



NSAA SOFTBALL

2024

MANUAL





NSAA Mission and Purpose

The public and non-public high schools of Nebraska voluntarily agreed to form the Nebraska School Activities Association for the following purposes:

- To formulate and make policies which will cultivate high ideals of citizenship, fair competition, sportsmanship and teamwork which will complement the member schools' curriculum programs.
- To foster uniformity of standards in interscholastic activity competition.
- To organize, develop, direct and regulate an interscholastic activity program which is equitable and will protect and promote the health and physical welfare of all participants.

Who is the NSAA?

The Other Half of Education

- The NSAA is a non-profit organization, comprised of 309 public and non-public member high schools in the State of Nebraska. Member schools voluntarily agree to conduct NSAA-sanctioned activities consistent with the rules established locally and the rules established collectively as members of the NSAA.
- The NSAA sanctions 24 sports and 5 performing arts activities and directs 28 State Championships for nearly 100,000 student-activity participants annually.
- The NSAA Constitution and Bylaws, Activity Manuals and policies form the governance structure of the organization. These regulations are approved and changed only by member schools and a member-elected Board of Directors through the legislative process initiated and driven by member schools. Unless otherwise noted, NSAA rules and regulations apply to current 9th thru 12th grade students.
- NSAA rules set baselines for participation such as: academic requirements; attendance requirements; transfer eligibility; sportsmanship.
- The primary functions of the NSAA Staff are to: assist member schools with compliance questions related to eligibility, transfers and playing rules; enforce the rules established by the member schools; and administer NSAA State Championship events.
- The NSAA honors and recognizes students, coaches and volunteers for their excellence and achievements through multiple awards programs.
- The NSAA annually registers officials and judges. Member schools are responsible for hiring officials and judges during the regular season.
- When parents, families, students, or community members have questions or concerns related to NSAA-sanctioned activities, those must be directed first to the administration of the member school.
- Staffing, playing time, and team rules are decisions made by the member school, not the NSAA. The NSAA has no authority to interfere with these member school decisions.

This SOFTBALL MANUAL has been prepared and designed to provide general information for use in the administration of NSAA Softball competition. It will serve as a guide to the participating schools and will provide for greater consistency between games. The regulations in this manual shall be considered official unless the schools are notified of a change.

Assistant Director, Ron Higdon, is the NSAA staff member responsible for administering Softball and is the contact person for schools with questions regarding this activity. He can be reached at rhigdon@nsaahome.org or through Business Manager, Megan Huber, mhuber@nsaahome.org.

NSAA Approved Rule Changes For 2024-2025

- **Organized Practice Rule** - Beginning in the 2024-25 school year, baseball and softball coaches are permitted to increase the number of offseason practice participants from 4 to 7 players for sport specific training (hitting/ fielding and throwing).
- **Class B sub-district assignments** – Class B schools are created using the total number of Class B Teams and based solely on geographic location starting West and moving East. The number of sub-districts and number of teams in each sub-district will be assigned as follows: number of total Class B teams; Sub-District Assignments Greater than forty (40); Ten (10) sub-districts will be four teams with sub-districts of five teams being created for the extra teams over forty (40). The five team sub-districts will be the teams that are furthest East. Equal to forty (40); Ten (10) sub-districts will be four (4) teams. Less than forty (40); The number of sub districts will be the result of dividing the total number of teams in class B by four (4) rounded down to the nearest whole number. Sub-districts will be four (4) teams with sub-districts of five (5) teams being created for the extra teams over the result of four (4) times the number of sub-districts. The five (5) team sub-districts will be the teams that are furthest East.
- 1. **Class C sub-district assignments** - Class C schools are to be placed into ten districts.
- 2. The ten districts will be determined using a serpentine method (not modified), based upon the NSAA wildcard point system, on the Monday of week 13, prior to the first district tournament. The top seed in each district will be offered a contract to host the district tournament. If the higher seed is unable to host the district tournament, the subsequent seed shall be offered a contract until a location is secured.
- 3. If the total number of teams is not divisible by four (4), then sub-districts of five (5) teams will be created for extra teams over that number divisible by four (4). Class C sub-districts will be single elimination with the winner qualifying for district finals. The highest seed will be the host unless they choose not to host.
- During postseason play, the home team will be the higher seeded team. If there is an “if-necessary” game required, the home/away team status will be alternated for that game.

