody to contain Dick Southe, the Andover center, who made 10 of his 14 points in the final 12 minutes as Andover rallied to pull out a 59-52 victory.

Clarenceville had fought back from a first period in which the Trojans scored only seven points to gain a 29-24 halftime lead and then add to its margin in the third quarter.

Bob Riding scored the leaders in scoring with 18 points. Dave Scholes chipped in with 10 more for the losers.

Last Minute Dramatics Hoist St. Agatha To Lead

Talk about dramatic final minutes in basketball.

St. Agatha put one on against St. Thomas and not only won a cliffhanger, 68-67, but the victory -- St. Agatha's eighth in 10 games -- also shot the Townshippers into the lead in the Southwest Division of the Catholic League.

An assist from Wayne St. Mary's helped St. Agatha move to the top alone. St. Mary's dropped Mt. Carmel, 67-64.

final minute against St. Thomas.

St. Agatha had fallen behind by a point. With 45 seconds to go, Dave Urban, clicked on a jumper from the corner and St. Agatha had a 68-67 lead.

St. Thomas had the ball, but Charles Schrock stole it for St. Agatha. A violation cost St. Agatha the ball with 15 seconds left and St. Thomas had another chance to cash a winning basket.

This time Tim Flamboe stole the ball and even received a free throw. Although

he missed it, there was no time left for St. Thomas to engineer another point.

Urban led off scoring with 21 points. Flamboe had 17, Doug Inch 14 and George Barbour eight for the winners.

BUT TO GET back to that



Ski Heil

By "BILL" CAMERON

Traverse City--"Cherry capital of the world"; head-

quarters of the United States Ski Association-Central Division; home of Gov. Milliken and Sen. Griffin; proximity to six ski areas. Northwestern Michigan College, the only maritime and pilot training school in Michigan; and some of the friendliest people you'll meet anywhere.

My family and I spent three enjoyable days there, staying at the Park Place Hotel. The Park Place has an excellent mid-week family plan where each child under 12 sleeps free and skis free. I always look for the little extras that distinguish good hotels--the bottomless cup of coffee, excellent food, and children's menu, good service.

I found all of these plus a bonus--a newspaper outside my door each morning; and best of all for families, an indoor swimming pool, open till midnight. You never have to worry about the kids saying there's nothing to do.

CAN YOU imagine having the ski slopes all in yourself? It's a great feeling not having to worry about someone running into you or waiting in long lift lines. We skied at Timberlee on Monday, and I counted eight other skiers for the first two hours!

Victor Weyard has done a great job improving the area. Their holiday business increased 200% over 1968! He has added a new chairlift servicing a couple of good advanced runs.

Tuesday we skied at Sugarloaf which is a very good beginner-intermediate area. One look at "Awful-Awful" makes you want to return to the lodge. It has to be the steepest slope in the lower peninsula! I was looking forward to attacking

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