

Roberts: Give athletes nothing

BY LANCE-MICHAEL CORREIA
Record-Eagle staff writer

Jack Roberts, Executive Director of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, visited the area recently, and took a few minutes to discuss the current state of prep football.

Lance-Michael Correia: This fall will be the fifth year of the expanded playoff format that allows 256 teams into the postseason. Even though you personally were not a proponent of expansion, how has the system worked and how does it need to be refined in the future?

Jack Roberts: I opposed expansion because I was worried about the length of the season. It's too long and starts too early in August.

Some thought the 'six (wins) & in' would weaken the playoffs, but you're seeing more schools schedule more tough opponents without the fears they had under the old system.

The new system has included a lot more schools, and an equal percentage of (class) A, B, C and

D schools get in. In other words, we're not leaving out anybody who had a great season.

L-MC: There has been rumors for years that the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association is looking into a separate tournament for public and parochial schools. It appears that issue is dead for now, but will it resurface again?

JR: I believe it is virtually a dead issue now. Under the (Michigan High School Football Coaches Association) proposal, every public school would get in (the playoffs) and there would be three divisions for non-public schools.

It didn't receive enough votes among the coaches to pursue it at this time.

L-MC: How does the MHSAA deal with high school football players using over-the-counter nutritional supplements?

JR: We advise coaches all over the state: Give athletes nothing. Public Law 187 prohibits distribution of anything called 'perfor-

mance enhancing.' The covers Andro (Androstenedione), Creatine and other compounds. We tell coaches, 'no pills, no anything' — even Tylenol or aspirin. If you're not well, go to the school nurse.

We'll tape (the athletes), but we'll give them nothing to ingest. That's the best advice.

L-MC: The MHSAA is under contract to hold the state finals at the Pontiac Silverdome for the next two seasons. How did the Silverdome do this past season in hosting the championships and is the MHSAA still pleased with holding them in Pontiac?

JR: The Silverdome may have given us our best year ever in 2002. A few things didn't go as well without the (Detroit) Lions being in there, but it also helped. We had more locker room space, more arena space and it was a lot cleaner. It was in the best shape we've ever found it.

We're told they're booking events past 2004, so we're not sure. Certainly, we'll be talking

with Ford Field as we approach (our) final event there. A lot of (schools) will still prefer the Silverdome, mainly because it's

an hour north of Ford Field. We're not anxious to leave the Silverdome — we think it serves the membership well.



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2003 Varsity Football Schedule

August 29	Vikings vs Bay City John Glen	Away
September 5	Vikings vs Mt. Pleasant	Away
September 12	Vikings vs Gaylord	Home
September 19	Vikings vs Traverse City West	Home
September 26	Vikings vs Traverse City Central	Away
October 3	Vikings vs Sault Ste. Marie	Away
October 11	Vikings vs Cheboygan	Home
October 17	Vikings vs Petoskey	Home
October 24	Vikings vs Alpena	Away

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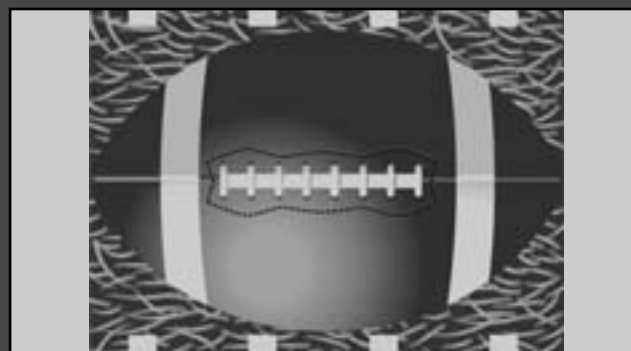
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