CPR/AED Certification - All head coaches/sponsors and assistant coaches/sponsors are required to be CPR/AED certified once every two years. Certification should be completed prior to any pre-season or regular season physical workouts that the respective coach/sponsor would be present for or involved in administering. All first-year head coaches/sponsors and assistant coaches/sponsors are required to complete certification prior to the start of the activity season which they are to coach. Coaches' aides and volunteer coaches are not required to be CPR/AED certified.

2024 NFHS Softball Rule Changes

REMINDER:

- Starting January 1, 2025, new ball specifications will be required for high school competition. Balls manufactured with the current specifications will be permitted for use through 2024.

	SIZE	COR	COMPRESSION	WEIGHT & CIRCUMFERENCE
Before January 1, 2025	12"	.47 max	375 lbs. max	6 ¼ to 7 ounces 11 7/8 to 12 ¼ inches
After January 1, 2025	12"	.47 max	325 lbs. +/- 50	6 ½ to 7 ounces 11 7/8 to 12 ¼ inches

1-8-6: The rule edit continues to require that electronic devices for coaching purposes can only be used in the dugout but does not require that the information originate from the dugout. The electronic information may be transmitted to the dugout from anywhere outside of live ball area.

3-2-3: Beginning January 1, 2027, uniforms may only bear a single manufacturer's logo, school name, school logo, mascot and/or the participant's name. Advertisements, messages, team slogans, etc., will no longer be allowed.

3-2-5: Headbands and ribbons are no longer restricted under the uniform rules. Headbands and ribbons may be any color or design.

3-2-7: If worn, a player's wristband with a playbook/playcard must be worn on the player's wrist or arm. If worn by the pitcher, the wristband with a playbook/playcard must be worn on the non-pitching wrist or arm. It remains legal for players to keep the wristband with a playbook/playcard in their back pocket.

4-2-7, 10-2-3e, h: The umpire may call (end) a game if conditions in or around the facility become unacceptable to safely continue the game.

6-1-2c, 2-47: The pitcher may now have both feet off the ground at the same time as long as both feet remain within the 24-inch width of the pitcher's plate and the pitcher does not replant the pivot foot. A definition for the replant was added.

6-2-2: Pitchers shall only use dirt, powdered rosin or comparable drying agents that are listed on the USA Softball's certified equipment webpage to dry the hand.



Softball

10-14 Day Heat-Acclimatization Period

1. Days 1 through 5 of the heat-acclimatization period consist of the first 5 days of formal practice. During this time, athletes may not participate in more than 1 practice per day.
2. If a practice is interrupted by inclement weather or heat restrictions, the practice should recommence once conditions are deemed safe. Total practice time should not exceed 3 hours in any 1 day.
3. A 1-hour maximum walk-through is permitted during days 1–5 of the heat-acclimatization period. However, a 3-hour recovery period should be inserted between the practice and walk-through (or vice versa). The only pieces of player equipment to be worn by the individuals during the walk-through are shoes and helmets. A. Stationary batting practice, in a batting cage, may be considered a walk-through.
4. During days 1–2 of the heat-acclimatization period in softball, a helmet should be the only protective equipment permitted (catchers, as in the case of softball, should <i>not</i> wear full protective gear or perform activities that would require protective equipment). <u>This is on an individual basis.</u> Player A may meet the acclimatization requirements during the 4-week pitchers/catchers time frame (bylaw 3.2.3, b). However, player B, who did not acclimate prior to the first day of practice will need to acclimate on days 1 and 2. A. On day 3, helmets, leg gear, and body protector may be worn by catchers.
5. Beginning no earlier than day 6 and continuing through day 14, double-practice days must be followed by a single-practice day. On single-practice days, 1 walk-through is permitted, separated from the practice by at least 3 hours of continuous rest. When a double-practice day is followed by a rest day, another double-practice day is permitted after the rest day. A. Stationary batting practice, in a batting cage, may be considered a walk-through.
6. On a double-practice day, neither practice should exceed 3 hours in duration, and student-athletes should not participate in more than 5 total hours of practice. Warm-up, stretching, cool-down, walk-through, conditioning, and weight-room activities are included as part of the practice time. The 2 practices should be separated by at least 3 continuous hours in a cool environment.
7. Because the risk of exertional heat illnesses during the preseason heat-acclimatization period is high, we strongly recommend that an athletic trainer be on site before, during, and after all practices.

