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Abstract

Records of the MIAA document the activities of the oldest existing college athletic conference in the United States. Collection includes correspondence, minutes, constitutions and by-laws, reports, manuals, statistics, press kits, programs, photographs, and videos. Also included is the MIAA publication *Fact Finder* which concluded publication in 2016-2017, but information contained in it can be found on the conference website (miaa.org). Major topics include administration, sports competition, the centennial anniversary, women’s sports, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Many documents that for years were added to this collection can now be found on the conference website (miaa.org). The conference also maintains an administrative website which has restricted access.

Accession No.: H91-1110
Provenance: Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association
Donor: Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association
Photographs: 187 (in Box 13)
Michael Douma, July 2003
Updated: Tom Renner, February 2019

History

The Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA) is the oldest continuous operating intercollegiate athletic conference in the United States. On March 17, 1888, delegates from Adrian, Albion, Hillsdale, Olivet, and Michigan Agricultural College (now known as Michigan State University) met in Jackson to discuss the formation of an athletic conference among Michigan colleges. The idea was primarily driven by a desire to formalize a Field Day competition with baseball, track and field, and tennis.

A constitution with nine articles was created at Albion only a week later on the 24th. The site was particularly appropriate considering that over the 131-year history of the MIAA only Albion has held continuous membership. Of the five schools that had met the previous week, Adrian did not attend the constitutional meeting, nor would they join the league for another 20 years. The first president of the MIAA was E. H. Barringer of Hillsdale and the first “Field Day” occurred from May 31 to June 2, 1888.

Over the history of the MIAA only four schools have left the organization. Michigan Agricultural College left in 1907. Michigan Normal College (currently Eastern Michigan University) joined in 1892, left in 1902, rejoined in 1920, and left for good in 1926. Hillsdale College left the MIAA in 1960 in a dispute over participation in post-season competition. The MIAA went 45 years (1953-1997) without a change in membership. Two new members were added effective with the start of the 1997-1998 academic year, The Defiance College of Defiance, Ohio and Saint Mary’s College of Notre Dame, Indiana. The expansion gave the MIAA eight schools participating in men’s sports and nine schools in women’s sports. (Saint Mary’s is an all-women’s college.) It also marked the first time that the conference added members from outside Michigan. However, the Presidents Council decreed that the conference would not change its name and would remain the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association. Saint Mary’s was granted permanent membership with the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year. After three years as a provisional conference member, Defiance withdrew membership at
the conclusion of the 1999-2000 winter season to join the Heartland Conference. The MIAA marked a historic note in 2002 when the league accepted Wisconsin Lutheran College of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as an associate member for the purpose of competing in football. Wisconsin Lutheran ended its membership after the 2007 football season. Tri-State University of Angola, Indiana, upon its acceptance as a provisional member of NCAA Division III, became a full member of the conference with the start of the 2004-2005 school year. Tri-State became eligible to compete for conference championships, but was not able to participate in Division III championship competition pending entry as a full NCAA member. Tri-State University achieved full membership on August 1, 2007. Tri-State University became Trine University effective August 1, 2008. In 2018, the conference added Finlandia University of Hancock, Michigan as an associate member for the purpose of competing in football.

The nine current full members of the MIAA are all private colleges, which do not award athletic scholarships. The years of participation in the MIAA by these colleges is as follows:

- Adrian: 1908-1922, 1937-present
- Albion: 1888-present
- Alma: 1902-present
- Calvin: 1953-present
- Hope: 1926-present
- Kalamazoo: 1896-present
- Olivet: 1888-1940, 1952-present
- Saint Mary’s: 1997-present
- Trine: 2007-present

There have been seven commissioners of the league: Clark Heeron from 1922 to 1931, when the position was known as Judge Advocate; James Hasselman of Michigan State University from 1931 to 1933, the only commissioner from a non-league school; DeGay Ernst from 1933 to 1961; Win Schuler from 1961 to 1965; John Hoekje from 1965 to 1971, who had the added responsibility as the Supervisor of Officials; Albert L. Deal from 1971 to 1991, when Supervisor of Officials was separated from the job; Sheila K. Wallace-Kovalchik became the first woman commissioner in 1991, serving until June 30, 2002; David L. Neilson served as the eighth commissioner from the spring of 2003 until the conclusion of the 2013-14 school year. Penny Allen-Cook became commissioner on July 1, 2014.

