

Rhode Island Interscholastic League Finalizes New Baseball Alignment

Patriots to Compete in Division I; Will Continue Regional Rivalries

December 18, 2006

PROVIDENCE ----- The Rhode Island Interscholastic League's Principals Committee on Athletics unanimously approved a brand new baseball alignment for the 2007 through 2010 seasons at its meeting yesterday.

Under this new alignment, 28 teams, including 12 teams that had previously competed in Division II, will make up the new Division I. The division will be split up into four, seven-team subdivisions (D-I North, D-I South, D-I East, and D-I West) which were created using geography. Each team in Division I will play 18 league games. Each team in a subdivision will play each of the other teams in its subdivision once home and once away. In addition, each subdivision will be scheduled to play crossover games with six of the seven teams in another subdivision. The crossover divisions will be assigned on a rotating basis, and teams will be assigned crossover games based on the previous years finish. In addition, under a modified playoff format, 24 of the 28 Division I teams will qualify for the playoffs with the top 8 seeds receiving byes into the double-elimination, semifinal round. The quarterfinal round, consisting of 16 teams, will continue to use a best-of-three format. The semifinal and final round will now use a double-elimination format similar to the NCAA model. Under this new system, four teams will be assigned to a bracket, with the champion in each bracket advancing to the Division I Final Four Championship, to be held at both McCarthy Stadium in West Warwick and McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket. It is expected that this new format will generate interest and excitement.

The new Division II will consist of 20 teams, including 8 teams that had previously competed in Division II along with the 12 teams from the former Division III. This division is split into two, ten-team subdivisions (D-II North and D-II South) which were created using geography. Each team in Division II will play 18 league games by playing each of the other teams in its subdivision once at home and once away. The

playoff system in Division II will remain the same as previous years, with 16 teams qualifying for a one game preliminary round. Quarterfinal, semifinal, and final series will use a best-of-three format. The Division II Championship Series will be held at McCoy Stadium.

The Patriots are slated to play in Division I-East, with longtime rivals Rogers, Middletown, Tiverton, and Barrington. Old Eastern Division foe East Providence also will play in D-I East, along with a playoff rival from last year, Moses Brown. For 2007, the Patriots will have crossover games on the road at Coventry, defending Division I State Champions Cranston West, and Warwick Veterans. The Pats will host crossover games versus Cranston East, Pilgrim, and perennial power Bishop Hendricken. For a complete 2007 PHS Varsity Baseball Schedule, log on to www.phsbaseball.org.