***NOTES:**

1. Consideration should also be taken for any practices conducted in hot and humid weather in non-air cooled facilities.
2. Consult the Heat Index Chart, www.nsaaonline.org, Sports Medicine Page

References:

National Federation of State High School Associations Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.
Heat acclimatization and heat illness prevention position statement. Published 2012.
<http://www.nfhs.org>.

NSAA SMAC Revised and Approved – April, 2016
NSAA SMAC Revised and Approved – April, 2015
NSAA SMAC Revised and Approved – April, 2014
NSAA SMAC Recommendations – April, 2013

WEBSITE

NSAAHOME.ORG

Administrators, coaches and others involved in this activity should make themselves familiar with what is offered on the website as the NSAA office uses it as a quick way to offer information without having the trouble and expense of additional mailings. Here are some softball topics on the internet:

Current year classifications; district assignments; rules meeting information; regular season schedules; district pairings and results; wildcard standings for Classes A, B, and C; state championship schedule, pairings, and results; state records; school-by-school state championship history; and state championship results.

The records, for instance, are updated as coaches report record performances. The office will not send a list of the records to coaches. Coaches are expected to check the record categories on the internet and notify the NSAA when submitting information for new records.

It is important for schools to routinely check wildcard standings on the website. Call the NSAA with any questions or incorrect listing of wins or losses.

NSAA SPORTSMANSHIP BYLAWS & APPROVED RULINGS

2.11.1 PENALTIES

2.11.3 Participant Ejections from Athletic Contests. Any participant ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 2.11.3

Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. Any participant ejected a third time shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.

2.11.4 Coach Ejections from Athletic Contests. Any coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible to coach the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

NSAA SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDELINES AND EJECTIONS

1. Enforcement of the "sit-out rule" for ejections from high school contests for unsportsmanlike conduct is a responsibility of the member school. Failure to properly enforce this rule could result in other sanctions by the NSAA.
2. Administrators will be expected to promptly file a report with the NSAA whenever a participant or coach from their school has been ejected from any high school contest. Such filing must be done online under the AD login section of the NSAA webpage.
3. A participant or coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and any other athletic contest at any level during the interim.
4. Enforcement of the "sit-out rule" is expected to begin immediately, regardless whether it is regular-season or tournament play.
5. Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.
6. Any participant ejected a third time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.
7. During the time of their "sit-out" suspension, athletes who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct may not suit up or participate, but it is the school's discretion whether such athlete is able to travel with the team or sit on the team bench.
8. Coaches who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct may not coach in any contest or be present at the contest site during the time of their "sit-out" suspension. Coaches who are ejected will also be required to successfully complete an NFHS Teaching and Modeling Behavior online course within 10 days of the ejection. Failure to successfully complete the course will result in a suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season. In those situations, in which the

ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Behavior online course before being able to coach the following season or year.

9. Coaches who are ejected a second time in a season will be required to sit-out the next two contests at that level, plus all other contests at other levels during the interim. Coaches may not be present at the contest site during the time of their "sit-out" suspension. Any coach ejected a second time will also be required to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online coaching course within 10 days of the ejection. Failure to successfully complete the course will result in a suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season. In those situations, in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Behavior online course (or the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course if second ejection) before being able to coach the following season or year.
10. If the ejection takes place in the final game of the season, the suspension will carry over to the following season.
11. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.
12. Officials will be expected to file with the NSAA an ejection report for any ejection of a player or coach from a contest online. Any unusual situation that occurs prior to, during, or after a contest should also be reported.
13. Prompt reporting to the NSAA office by the official is necessary. Officials are asked to submit their electronic report or call the NSAA office by the day following the ejection.
14. Officials are asked to be specific in listing the reason(s) for an ejection.
15. Affiliated officials (officials registered from contiguous states) will also be required to perform this reporting function.
16. There is no appeal process for ejections for unsportsmanlike conduct.
17. The Executive Director shall reserve the right to consider the length of suspension when some levels of competition are scheduled on an irregular basis (e.g., three weeks between regularly scheduled non-varsity contests).

2.11.5 Investigation. Prior to the assessment of any penalty, the Executive Director will gather data in order to establish intent, fault, and the effect an ineligible participant had on any interschool contest. These factors shall be weighed in determining the severity of the penalty assessed. The Executive Director's decision may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

2.11.6 Institution Control. If the said violation is brought to the attention of the Board of Directors as a result of self-policing by the offending school, the Board of Directors shall issue the highest of commendations to the administration of the school for its efforts in enforcing the Constitution.