Women first competed in the league in 1896. On March 20, 1941, the Women’s Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (WMIAA) was formed. During the 1978-1979 season the WMIAA and the MIAA were brought under single governance.

Currently the MIAA sponsors 23 men and women’s sports. What follows below is a summary of the various official league sports and the years of sponsorship.

- Baseball (m): 1888-1929, 1948-present
- Basketball (m): 1911-present
- Basketball (w): 1973-present
- Cross Country (m): 1922-1932, 1946-present
- Cross Country (w): 1981-present
- Field Hockey (w): 1968-1990
- Football (m): 1894-present *
- Golf (m): 1934-present
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Golf (w) 1991-present
Lacrosse (m) 2013-present
Lacrosse (w) 2013-present
Soccer (m) 1970-present
Soccer (w) 1989-present
Softball (w) 1977-present
Swimming (m) 1971-present
Swimming (w) 1977-present
Tennis (m) 1888-present **
Tennis (w) 1938-present **
Track, Indoor (m) 1936-1948, 2016-present
Track, Indoor (w) 2016-present
Track, Outdoor (m) 1888-present
Track, Outdoor (w) 1979-present
Volleyball (w) 1972-present
Wrestling (m) 1969-1982, 2018-present

* There was an official champion in 1894, but football was not an official sport until 1904.
** Tennis championships from 1896 to 1925 were coed.

Scope and Content

The records of the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA) consist of materials from 1913 to present that document the activities of the oldest existing collegiate athletic conference in the United States. The record group contains folders divided into eight subgroups, Administration, Competition, Centennial, Objects, Oversized, Photographs, Publications, and Restricted.

The Administration subgroup consists of records from 1913 to 2002 that document the administrative activities of the organization. Materials include minutes, correspondence, constitutions and by-laws, reports and manuals. The subgroup is arranged alphabetically by topical folder headings.

This subgroup forms the core of the collection and the researcher will find rich sources of information in the correspondence and minutes folders. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) materials document to a limited degree the relationship between a regional and a national athletic association. The NCAA reports illustrate some of the issues that have been faced by college sports.

One major subject represented in this section is women’s participation in college sports. Information on this will be found in Athletic Director’s meeting minutes, correspondence (mostly late 1970s), NCAA reports, and the constitution of the Women’s Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (WMIAA). One weakness of the collection is how few WMIAA materials it contains. Another interesting subject is the wide variety of eligibility questions that have arisen over the years that are primarily documented in the correspondence files. The Eligibility Study Statistics folder is RESTRICTED due to the presence of student grade point averages. The Officials folder is also RESTRICTED due to the presence of Social Security numbers. Also of interest is a 1922 letter signed by Charles Comiskey on 1917 World Champions Chicago White Sox letterhead.

The Competition subgroup contains documents from 1924 to 2018 that are directly related to athletic competition in the Association, covering a variety of sports. Included are the MIAA publication Fact Finder, statistics, press kits, programs, and handbooks. The folders are arranged alphabetically by
sport.

The Centennial subgroup documents activities recognizing the centennial anniversary of the MIAA in 1987. The bulk of the materials cover the time span 1985 to 1987, with a few photographs that predate the rest of the documents. Materials include photographs, programs, videos, minutes, correspondence, logos, and a press kit. The two major topics of this subgroup are the anniversary banquet and the book *Celebrating a Century of the Student Athlete*. Folders have been arranged alphabetically by topical headings.

