

The Daily Press-Escanaba
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All-Star Grid Date Moved

ESCANABA - The date for the second annual Upper Peninsula All-Star football game has been changed to accommodate implementation of a new artificial playing surface in the Superior Dome.

The game has been moved ahead one week to June 20. Players will arrive at Northern Michigan University June 15 for a week of practice and other activities.

The football switch was required because NMU is putting a new artificial surface in the Superior Dome. The project was originally scheduled to begin in January and finish in time for the All-Star Game.

Now the project will start after the All-Star Game and be done in time for NMU's season to begin.

All-Star organizer Todd Goldbeck said his organization (Xcel Sports) was not given any other dates by NMU officials to hold the game. "That was really the only option I had," he informed the Daily Press in an email Tuesday.

Goldbeck said the football game will return to the final Saturday in June in 2010. Football rosters are expected to be announced soon.

The change is a direct conflict with the U.P. All-Star Classic basketball game, which is scheduled in Escanaba June 20. Last year several athletes qualified for both games.

"I guess we all have to make the best of the situation," he said.

Daily Press sports editor Dennis Grall, co-director of the U.P. All-Star Classic for the U.P. Sports Hall of Fame, will discuss options for that game with Escanaba High School athletic director Dave Wilson.

"We don't want to force athletes to make an impossible decision if they are fortunate to be picked for both games," Grall said. "We will try to sort this out so it helps everyone. Both games use their proceeds for charitable causes, so it is best that we find a good solution for everyone."