BYLAWS & APPROVED RULINGS GOVERNING SOFTBALL

APPROVED RULING 2.1.2

Medical Personnel at Regular Season Games

It is important for every school to have an emergency action plan (EAP) for administrators, faculty, coaches and staff members to follow should emergencies occur. Due to lack of universal availability of medical coverage and other logistical reasons, NSAA does not require that schools have a physician, trainer or ambulance on-site at regular season activities.

2.12 [NFHS courses required for all NSAA coaches and sponsors.](#)

Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Education

All coaches, activity sponsors, and volunteers are required to complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest online training courses at least once every three years. These courses should be taken prior to any pre-season or regular season physical workouts that the respective coach would be present for or involved in administering. Any course taken after May 1 would be considered valid for the following school year. All first-year coaches are required to complete all three courses prior to the start of the activity season which they are to coach.

CPR/AED Certification

*All head coaches/sponsors and assistant coaches/sponsors are required to be CPR/AED certified once every two years. Certification should be completed prior to any pre-season or regular season physical workouts that the respective coach/sponsor would be present for or involved in administering. All first-year head coaches/sponsors and assistant coaches/sponsors are required to complete certification prior to the start of the activity season which they are to coach. **Coaches aides and volunteer coaches are not required to be CPR/AED certified.***

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.1.1.C. – End of season for Outside Participation

Students who are not listed on the NSAA District entry form may participate in outside group instruction or competition of the same sport before the varsity school team has been completely eliminated from postseason competition. Those students who have participated in outside group instruction or competition following their regular season schedule would not be eligible to be placed on the district or state entry form of the same sport and would not be allowed to practice with the varsity team.

3.11.7.1 Girls softball shall be conducted during the fall sports season.

3.11.7.2 The softball season shall begin with the first day of practice as permitted by NSAA rules and shall end with the state tournament.

3.11.7.3 **Contest Limitation.** No team representing a member school in Classes A, B or C may participate in more than eighteen (18) dates; The district and state championships are not included in the eighteen dates. A tournament is one date. Schools are limited to five (5) tournaments, including the conference tournament, during the regular season.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS For 3.11.7.3

- 1) *A tournament is defined as a contest involving four or more teams in which the winner continues to advance and compete until a single winner is determined. The NSAA shall permit a triangular softball engagement and shall count it as only one date. This can include three or four schools playing two contests or two of the other schools in one session.*

Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Jamboree

Each school is permitted to participate in one Jamboree event during Weeks 6 & 7 (August 12-17; 19-20).

Do **NOT** enter the Hall of Fame game on your NSAA regular season schedule.

[Full Jamboree information is posted on the NSAA website.](#)

3.1 SPORTS SEASONS

3.1.1 Interscholastic sports sponsored by the Association shall be divided into three seasons: Fall, Winter, Spring.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.1.1

1. *A season begins on the first day of allowable practices for that sport, as designated in 3.1.1.2. The season officially ends with the conclusion of the State Championship in that sport. Students may not participate in outside group instruction or competition once the season officially begins, and outside group instruction or competition may not commence until the school varsity team has been completely eliminated from further participation in that sport.*
2. *All scheduled and postponed regular season varsity contests must be played prior to the start of Sub-district, District, or State competition. Once Sub-district, District, or State competition begins, no regular season varsity contests shall be permitted.*
3. *Students who are not listed on the NSAA District entry form may participate in outside group instruction or competition of the same sport before the varsity team has been completely eliminated from post-season competition. Those students who have participated in outside group instruction or competition following their regular season schedule would not be eligible to be placed on the District or State entry form of the same sport and would not be allowed to practice with the varsity team.*

3.3 GENERAL REGULATIONS GOVERNING COMPETITION

3.3.11 Conduct and Sportsmanship. Member schools shall maintain proper crowd control and enforce the principles of good sportsmanship and ethics during all interscholastic contests. Failure to fulfill this obligation shall subject the school to penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.

3.3.11.1 Conduct of Coaches and Athletes. Coaches and athletes shall conduct themselves in accordance with the playing rules of the sport contest and refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct during interscholastic competition. Failure to fulfill this obligation will subject the individual(s) to the penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.