Most of the photographs are reproductions of earlier originals and have been arranged in the page order in which they appear in the book. The photos have been described through the following characteristics: page number; subject; school(s); sport(s), if not obvious from the subject; and the date. Occasionally a parenthetical note has been added at the end with additional information. Nine of the photographs that appear in the book do not have images in this collection, they are as follows:

96; Rudy Vlaardingerbroek; Calvin
98; Jare Klein; Olivet
99; Mark Veenstra; Calvin
101; Doug Diekema; Calvin
102; John Brink; Calvin
103; Doug DeSmit; Calvin
103; Leah Calsbeek; Calvin
105; Russ DeVette and Gordon Brewer; Hope
107; Marv Zuidema, Calvin

The collection of photographs has been broadened by digitizing images taken by Tom Renner during his association with the MIAA (1967-2019).

The Objects subgroup includes t-shirts, mini-football, patch, awards, and medals commemorating important events or games in the association’s history.

The Oversized subgroup is located in the Hope College Non-Photographic Media cabinet. The Photographs subgroup contains images from the MIAA Centennial publication *Celebrating a Century of the Student Athlete*, 1988, archival photographs digitized by Tom Renner, and other archival images.

The Publications subgroup contains items published by the MIAA such as championship programs. There are also publications provided by member schools.

The Restricted subgroup contains records restricted to the public for research.

The Hope College Collection contains biographical materials Hope faculty and staff that have been active in the MIAA. In addition, files on the following MIAA people are included in the Biographical Files of the Hope College Collection:

Dempsey, Cedric
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Committee to Study Division XI of the By Laws, 1957
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90; Football Game, Louis Japinga; Hope; ca. 1933
91; Henry “Hank” Brown; Kalamazoo; Golf; n.d.
91; Football Team; Alma; 1935
91; Milton “Bud” Hinga; Hope; Football and Basketball Coach; n.d.
91; Walt Ptak; Albion; Football, All American; 1940 (includes negative)
91; Bob Devaney; Alma; Football; ca. 1937
91; Ordell McElhaney; Albion; Football; ca. 1939
92; Dale Sprankle; Albion, Adrian; Football Coach; n.d.
92; Walter Sprandel; Albion, Olivet; Football Coach; n.d.
92; John Porter; Albion; Basketball; ca. 1952
93; Swimming Team; Kalamazoo; ca. 1946
93; Basketball Team; Hope; ca. 1943
93; Elkin Isaac; Albion; Basketball, Cross Country, Track, Coach; n.d.
94; Barney Steen and Don Vroon; Calvin; Basketball, Coach; ca. 1956

