

**MINUTES OF THE IHSA BASS FISHING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
September 11, 2013

The IHSA Bass Fishing Advisory Committee met at the IHSA Office, Bloomington, Illinois, on Wednesday, September 11, 2013, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Committee members present were: Darren Gates, Macon (Meridian); Joe Large, Aurora (Marmion Academy); Mike Berentes, Rock Falls; Andy Lutzenkirchen, Naperville (Central); Mike Mulligan, Chicago (Taft), Harold Northup, Jr., Carthage (Illini West); and Gary Payne, Farina (South Central). Also in attendance were Kurt Gibson, IHSA Associate Executive Director; and Dan Stephenson, Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**1. II. Dates and Sites – A. Individual Tournament Series Dates and Sites – 1)**

**Recommendation:** The committee recommends moving the sectional dates in 2014-15 and 2015-16 to the following:

2015 sectional: Friday of week 43 (May 1) [make up: May 4]

2016 sectional: Friday of week 44 (May 6) [make up: May 9]

Approved

**2. II. Dates and Sites – A. Individual Tournament Series Dates and Sites – 2)**

**Recommendation:** The committee recommends moving the state final dates in 2014-15 and 2015-2016 to the following

2015 state finals: Friday and Saturday of week 45 (May15-16)

2016 state finals: Friday and Saturday of week 46 (May 20-21)

**Rationale (for #'s 1 and 2):** The committee believes that the modest moving back of the sectional and state finals competitions by 2 weeks will provide a better experience for students and coaches. Moving back the dates only increases the likelihood of better fishing conditions, which has been an on-going concern for the bass fishing program from its inception. The committee recommends this for the selected years to coincide with the current agreement with state finals host Carlyle Lake and serve as a trial for future consideration. The committee believes scheduling the dates so that the state finals is completed the weekend prior to the Memorial Day weekend would allow for bodies of water all around the state to be in better fishing condition than the current dates. In making this recommendation, the committee recognizes that approval for this would need to come from the city of Carlyle in addition to the IHSA Board of Directors.

Approved

**3. VIII. Dates and Sites – M. Coaching**

**Recommendation:** The captain/coach of the boat may make suggestions but may not fish in any respect, including tying lures, netting fish, and handling of fish or gear. The captain/coach or team participants can operate the electric motor. If a team has only one participant on the boat,

the captain/coach may net the fish if asked by the participant. A boat captain must be an employee of the district or be a board-approved bass fishing captain.

**Rationale:** The committee is concerned of repeated instances where schools have attempted to use the services of local ‘experts’ on some bodies of water to gain a competitive advantage over their fellow competitors. In fishing circles, this major breach of etiquette is unacceptable, and the committee believes it is time to insert clear language into the Terms and Conditions to address this.

## Approved by Consent

### ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### 1. Bids for New Location for State Finals

**Recommendation:** The committee recommends the IHSA Board of Directors take bids on new locations for the state finals upon the end the current agreement with Carlyle, which is set to expire after the 2015-16 school year.

**Rationale:** While the committee is appreciative of the work the city of Carlyle and the Army Corps of Engineers have done in regards to putting on a first class event at the state finals, the committee is concerned that water safety and fluctuating water levels make Carlyle Lake a challenge. Less fluctuation in the water levels would seem to increase the likelihood that the event would not have to be postponed as it has been in two of the last three years. The committee believes that perhaps a more centralized location would, in addition to improving safety for all participants, afford schools a more realistic chance to visit the site during the year and practice there.

## Died for lack of motion

### ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION:

1. The committee discussed and reviewed the minutes of the 2012 advisory committee meeting.
2. The committee reviewed the recently-completed 2013 state finals. The committee recognized that the change to identifying decals on the qualifying boats in lieu of flag seemed to work out well. It was suggested that the IHSA consider using the decals again in 2014 and put them on the sides of the boat motors in lieu of the front of the boat.
3. The committee discussed at length a series of intertwined topics:
  - a. **Sectional Locations:** the committee discussed the location of sectional lakes and brainstormed some additional bodies of water for future consideration. The committee heard that one of the challenges currently being faced is the lack of locations in northeast Illinois, an area where there are almost more entered member schools than there are bodies of water within an approximate one hour drive for schools.

- b. **State Series dates:** the committee also discussed at length the placement of the bass fishing state series dates in the IHSA Standardized Calendar. The committee expressed its belief that even a modest two week shift in dates would improve the over-all fishing experience for students. The two week shift concept, which was ultimately moved forward in a recommendation, would seem to allow for bodies of water to warm and for improved fishing conditions for competitors. The committee also discussed the possibility of holding sectional tournaments on Saturdays instead of Fridays. While no action was taken on that concept, it is something the committee can revisit in the future.
  - c. **State Final Location:** the committee also discussed Carlyle Lake, the site of the state finals. The committee shared its views on the challenges posed there from a fishing standpoint. The committee also reviewed correspondence that outlined the perceived need to move the site to a more centralized location so that all participating schools can have a greater opportunity to practice fish at the site.
4. The committee also discussed the use by member schools of local individuals with knowledge of certain bodies of water to gain a competitive advantage over other schools. Ultimately, the committee made a recommendation to try and prevent such tactics in the future.
  5. The committee also discussed whether or not a new process should be developed to allow for all sectionals to send three boats to the state finals, even if fewer than three boats catch fish at a given sectional tournament. No recommendation to develop a new process came forward as the committee continues to believe that catching a fish is a requirement for advancement.
  6. The committee recognized outgoing members Harold Northrup and Joe Large.