



MIHL Announces Expansion

The Michigan Interscholastic Hockey League (MIHL) is proud to announce that Orchard Lake St. Mary's Preparatory has accepted an invitation to join the MIHL beginning with the 2010 – 2011 season. "As a league, we thought it was an opportune time to expand and St. Mary's was the logical choice. Brian Klanow, Head Coach, has done a great job building his program to its current level. Not only have they been successful and are considered to be one of the state powers in hockey, the goals of their program are consistent with the goals of the MIHL which are to promote quality high school hockey, good sportsmanship and player development", explained MIHL President Andy Weidenbach.

Brian Klanow couldn't be more pleased, "It was a great honor to receive the invitation and a no brainer to accept it. The MIHL is arguably the strongest league in the state and has done so much to advance and improve the quality of high school hockey in Michigan. We are proud to be part of the MIHL and its initiatives."

St. Mary's brings with them a track record of success, not only claiming 3 MHSAA State Championships but winning them in different divisions. In 2005, St. Mary's defeated Flint Powers 3 – 1 for the Division III crown and in 2007 they defeated Marquette 4 – 2 for the Division I championship. The Division I Championship game in 2008 found St. Mary's and Marquette deadlocked 1 – 1 after 8 overtimes – both teams were declared to be State Champions.

"It's a win-win situation for all of us. We strengthened our league and we strengthened our schedules. Some members of the league already have a natural rivalry with St. Mary's, so we know what we are in for. Additionally, expanding to eight teams at this time gives us options for future scheduling," observed Todd Johnson, Catholic Central Head Coach.

Klanow is already looking forward to next season, "We can't wait for league play to begin, but I think our schedule just got a little harder. You can't take a night off in the MIHL and win. It comes with its challenges, the competition is very strong."

The MIHL was founded by Birmingham Brother Rice, Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook Kingswood, Detroit Catholic Central and Port Huron Northern and started play in the 1999 – 2000 season. Expansion came quickly with Grosse Pointe North joining the league in the 2000-2001 season and University of Detroit Jesuit being added in the 2002-2003 season. De La Salle came into the league for the 2007-2008 season.

For additional information contact: Patrick J. Ronayne, 248 225 1264, pjronayne@comcast.net