94; Fritz Shurmur; Albion; Football, Baseball; ca. 1953
94; Morley Fraser; Albion; Football and Basketball Coach; n.d.
95; John Kleinheksel; Hope; Track; ca. 1958
95; Henry Hughes; Adrian; Basketball; n.d.
95; Rosemary “Posy” Luther; Kalamazoo; Tennis; ca. 1959
95; Jim Northrup; Alma; Football; n.d.
95; Basketball Team; Hope; 1959
96; Tennis Team; Hope; 1962 (includes negative)
96; John Hoekje; MIAA Commissioner, 1969
97; Football Team; Kalamazoo; 1962 (includes coach Rolla Anderson, Ray Comeau, and Jim Harkema)
97; A. L. “Tish” Loveless; Kalamazoo; Archery, Field Hockey, and Tennis Coach; n.d.
97; Floyd Brady; Hope; Basketball; 1968
97; John Persons; Kalamazoo; Baseball; n.d.
97; All Sports Trophy; Hope; 1964 (Commissioner Win Schuler and Coach Gordon Brewer)
98; Don Knoechel; Kalamazoo; Swimming - All American; ca. 1980
98; Charlotte “Char” Duff; Albion; Field Hockey Coach; 1981
98; Albert L. Deal and Degay Ernst; MIAA Commissioners; n.d.
99; Jamie Van Arsdale; Adrian; Basketball; ca. 1980
99; Tennis Team; Kalamazoo; National Champions, Coach George Acker; 1976
100; Frank Joranko; Albion; Football and Baseball Coach; n.d.
100; Marjorie Snyder; Kalamazoo; Tennis, Field Hockey; n.d.
100; Mike Maciasz; Olivet; Basketball; n.d.
101; Stuart Scholl; Hope; Cross Country, Track; ca. 1976
101; Tomazine Polizzi; Albion; Field Hockey; n.d.
101; Basketball Game; Calvin vs. Hope; n.d.
101; Tracy Garner; Albion; Track; ca. 1983
102; Merry Lu Jordan; Kalamazoo; Archery; n.d.
102; Rob Appell; Hope; Track; ca. 1986
103; Dan and Mike Pantaleo; Olivet; Wrestling All Americans; 1982, 1984
104; Alex Palladino and Jim Burda; Kalamazoo; Tennis, National Champions; n.d.
104; Nancy Walsh; Adrian; Basketball Coach; n.d.
105; Swimming Team; Hope; Coach John Patnott, Shelly Russell, and
Rob Peel; 1987
105; Track Meet; Alma; Includes Jill Charron; n.d.
105; David Tuuk; Calvin; Coach, n.d.
106; Lynn Achterberg; Kalamazoo; Diving; n.d.
106; Timon Corwin; Kalamazoo; Tennis; n.d.
106; Sue Leiby; Albion; Swimming, National Champion; ca. 1984
107; Karla Wolters; Calvin, Hope; Coach; n.d.
107; George Acker; Kalamazoo; Coach, n.d.
107; Gary Morrison; Olivet; Coach; n.d.
107; Bob Kent; Kalamazoo; Coach; n.d.
107; Bill Klenk; Alma; Coach; 1987
107; Bill Vanderbilt; Hope; Coach; n.d.
107; Ray Smith; Hope; Coach; n.d.
Not in Book; Cedric Dempsey; Albion; Baseball, Basketball; n.d.
(includes negative); Ron Schipper, n.d, 1984

Clippings, 1987-1988
Logo, 1987
“MIAA Athletic History” by Robert Wagner, n.d.
Press Kit, 1987
Senate Concurrent Resolution, 1987

PHOTOGRAPHs
Adrian College Football Team, 1892 (1 image)
Archival Photographs (digital), 1950s-2006 (3 CDs) (68 images)
Basketball (Men’s), 1976, 1993 (2 images)
Deal, Al, Retirement, n.d., 1987 (6 images)
Kalamazoo College Football Team, 1919 (1 image)
Kovalchik, Sheila, n.d. (1 image)
Michigan State Agricultural College MIAA Football Champions, 1905 (1 image)
Neilson, David, Commissioner, 2002-2014 (4 images)
Olivette College Football Team, n.d., 1900 (2 images)
Track and Field
   Dempsey, Cedric, Sheila Kovalchik, June Dempsey, Melvin Vulgamore, 2001 (1 image)
   Graham, Robert C., ca. 1905 (4 images; 4 digital)

PUBLICATIONS
Celebrating a Century of the Student Athlete, 1988
Centennial Football Pressbook, 1997
“A Century of Tradition: Hillsdale College Football, 100 Years of Excellence,” 1991
First Hundred Years of Hillsdale College, The by Vivian Lyon Moore, ca. 1944
Golden Years: Calvin’s First Half-Century in the MIAA, 1953-2003 (Calvin College) by
   David B. Tuuk, 2005
Life with Morley: A Commemorative Album for Coach Morley Fraser, 2002
Maroon and Gold Will Bind Our Hearts (Calvin College) by David B. Tuuk, 1998

