The North Carolina High School Athletic Association has announced possible changes concerning the upcoming high school football season this fall……..

Well, some of those changes could occur this fall. According to Rick Stunk, the Associate Executive Director of Media Relations and Special Programs for the NCHSAA, the state association has put together a sub-committee proposing to lessen the football season to 11 weeks. It is also proposing a pod seeding system that would cut down travel costs, especially in the first round of the state playoffs.

The pod system would divide the state into four sections, west, mid-west, east, and mid-east. The state association will hold a hearing on the matter on May 4, and will most likely vote on the issue on May 5.

If it passes, which Strunk believes it will, the proposal would go into effect by 2011. But the pod seeding system would go into effect this season. If the pod system was in effect last year, Watauga High would have been in the west with the likes of A.C. Reynolds (which won the Class 4A title), T.C. Roberson, Sun Valley, Alexander Central, Mount Tabor, Porter Ridge, and East Gaston.

And instead of opening the state playoffs at Ragsdale, like the Pioneers did last season, they would have opened post-season play at Alexander Central. Ragsdale would have been in the mid-west and would have opened the playoffs against High Point Central.

There is also an “opt out declaration” clause for schools not wanting to enter the state playoffs. This must be done before the brackets are released, and the school opting out will not be penalized. A form must be presented by the school to the state association, and it must be

signed by the school's athletics director, principal and superintendent.

Max Linville and Dylan Norris of Watauga High have been selected to play for the Region 7 All-Stars at the North Carolina State Games in June. Linville is currently batting .282, and he leads the team with nine doubles and four home runs. Norris leads the team with six win and has a 2.97 earned-run-average.

Cal Hardee played in the state games last season and went 5-11, which earned him a baseball scholarship at Appalachian State University. And Hardee is currently trying out for the East-West Senior All-Star Game.

He survived the first cuts. Another tryout will be held on May 8. Hardee is hitting .392 with two home runs and 18 RBI. He also has a .514 slugging percentage. Pitching-wise, Hardee is 5-3 with a 2.02 ERA, and he leads the team with 65 strikeouts. He also set a school record by striking out 16 men on April 21 against Fred T. Foard.

The East-West All-Star game will be play June 16; it will be a double-header. The High School Tournament will be held June 17-20. All the games will be played at UNC Charlotte.