

- (a) The above does not apply to the sports of cross country, golf, swimming, and track and field.
- 4.1.15 **Reporting Playoff Qualifiers:** Schools must submit their completed and accurate schedule and results into MaxPreps to be considered for playoff qualification for the sports of Baseball, Basketball, Football, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Dual Team Tennis, and Volleyball. Conference administrators must use this information to submit the final order of finish to the NCHSAA.
- (a) For reporting potential qualifiers to state playoffs, conference administrators are required to submit the appropriate information online immediately upon conclusion of the regular season.
- (b) Failure to comply with the reporting procedure will result in a \$400 fine to the school or conference in question.
- (c) All sports, with the exceptions of dual team tennis, dual team wrestling and lacrosse, will use seeded brackets (see also, Seeding 4.1.18)
- (d) Upon conclusion of the conference tournament, the conference administrator will immediately submit the final conference standings of all teams. The records that are listed on the brackets when playoff qualifiers are posted by the NCHSAA will represent the adjusted overall record of each team.
NOTE: If a team qualifies for a playoff berth but is ineligible for further competition due to violation of the ejection policy, its position is vacated.
- (e) Check the NCHSAA website for additional information.
- 4.1.16 **Submission of Incorrect Record:** Once the seeding process is completed and the brackets have been finalized, if a team has submitted an incorrect record, and the seed is affected, that team will be removed from the bracket and no other team will be substituted in or added to the playoffs. **Note:** Incorrect records can be changed during the NCHSAA designated "window of opportunity." Reference 3.2.3 (d)(e) & (f).
- 4.1.17 **Bracket Sizes:**
- (a) Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball
- (1) 1A & 4A: 48-team brackets
- (2) 2A & 3A: 64-team brackets
- (b) Football
- (1) 1A & 4A: 48-team brackets
- (i) Subdivided into 1A, 1AA, 4A, 4AA (24-team brackets)
- (2) 2A & 3A: 64-team brackets
- (ii) Subdivided into 2A, 2AA, 3A, 3AA (32-team brackets)
- (c) Tennis, Wrestling
- (1) 1A: 24-team bracket
- (2) 2A, 3A, & 4A: 32-team brackets
- (d) Lacrosse
- (1) Men's 1A/2A/3A: 24-team bracket
- (2) Men's 4A: 40-team bracket
- (3) Women's: 40-team bracket
- 4.1.18 **Playoff Berths/Qualification:**
- (a) Conference automatic qualifiers are determined by the number of teams from a given classification in each conference as follows:
- (1) 1 – 4 teams = 1 automatic qualifier
- (2) 5 – 8 teams = 2 automatic qualifiers
- (3) 9 or more teams = 3 automatic qualifiers
- (b) Conference tournament champions automatically qualify
- (1) If the regular season champion also wins the tournament, no additional berth will be awarded.
- (2) If a team other than the regular season champion wins the tournament, it will automatically qualify for the playoffs. The team will be seeded as an at-large berth in the playoffs unless already automatically qualified based upon their regular season conference finish.
- (c) Split conference application
- (1) The highest finishing team from a given classification will automatically qualify, regardless of overall conference finish.
- (2) Two teams that finish 1st and 2nd overall in the conference from the same classification will automatically qualify regardless of rule 4.1.18(a)(1-3).
NOTE: Ties for 1st place in the overall conference or for highest finisher in a classification must be broken using the established tie-breaking procedure [rule 4.1.13].
- (d) If too many teams qualify using the above criteria, adjustments to the established bracket size will be made to accommodate the automatic qualifiers.
- (e) If not enough teams qualify using the above criteria, the bracket will be filled by non-automatic qualifiers in that classification.

- (1) Teams in their classification with the highest MaxPreps ranking (or other NCHSAA selected ranking system) will be selected to fill the remaining slots in the bracket.

4.1.19 Seeding:

- (a) Once the qualifying teams in each classification are determined, they will be divided into two regions of equal size (East and West) based on the longitude of each school.
- (b) The teams in each region will be seeded as follows:
 - (1) Seed all 1st place automatic berths and highest finishing team in each classification of a split conference by MaxPreps ranking (or other NCHSAA selected ranking system); then
 - (2) Seed all 2nd place automatic berths by MaxPreps ranking (or other NCHSAA selected ranking system); then
 - (3) Seed all 3rd place automatic berths by MaxPreps ranking (or other NCHSAA selected ranking system); then
 - (4) Seed all conference tournament champions and at-large berths by MaxPreps ranking (or other NCHSAA selected ranking system).
- (c) Once seeding is complete:
 - (1) Existing byes will be awarded to the highest seeds possible.
 - (2) The higher seed is the home team unless otherwise determined by the NCHSAA.

4.1.20 Reporting Playoff Advancement:

- (a) After schools have qualified for the playoffs, it is their responsibility to report advancement by the appropriate method and deadline as designated by the NCHSAA.
- (b) Failure to report a playoff advancement will result in a \$400 fine to the school. Teams must report advancement no later than 6 a.m. the day following each win.
- (c) Postponements should also be reported.

4.1.21 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.

4.1.22 Health and Safety Guidelines: Follow all applicable Health and Safety Guidelines (2.3), which includes:

- (a) Heat Illness Prevention and Management (2.3.1)
- (b) Heat Acclimatization (2.3.2)
- (c) Prevention of Heat Illness (2.3.3)
 - (1) WBGT and Heat Index Charts on page 35
- (d) Recognition of Heat Illness (2.3.4)
- (e) Management of Heat Illness (2.3.5)
- (f) Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act (2.3.6)
 - (1) Education, Plan, and Emergency Action Plan (2.3.6.c)
- (g) Cardiac Safety Program (2.3.7)
- (h) NFHS Guidelines for Handling Practices and Contests During Lightning or Thunder Disturbances (2.3.8)
- (i) Tobacco Products, Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances (2.3.9)
- (j) Performance Enhancing Substances (2.3.10)
- (k) Infectious Disease Policy (2.3.11)
- (l) Catastrophic Insurance (2.3.12)
- (m) Student Accident Insurance and Athletic Coverage (2.3.13)
- (n) Hazing (2.3.14)

4.1.23 Body Paint: No face/body paint is allowed during regular season or playoffs.

4.1.24 Noisemakers: Any noise-making objects are prohibited at indoor contests (cheerleaders may use non-electronic hand megaphones).

4.1.25 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.

- (a) Filming, videotaping or video streaming for baseball and softball may not be done beyond either first base or third base.

4.1.26 Clinic Dates: For 2017-2018 NCHSAA Clinic Dates, see NCHSAA website.