Box 14

PUBLICATIONS (cont.)
MIAA Basketball Tournament Programs & Box Scores, 1992-2006
MIAA Fact Finder, 1965-2003 (16 folders)

Box 15

PUBLICATIONS (cont.)
“MIAA Facts and Figures: An Update of the MIAA Centennial Publication, Celebrating a Century of the Student-Athlete,” through 2014-2015 Academic Year
MIAA Football: The Illustrated Gridiron History of the MIAA by Todd and Gerald Harburn, 1986
MIAA Handbook, 1939 (3 copies)
MIAA Milestones, 1988-1989
National Collegiate Athletic Association News, 8/15/73 (reorganization, federal legislation, drug testing)
NCAA Directory, 1976-1977
NCAA Publications Catalog, 1976
100 Years of Hope Basketball by Randall P. Vande Water, 2004
Pioneers in Women’s Athletics: A History of Women in the MIAA by Thomas A. Myers, 1987

Box 16 (RESTRICTED)

ADMINISTRATION
Eligibility
Hardship Requests, 2008-2012 (RESTRICTED)
Reports
Adrian, 1937-2001, 2010-2011 (12 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Albion, 1929-2001, 2010-2011 (13 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Alma, 1930-2001, 2010-2011 (12 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Calvin, 1953-2001, 2010-2011 (12 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Defiance, 1997-2000 (3 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Hillsdale, 1920-1957 (RESTRICTED)
Box 17 (RESTRICTED)

ADMINISTRATION
Eligibility Reports
Kalamazoo, 1921-2001, 2010-2011 (12 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Michigan State Normal College (Eastern Michigan University), 1921 (RESTRICTED)
Non-MIAA Institutions, 1947-1954 (RESTRICTED)
Olivet, 1930-2001, 2010-2011 (12 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Saint Mary’s, 1997-2001, 2010-2011 (5 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Trine, 2010-2011 (RESTRICTED)
Unidentified Colleges, n.d., 1937-1938 (RESTRICTED)

Eligibility Study
Statistics, 1948-1952 (2 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Study, 1952 (RESTRICTED)

Box 18 (RESTRICTED)

ADMINISTRATION
Financial Aid
Member Reports, 2010-2011 (RESTRICTED)
Reports
Report Summaries, 2006-2008 (RESTRICTED)

Officials (Referees/Umpires)
Baseball
Correspondence, 2011-2012 (RESTRICTED)
Basketball (men’s), 1972-1991, 2010-2012 (2 folders) (RESTRICTED)
Conduct Fouls, 2010-2012 (RESTRICTED)
Discrimination Allegation, 2011 (RESTRICTED)
Field Hockey, 1980-1984 (RESTRICTED)
Misc., 2010-2011 (RESTRICTED)
Soccer (men’s), 1976, 1984, 1986, 2010-2012 (RESTRICTED)
Softball, 1988 (RESTRICTED)
Tennis, 2010-2012 (RESTRICTED)
Volleyball, 1981-1985 (RESTRICTED)

Proposition 48 (RESTRICTED)
Reports
Secondary Violations, 2009-2012 (RESTRICTED)
Box 19

OBJECTS

Albion Football T-Shirt (1994 NCAA Division III)
MIAA Basketball Tournament, 1999
MIAA Centennial Mini-Football, 1997
MIAA Commemorative (100th Year) Football T-Shirt, 1997
MIAA Commemorative (100th Year) Football Patch, 1997 (2)
MIAA Award
MIAA Medals

OVERSIZED (Hope Non-Photographic Media Drawer)

Basketball Posters (1996 NCAA Division III)

Resolutions

100th Anniversary
   Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Michigan (AICUM), 1987
   Michigan Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 391, 1987 Honoring Albert Deal
   AICUM, 1991
   Deal, Al, MIAA Commissioner, Resolution Honoring, 1991
   Michigan House Concurrent Resolution No. 170, 1991

Sue Little Memorial Plaque

Newspapers, display copy, 1998