3.3.11.2 Definition of Unsportsmanlike Conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include the following: fighting, verbal abuse or dissent directed toward an official or opponent, racial or ethnic slurs, inappropriate comments or actions that may be construed as sexual harassment, profanity, obscene gestures, flagrant and violent fouls, taunting, trash talk, baiting, cheating, throwing or abusing equipment, inappropriate posters, physical intimidation or abuse of an official or opponent, and unauthorized leaving of a team bench area.

3.2 OUT OF SEASON PROGRAMS

3.2.4, F - Organized Practice.

Baseball & Softball. An organized practice shall mean more than seven students under the direct supervision of a sponsor. If more than one group is practicing at the same time, it shall be called an organized practice. Beginning four weeks prior to the official start of softball and baseball practice, sponsors may work with up to eight (8) players using only balls, gloves and protective catcher's equipment. No other equipment, including bats may be used by players or coaches. An organized practice shall mean more than eight (8) students under the direct supervision of a sponsor. If more than one group is practicing at the same time, it shall be called an organized practice. During the four weeks prior to the official start of practice, sponsors will have the option of working with seven (7) student athletes or eight (8) student athletes using the prescribed allowable equipment.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.2.3

Applicable to Coaches During the School Year:

Any individual who served as a school's head coach, assistant coach, coach's aide, or volunteer coach shall not coach athletes from that member school in non-high school competition if the number of athletes from the school which the individual served exceeds the number permitted for an organized practice in the sport involved.

3.2.6 CAMPS AND CLINICS DEFINITIONS

Camp Definition: Camps include planned physical participation that is of a competitive nature where actual Games are played or simulated by camp attendees. Participation shall mean physically taking part in the sport activity in which instruction is offered in the camp or school.

Clinic Definition: A clinic includes planned activities of instruction or demonstration directly related to the Teaching of individual skills. There shall be no competition between athletes who are in attendance.

Starting in the 2023-24 school year, during a season of sport, students are permitted to attend and PARTICIPATE in college camps/clinics without having to sit out scheduled competitions upon return.

3.2.6.1 "School-Year, Out-of-Season". Athletes and coaches may attend professional or commercial sports camps/clinics sponsored by non-member high schools. During the "school-year, out-of-season" period, the organized practice rule for the sport in which instruction is being given shall apply. No more than the limit permitted for organized practice may attend and receive instruction. Attendance to "school-year, out-of-season" clinics shall be voluntary. No coach or school representative may directly or by implication direct a student to attend a clinic as a condition for membership on the high school team or restrict the level of team participation within the high school program.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.2.6 and 3.2.6.1

The purpose of specialized sports camps/clinics is to give individual athletes an opportunity to improve his/her skills in a particular activity. The athlete and/or his/her parents shall pay the fees and expenses for attendance to such camps or schools. The school, booster clubs, individuals and/or other organizations shall not provide expenses, or support for individuals participating in clinics. Team fundraisers may be used to finance summer league and camp/clinic activities. The AD/coach can hold money collected from fundraising in a school account until the money is needed to pay for summer league or camp/clinic activities. Any athlete receiving money for summer league, camps/clinics must participate in the fundraising activity. The school may provide transportation for individuals participating in camps/clinics with prior approval from the district's Board of Education.

Q: Can a coach (head, assistant or volunteer) attend a school year out-of-season camp or clinic?

A: Only if the organized practice rule for that particular sport is followed. If the number of athletes from the team exceeds the organized practice limit, the coach cannot be in attendance. Organized Practice numbers are defined in Bylaw 3.2.3

3.2.7 Summertime Participation. "Summertime shall be defined as the Tuesday following Memorial Day to July 31. During the "summertime" there shall be no restrictions on the amount of contact between students and high school coaches. Attendance shall be voluntary, and coaches/school representative may not directly or by implication require a student to attend "summertime" activities as a condition for membership on a high school team or restrict the level of team participation within the high school program.

3.2.7.1 NSAA Catastrophic Insurance does not cover coaches/students/schools during the summertime period.

3.2.7.2 Summertime School-Sponsored Camps/Clinics: A school may organize a camp or clinic in any sport from the Tuesday following Memorial Day through July 31. The camp shall be limited to no more than ten days starting with the first date of the camp/clinic.

- a. Summertime school-sponsored camps/clinics include planned physical activities that are instructional and competitive in nature where actual games can be played or simulated by camp attendees.
- b. Summertime school-sponsored camps/clinics shall be voluntary and open to all interested students from grades 9-12.
- c. The use of school facilities and equipment is permitted in accordance with the district's Board of Education policy.

