

2021-2022 NCHSAA Team Sport Contest Limitations, Playoff, and Seeding Format

Season Limitations

Baseball	22 Games
Basketball	22 Games
Football	10 Games
Lacrosse (M)	20 Games
Lacrosse (W)	20 Games
Soccer	22 Games
Softball	22 Games
Tennis	22 Matches
Volleyball	22 Matches (Only 3 out of 5 matches count towards RPI)
Wrestling	No Change

Sports listed above can have one (1) in-season tournament (3-game maximum), which would only count as (1) game/match (exception: wrestling)

- In tournaments where a team could play in more than 3-games, any game played beyond the 3rd game would each count as an individual game on the schedule

Brackets

Baseball, Basketball, Football, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball

- 64 Team Brackets

Lacrosse

- 40 Team Brackets

Tennis

- 32 Team Brackets

Wrestling

- 32 Team Brackets

Automatic Qualification

- Each conference will be allotted playoff berths based on the number of schools fielding a team in a particular sport
 - 1-5 Teams = 1 Berth (Conference Champion)
 - 6+ Teams = 2 Berths (Conference Champion + 2nd Place or Conference Tournament Champion)
- The highest finishing team from a given classification in a split conference will automatically qualify, regardless of overall conference finish (minimum of 2 schools per classification)
- Addition of RPI rating to Handbook for conference tie-breaking procedure as the final tiebreaker

Wildcards

The remaining non-automatic teams in each region (East/West) will fill the remaining berths based solely upon their RPI rating.

Seeding

- Conference champions will be seeded before any other qualifying teams by RPI rating
- All other teams will be seeded after the conference champions by RPI rating of the school, regardless of conference finish
- Each region (East/West) will be seeded independently of one another, utilizing the RPI rating of the school

NCHSAA Playoff Ranking Formula

An RPI (Ratings Percentage Index) formula will be used for all team bracketed playoffs. The formula will be as follows for all sports:

$$\text{RPI} = (0.3 \times \text{WP}) + (0.4 \times \text{OWP}) + (0.3 \times \text{OOWP})$$

- **Winning Percentage (WP):** Divide the number of wins by the number of total games played. A tie is worth half a win. If a win in an individual contest gives that contest a winning percentage of 1.00, a tie will give that individual contest a winning percentage of .500 for both teams.
- **Opponents' Winning Percentage (OWP):** Average the winning percentages of a team's opponents. (Note: This is not calculated via the opponents' combined record, instead of by averaging each winning percentage of the opponents.) All games involving the team whose RPI is being calculated are ignored in this process.
- **Opponents' Opponents Winning Percentage (OOWP):** The same process as described above, except calculated for the opponents of a team's opponents. (Note: There is an exception for out-of-state teams, which is addressed below.)

Out-of-State Opponents

Out-of-state opponents from the following states will be counted the same as in-state opponents provided they have a verified MaxPreps account and schedule:

- Georgia
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Virginia

All other out-of-state opponents will be handled in the following manner:

- Their direct winning percentage (for example, .750) will count toward the formula, but each of their opponents will have a .500 winning percentage assigned.
- The .500 figure was selected because it is the average value of opponents' opponents winning percentages across all sports in data gathered from the states using RPI, such as Colorado, Utah, and Washington.
- Note: It is the NCHSAA member school's responsibility to ensure that the data from their out-of-state opponent is correctly listed on MaxPreps.

International Opponents

International opponents will not count toward the RPI calculation.

Non-Varsity Competition

Contests against the non-varsity competition will not count toward the RPI calculation.

In-State (Non-NCHSAA) Competition

Contests against in-state, non-NCHSAA schools will be handled in the following manner:

- Their direct winning percentage (for example, .750) will count toward the formula, but each of their opponents will have a .500 winning percentage assigned.
- The .500 figure was selected because it is the average value of opponents' opponents winning percentages across all sports in data gathered from the states using RPI, such as Colorado, Utah, and Washington.
- Note: It is the responsibility of the NCHSAA member school to ensure that the data from their opponent is correctly listed on MaxPreps.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does my RPI rating go down if I win a game?

No, this is a common misconception. The direct game is not factored into your RPI formula. For example, if your team plays a team that is 9-0, and you beat them, their record is now 9-1 (winning percentage of .900). However, because the direct game is not included in your team's calculations, they are factored in as 9-0 for the purposes of your RPI calculation. In other words, their winning percentage for your calculation remains at 1.000. This is true even if you play a team twice or even more. All direct games against that opponent are removed from the calculation.

2. Do scrimmages count toward the RPI?

No, they do not. Note: You should not list scrimmages on your official MaxPreps schedule. Instead, list on your Team Calendar in MaxPreps.

3. What happens if two (2) teams are tied in the final RPI standings?

There is a tiebreaker for this unlikely scenario. It is as follows:

- i. Head-to-head results between the tied teams
- ii. Overall Winning percentage
- iii. Opponents' winning percentage
- iv. Opponents' opponents winning percentage
- v. Highest-rated win (according to the final RPI standings)
- vi. Next-highest rated win (exhaust all possibilities)
- vii. Draw

4. How should teams be scheduling?

The main thing to remember with the RPI is it takes into account an entire schedule. A single game on a schedule does not have a major impact. View the entire schedule as a whole and try to judge the strength of schedule.

5. Does the score of the contest matter in the RPI formula?

There is no factor for score differential in the RPI formula. A 1-0 win counts the same as 50-1.

6. What happens if a game is canceled and cannot be rescheduled?

Because the RPI system works off of averages, a game that cannot be rescheduled will not factor into the final formula. It would not penalize nor benefit any team involved in that scenario.

7. How do schools that drop programs affect the RPI?

If a school drops a program before the start of its competitive season, no forfeits will be involved. Instead, their opponents now have open dates in that sport. If a school drops a program after their competitive season has started, that team shall forfeit one (1) contest to each conference opponent they have yet to play. All other non-conference contests and subsequent conference contests will be deemed as a no-contest. In this instance, the competitive season is defined as the sport's first play date in question (conference bylaws may dictate an earlier drop deadline if they wish).

8. Where should we be reporting scores?

Continue reporting scores to MaxPreps. The official RPI feed will be calculated from results entered into that platform.

9. How often will the RPI standings be published?

The RPI standings will be published for the first time once a sports season reaches the midway point. When this occurs, the RPI feed will be updated continuously throughout the remainder of the regular season.