

SECTION 4: INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

- 4.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:** This section is applicable to interscholastic athletic activities included in 4.2 – 4.14.
- 4.1.1 Mailings:** Rule books will be mailed to athletic directors prior to the beginning of regular season practice except for the sports of golf and tennis. All other information should be found in the athletic activities section of the Handbook or on the NCHSAA website.
- 4.1.2 Classifications:** A, AA, AAA, AAAA for all sports except:
- Football for playoffs, classes are subdivided to 1-A and 1-AA, 2-A and 2-AA, 3-A and 3-AA, 4-A and 4-AA.
 - Women's Golf classes are A/AA, AAA, and AAAA.
 - Lacrosse (women) are open classification.
 - Lacrosse (men) A/AA/AAA, and AAAA. **(Revised: December 2013)**
 - Swimming (men and women) A/AA, AAA, and AAAA.
 - Indoor Track (men and women) A/AA, AAA, and AAAA.
- 4.1.3 Preseason Scrimmages:** Schools are allowed two preseason varsity scrimmages. Only eligible players may participate in any scrimmage. These scrimmages must be conducted as events open to the public (no closed scrimmages allowed) and one scrimmage must use NCHSAA registered officials. Officials are to be assigned to work a maximum of two hours per scrimmage. Multiple team scrimmages are allowed. Junior varsity scrimmages are allowed in conjunction with varsity scrimmages at the same date and site. For more information on Scrimmages, reference 2.3.4. Below are the following exceptions for the sports of:
- Cross country, golf, swimming and tennis. No officials are required.
 - Football – Seven hours of preseason scrimmage time is allowed. Live kicking situations are allowable only when officials are present. These scrimmages cannot occur until at least 8 separate days of practice have been completed (reference 4.5.2). NCHSAA-registered officials must be used for at least two hours of the allotted total of seven and is recommended for use for all seven hours.
- 4.1.4 Endowment Games:** One endowment game may be played which does not count against the regular season game limitation. The host school must request and be granted prior permission by the NCHSAA to play the endowment game (the request form will be on the NCHSAA website). The opponent must be informed of the request to be classified as an endowment game.
- Twenty-five (25) percent of the gross revenue will be remitted to the NCHSAA's endowment fund; expenses will be deducted from the remaining proceeds and the competing schools will divide the remainder.
 - The NCHSAA may approve additional endowment game requests to assist member schools with scheduling issues; however, under no circumstances may any additional endowment game (other than the one allowed and described above) be played that would otherwise result in any member school exceeding the regular season game limitation.
 - For more information on Endowment Games, reference 2.3.7.
- 4.1.5 Payment of Officials:** Officials are to be paid based on local fiscal policy as soon as possible. Officials are not required for the sports of cross country, golf, tennis, and track and field. For more information, reference 3.3.2.a.1.
- 4.1.6 Eligibility Sheets:** Eligibility sheets should be kept on file at the local school; must be made available to the NCHSAA upon request and are required to be shared among conference members.
- 4.1.7 Ejection/Disqualification Reports:** Officials must electronically file the required ejection/disqualification reports to the NCHSAA within 24 hours of the contest's completion. The NCHSAA will electronically send copies of the ejection/disqualification report to the principal, athletic director and regional supervisor. Athletic directors are required to submit a confirmation email upon receipt of the ejection/disqualification report. The confirmation must be submitted within 24 hours of receiving the ejection/disqualification report and is subject to a \$100 fine. If the wrong player is identified, a correction can be made through the regional supervisors and the NCHSAA. For more on the Sportsmanship/Ejection Policy and Penalties, reference 2.6.2 and 2.6.3. **(Revised: May 2014)**
- For soccer, go to Yellow Card Tracking and Ejections in the Soccer section 4.8.1.k.