3.2.7.3 Summertime Conditioning Program. A member school may organize and supervise a summer conditioning program to include weightlifting, running, and exercising. Conditioning sessions shall be no longer than 75 minutes in length per day or no more than 5 hours per week, and no student shall participate in more than one such session per day.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.2.7.3

Conditioning sessions organized and run by members of the school's coaching staff are subject to the 75-minute limitation. Students, for example, who work out on their own at the school facility in weightlifting, general calisthenics, running, or agility-type exercises shall not be considered to be involved in an organized conditioning program.

3.2.7.4 Summertime Open Gym/Facilities. It is permissible for students to be involved in NSAA activities of a school's open training program during the summertime. Permitting the participation by non-high school students (graduates, adults, or individuals not a member of the school) shall be determined by the district's Board of Education policy.

3.2.7.5 Summertime Regulations for Athletes and Coaches. From the Tuesday following Memorial Day or final day of school (whichever is later) until July 31, there shall be no restrictions on the contact between students and high school coaches.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.2.7.5

1. The organized practice rule shall be in effect during the school year until Memorial Day, except in the case of organized teams (e.g., Legion baseball, USA softball, etc.). If a high school coach or other adult associated with the school program is also the coach of an organized non-school team, practice and competition involving the coach and athletes of that non-school team may begin at the conclusion of the State Championships of that activity or during Week 46 of the standardized calendar, whichever date is later.

3.2.7.6 Summertime Leagues/Competitions. High school coaches are permitted to coach students from their school in summer league competition and games, provided there is no direct support from the school.

- a. All league fees and costs are to be paid by the athlete and/or his/her parents. The school, booster clubs, individuals and/or other organizations shall not provide expenses or support for individuals participating in such leagues.
- b. Team fundraisers may be used to finance summer league and camp activities. The AD/coach can hold money collected from fundraising in a school account until the money is needed to pay for summer league or camp activities. Any athlete receiving money for summer league/camps must participate in the fundraising activity.
- c. The use of school-issued game uniforms is prohibited.

3.2.7.7 Summertime Use of School Facilities. Member schools may permit the use of their facilities in accordance with the district's Board of Education board policy.

3.2.7.8 Summertime Use of School Equipment. Member schools may permit the use of school equipment, other than school-issued game uniforms in accordance with the district's Board of Education policy.

3.2.8 Summertime College/Professional/Commercial Team Sport Camps/Clinics. High school coaches are permitted to accompany students from their school to college, professional, or commercial sports specialized team camps/clinics during the summer.

- a. The purpose of a specialized sports camp/clinic/school is to give team members an opportunity to improve their skills in a particular activity.
- b. The athlete and/or his/her parents shall pay the fees and expenses for attendance to such camps or schools. The school, booster clubs, individuals and/or other organizations shall not provide expenses or support for individuals participating in camps, schools, and non-school competitions.
- c. Team fundraisers may be used to finance team commercial camp/clinic activities. The AD/coach can hold money collected from fundraising in a school account until the money is needed to pay for camp activities. Any athlete receiving money for summer team camps/clinics must participate in the fundraising activity.
- d. The school shall not provide school-issued uniforms but may provide transportation for individuals participating in such camps/clinics, or schools with prior approval from the district's Board of Education.

3.2.9 Summertime Individual Commercial Camps/Clinics. During the summer, students may attend any individual skill/technique camps or clinics.

- a. The purpose of an individual camp/clinic/school is to give a student an opportunity to improve his/her skills in a particular activity.
- b. The athlete and/or his/her parents shall pay the fees and expenses for attendance to such camps or schools. The school, booster clubs, individuals and/or other organizations shall not provide expenses or support for individuals participating in camps.
- c. Team fundraisers may be used to finance individual commercial camp/clinic activities. The AD/coach can hold money collected from fundraising in a school account until the money is needed to pay for summer individual camp/clinic activities. Any athlete receiving money for camps/clinics must participate in the fundraising activity.
- d. The school shall not provide school-issued uniforms.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.3.7

