

DATE: March 30, 1995  
TO: Principals and Athletic Directors  
FROM: Thomas M. Rashid, Catholic League Director  
RE: **An Inventory on Non-School Sports**

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**FROM MHSAA HANDBOOK, 1994-95**

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OUT-OF-SEASON  
PROGRAM RELATIONSHIPS**

The following statements were adopted March 27, 1992, as Representative Council recommendations for local school district policy with respect to out-of-season programs, with the intent that these statements encourage and guide local school districts' prevention of or solutions to out-of-season abuses:

1. The mission of MHSAA member schools is to provide well-rounded individuals. The purpose of interscholastic athletics is to help educate boys and girls and not to prepare students for college athletics, which is a by-product of interscholastic participation available to less than 1% of high school athletes.
2. For almost all students, specialization in a single athletic activity is not in their best long-term interests.
3. Students should be encouraged by coaches, administrators and parents to participate in a variety of school activities, including more than one sport during the school year.
4. Schools should not allow priority use of school equipment and facilities by non-school organizations which promote a philosophy contrary to Numbers 1, 2 and 3 above.
5. There should be no promotion or publicity within a school for non-school programs which promote a philosophy contrary to Numbers 1, 2 and 3 above.
6. Neither students nor school coaches should engage in non-school activities during the school year which resemble in any way a school team practicing or competing out-of-season, and thus violate the spirit of rules adopted by Michigan schools to limit out-of-season sports activities sponsored by schools.

Let's ask ourselves a few questions. Let's be prepared to correct the situation in our school soon - very soon.

- Do coaches or others make P.A. announcements, handout printed material, give verbal presentations or in any other way provide information on non-school sports, which take place during the school year, (such as AAU basketball, volleyball, fall baseball or AYSO soccer, indoor soccer, etc.)?
- Do we have students who do not participate in fall, winter or spring sports because they are competing in non-school sports?
- Is it possible that while we are allowing our students to freely choose their activity, we are subconsciously promoting one sport over others and encouraging specialization?
- Are we kidding ourselves when we say that "oh, that program is really good for the kids", when in effect it's really good for next season's basketball team's win-loss record?
- Are we strongly, and sincerely emphasizing involvement in a variety of school activities and athletics?
- Do the athletes know that your school's position and preference is that athletes participate in as many school sports as possible?
- Are we using our facilities (gyms) in Catholic schools during the school year for AAU programs out of a zest for winning?

**Something To Think About**

We are not telling young people what non-school activities they can be involved in. We are simply not going to let our staffs be involved in non-school sports. We are simply not going to use our facilities for non-school sports. We are going to let kids have a few days off... and then try-out or join-up with a school team or school activity. If we have people who are working in a contrary direction, let's be prepared to educate and make corrections.