- (b) For wrestling, in addition to the above, during a two day tournament, if a wrestler is ejected on Friday, this wrestler must miss Saturday of that tournament AND the next contest. If a wrestler is ejected on Saturday, this wrestler must miss the next TWO CONTESTS.
- 4.1.8 **Playoff Declaration:** A school has the option to “opt out” of the playoffs, provided it fills out the Playoff Declaration Form on the website, and submits it and it is in the NCHSAA offices prior to the reporting deadline for that specific sport. Proper submission means the school will not be considered for either an automatic berth or a wild card position. If the form is not submitted, then the school will be considered and may qualify for a playoff berth.
- (a) The above does not apply to the sports of cross country, golf, swimming, and track and field.
- 4.1.9 **Submission of Incorrect Record:** Reference 3.2.3.d, 3.2.3.e, and 3.2.3.f.
- 4.1.10 **Playoff Berths/Qualification for the Sports of Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball:**
- (a) A team must finish 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the conference to qualify. In a split conference a team must finish 1st or 2nd in their division, OR
- (b) If not enough teams qualify using the criteria in 4.1.10.a above, we would take the teams with the highest 22-game winning percentage, followed by conference winning percentage (split conferences use all conference games), OR
- (c) If too many teams qualify using the criteria in 4.1.10.a above, we would take the teams with the best overall conference finish followed by the highest conference winning percentage to determine the qualifiers.
- (d) All classifications will field a full complement of 64 teams.
- (e) If ties exist at any level the tie(s) will be broken first by head-to-head competition, and then by a draw.
- (f) Once the 64 teams are determined, they will be divided into groups of 32, Eastern and Western. This is not done by conferences but on actual geography (location of each school).
- 4.1.11 **Seeding for the Sports of Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball:**
- (a) Seed all #1s by 22-game winning percentage.
- (b) If school finishes first in its part of a classification in a split conference, it is seeded as a number one and not actually where it finished overall in the conference.
- (c) A team in a split conference that finishes second or third in the overall conference standings will be seeded second or third. **(Revised: May 2014)**
- (d) Seed all #2s by 22-game winning percentage. **(Revised: May 2014)**
- (e) Seed all #3s by 22-game winning percentage. **(Revised: May 2014)**
- (f) Seed all other qualifying teams based only on their 22-game winning percentage, regardless of conference finish.
- (g) General Information for all Classifications:
- (1) If teams in any 'tier' of the seeding process have identical winning percentage, head-to-head competition will be used. If they have played one another, the winner receives the higher seed. If they haven't played one another, a draw is made for the higher seed.
 - (2) The non-conference game(s) that are dropped for seeding purposes may still be used in breaking a tie as described above, i.e. two teams in the same half of a bracket are equal seeds from their individual conferences (both #2s) and have identical records (18-4). We will first try to break the tie(s) by looking at head-to-head competition. If these schools played each other in a non-conference game, but one of them didn't count that game for seeding purposes, the game will still be used to break the tie, with the team that lost getting the lower seed.
 - (3) Since teams that finish 1st, 2nd or 3rd are seeded in separate 'tiers' the overall record of a number two or even a number three team may be better than the record of a number one team. But under no circumstances will a team that finished as a #2 or #3 be seeded higher than any #1, nor will a #3 team ever be seeded higher than a #2.
 - (4) However, since all teams that finish lower than #3 are seeded in the same 'tier' regardless of conference finish, it will be possible for a team that finishes as a #5 to be seeded higher than a #4, or a #6 to be seeded higher than a #5, since the only consideration in that 'tier' is overall record.

- (5) Once seeding is complete, 1 plays 32, 2 plays 31, etc. The higher seed is the home team unless otherwise determined by the NCHSAA.
- 4.1.12 **NCHSAA Sports Brackets:** For the most up-to-date information on brackets in various sports, including conference playoff berths, seeding priorities and qualifiers, consult the NCHSAA web site at www.nchsa.org, and use the Playoff Brackets link on the home page.
- 4.1.13 **Unpaid Fines:** Schools that have unpaid fines to the NCHSAA are not eligible to compete in the playoffs for that sport (i.e. baseball fine would be specific to baseball playoffs) unless the fine is paid two (2) days prior to the reporting date for that sport. Any fine not paid at the end of the fiscal year (June 30) will carry over to the following school year making all teams at said school ineligible for the playoffs until the fine is paid in full.
- 4.1.14 **Health and Safety Guidelines:** Follow all applicable Health and Safety Guidelines (2.5), which includes:
- Inclement/Hot Weather Guidelines (2.5.1)
 - Heat and Humidity Guidelines (2.5.2)
 - Hot Weather Management/Prevention Guidelines and Recommendations (2.5.3)
 - WBGT and Heat Index Charts
 - Management of Suspected or Possible Heatstroke
 - Heat Exhaustion
 - Signs and Symptoms of Heat Stroke
 - Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act (2.5.4)
 - Education, Plan, and Emergency Action Plan
 - NFHS Guidelines for Handling Practices and Contests During Lightning or Thunder Disturbances (2.5.5)
 - Tobacco Products, Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances (2.5.6)
 - Performance Enhancing Substances (2.5.7)
 - Infectious Disease Policy (2.5.8)
 - Catastrophic Insurance (2.5.9)
 - Student Accident Insurance and Athletic Coverage (2.5.10)
 - Hazing (2.5.11)
- 4.1.15 **Body Paint:** No face/body paint is allowed during regular season or playoffs.
- 4.1.16 **Noisemakers:** Any noise-making objects are prohibited at indoor contests (cheerleaders may use non-electronic hand megaphones).
- 4.1.17 **Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming:** Filming, videotaping or video streaming of a contest or scrimmage by nonparticipating schools, in any sport, is considered unsportsmanlike conduct, subject to a \$400 fine, unless agreed upon by competing teams.
- Filming, videotaping or video streaming for baseball and softball may not be done beyond either first base or third base.
- 4.1.18 **Clinic Dates:** For 2014-2015 NCHSAA Clinic Dates, see NCHSAA website.

4.2 BASEBALL

4.2.1 **General**

- Information on Mailings, Classifications, Payment of Officials, Eligibility Sheets, Ejections, Playoff Declaration, Unpaid Fines, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under General Requirements for Interscholastic Activities (4.1).
- Date of First Practice: February 16
- Preseason Scrimmages: Reference 4.1.3
- Date of First Game: March 2
- Health and Safety Guidelines: Reference General Requirements for Interscholastic Athletic Activities for a listing of guidelines (4.1.14) and Health and Safety Guidelines (2.5) for all the information.
- Number of Regular Season Contests: Total 23 games (including any games played in invitational tournaments).
 - No more than four per week, provided fourth single game is on a non-school day for both.
 - Four games in three days is still permissible without using a non-school day (e.g. doubleheader on a school day).
 - It is permissible for an athlete to participate in a junior varsity and varsity game in the same day; however, any athlete is still subject to the weekly and seasonal limitations (four games a week, not to exceed three days, total of 23).