Eligibility for Sub-District/District/State Competition

1. *In all athletic activities, teams wishing to enter a sub-district, district, or state contest shall have participated in a minimum of five interschool varsity contests prior to the sub-district, district, or state contest.*
 - a. *Exceptions to the requirements for a team that has not participated in at least five interschool varsity contests would be considered if the team was unable to participate if weather conditions forced a cancellation of scheduled contests. Other extenuating circumstances would be considered by the Executive Director on a case-by-case basis.*
2. *In order to participate in a sub-district, district or State Championships, a student is required to have been a member of the school's team for at least twenty school days prior to the first day of the sub-district, district, or State Championships.*
 - a. *Exceptions to the requirements for a student who is not a member of the school team for twenty school days would be considered if an individual was unable to participate because of illness, injury, or transfer from another high school. School, team, or game suspensions, regardless of the underlying cause, shall not be considered as exceptions to this participation rule.*
3. *To be eligible to participate in a sub-district, district and/or state contest, a student shall have been a member of a school's team and shall have been "available to participate" in at least thirty percent (30%) of the school's scheduled interschool contests.*
 - a. *Exceptions to the requirements for a student who has not been available to participate in at least 30% of the school's varsity interschool contests would be considered if an individual was unable to participate because of illness, injury, transfer from another high school, or if weather conditions forced a cancellation of scheduled contests.*
 - b. *When determining whether a student has been available for (30%) of the school's varsity interschool contests, one would divide the number of varsity interschool contests for which the student was available by the school's total number of varsity interschool contests; all decimals .1 or above would be rounded up to the next higher whole number.*
 - c. *The term "available to participate" means that the student was a bona fide member of the team, eligible to participate for the school at some level of competition in the sport and is not suspended from participation in activities by virtue of NSAA rules.*
4. *For situations pertaining to eligibility to participate in district or state contests that are not specifically addressed by these guidelines, the Executive Director shall have the authority to waive membership and participation requirements on a case-by-case basis.*
5. *If a school takes its team off the playing field prior to the completion of a contest or prior to the suspension or termination of a game by the game officials, and the contest is forfeited because of the refusal of the school's team to continue play, the school shall be subject to a penalty set by the Board of Directors. The penalty may be the exclusion from participation in sub-district, district, playoffs, or state contests.*
6. *Broadcasting, recording, photographing, videotaping or televising of NSAA sponsored events (district, state, playoff, etc.) shall not be permitted for commercial purposes or for other than personal use except with the expressed permission of the Nebraska School Activities Association.*
7. *If an individual or team qualifies for state competition through competing in a district meet, that individual or team is expected to compete in the state contest in which he/she or the team qualifies. Unless excused by the Executive Director for just cause failure to compete in a state contest shall result in the school being penalized.*
8. *During sub-district, district, or state competition in activities sponsored by the Nebraska School Activities Association, the use of smokeless tobacco by any participant is prohibited. If a participant or substitute is detected using smokeless tobacco during competition, that individual shall be disqualified from participation in further competition in that contest.*

3.5.2 Individual Instruction. During a season of a sport, a student is permitted to take instruction from a person other than the high school coach at times other than scheduled high school practice sessions, but such instructions shall not interfere with, nor be substituted for the high school coaching, practice sessions, or contests.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.5.2

During a season of a sport, a student is permitted to take instruction from a person other than the high school coach. Group instruction, practices with outside teams, and tryouts for outside teams other than as part of a college or university recruiting visit, however, are not permitted.

SOFTBALL APPROVED RULINGS

1. District and state championship regulations:
 - a. Follow a double-elimination format (State).
 - b. Twenty (20) players per team will be permitted to dress for district or state championship competition.
 - c. District competition will be held during Week 14 of the Standardized Calendar.
 - d. The state championship will be held during Week 15 of the Standardized Calendar.
 - e. The state championship finals will be held on Monday of Week 16 of the Standardized Calendar.
2. In order to participate in a sub-district, district or state contest, in a particular activity, a student is required to have been a member of a school's team or group in the particular activity for at least twenty (20) school days prior to the first day of the sub-district, district or state competition. An exception to this requirement would be if a student were unable to be a member of a school's team or group due to injury, illness, or transfers from another school.
3. During the season of the sport, a school shall not permit a student who is not a member of the high school team, an adult, a college student or alumni to participate in any practice session, drill, scrimmage, game or contest in which a school team or an individual who is a member of a school team is involved. This does not prevent a coach from being involved for the primary purposes of teaching and demonstrating skills, methods, or techniques.
4. Double first base and rules.
 - a. Double first base will be used in all contests.
 - b. Double first base rules:
 - 1) When a play is being made on the batter-runner, she shall use the orange portion and the defense the white portion of the base.
 - 2) The defense may use the orange portion and the offense the white portion of first base when the ball is thrown from the foul side of the first base line, or an errant or missed throw pulls the defensive player into foul ground.
 - 3) If there is a force play by an infielder on the batter-runner, who touches only the white portion and collides with the fielder about to catch a thrown ball while on the white base, interference is ruled, the ball is dead, the batter-runner is out, and all other runners are returned to the base last occupied at the time of interference.
 - 4) If there is a play on the batter-runner, and the batter-runner touches only the white portion and the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to first base, it is treated the same as missing the base.

3.7.1 – Amateur Rule

A student shall be an amateur in all sports sponsored by the Nebraska School Activities Association. A student may be declared ineligible if he/she:

1. Accepts merchandise, compensation of any nature, or illegal awards for competing in Association-sponsored activities.
2. Enters into any agreement or contract to compete in professional sports.
3. Permits, with or without actual endorsement, the use of name, picture, and/or personal appearance as an athlete in the promotion of a commercial or profit-making event, item, plan, or service (this does not prevent a student's picture or name from being included in programs); or,
4. Receives merchandise or compensation of any nature for coaching any NSAA approved sport during the season of the sport in his/her school.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.7.1, C – Name, Image & Likeness

Under Bylaw 3.7.1.c, the term "with or without actual endorsement" requires that the student or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) have knowledge that the student's name, picture, and/or personal appearance are being used by another person or entity. *Note: For commonly asked NIL Questions, [view these NIL Q&A's](#).*

STEROID POLICY

The Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), strongly oppose the abuse of anabolic steroids and other performance-enhancing substances by high school student-athletes. Such use violates legal, ethical and competitive equity standards, and imposes unreasonable long-term health risks. The NSAA and the NFHS support prohibitions by educational institutions, amateur and professional organizations, and governmental regulators on the use of anabolic steroids and other controlled substances, except as specifically prescribed by physicians for therapeutic purposes.

GENERAL RULES

Participation. Any student who participates in any athletic contest other than as a representative of her school during the softball season becomes ineligible to represent the school in that sport for one or more contests or the remainder of that school year. The girls' softball season starts August 12th.

Teams registered with the NSAA can compete only with other teams that are registered with the NSAA during the softball season.

Contest Limitation. No team representing a member school in Classes A, B or C may participate in more than eighteen (18) dates; The district and state championships are not included in the eighteen dates. A tournament is one date. *Schools are limited to five (5) tournaments, including the conference tournament, during the regular season.*

Permissible Contests. Teams playing softball shall be allowed to schedule the following events:

- Single Game - two schools playing one game in one day.
- Doubleheader - two schools playing two games in one day.
- Triangular - three schools playing two pre-determined contests in one day.
- Double-Dual - four schools playing two pre-determined contests or two of the other schools in one day.
- Tournament - 4 or more teams where winners continue to advance or compete until a champion is determined (straight bracket or pool play with championship criteria).

Rescheduled Events. Rescheduling regular season or postponed varsity competition in all sports after sub-district, district or state competition begins is prohibited.

Softball Schedules. Due: August 15th, 2024

Once the softball season has begun, schools CANNOT add games to their regular season schedules.

All scheduled contests shall be played. Postponed contests shall be rescheduled by all participating schools if possible.

Supervision. The superintendent, principal or an authorized representative of the faculty shall accompany and supervise the team for its competition. NSAA Bylaw 3.3.10 pertains to all competitions during the season, as well as throughout the entire district and state championship series.

Future Dates

Year	First Practice	First Contest	District Tournaments	State Championships
2024	August 12	August 22	October 7-12	October 16-17-18 & 21
2025	August 11	August 21	October 6-11	October 15-16-17 & 20
2026	August 10	August 20	October 5-10	October 14-15-16 & 19

The season starts on the first day of practice. The first date for practice is Monday of Week 6 of the NSAA Standardized Calendar. The first date for a contest is Thursday of Week 7 of the Standardized Calendar. The season ends at the conclusion of the State Championships.

NSAA Rules Meeting. All head coaches are required to attend an NSAA Rules Meeting or complete an NSAA Rules Meeting online annually. Failure to do so will result in possible late fees and suspension penalties.

Online rules meetings are initially offered at no cost to coaches or officials, followed by a period with a \$50 "Late" Fee. The following sanctions and fees are applicable to those coaches who fail to complete the rules meeting by the expiration of the "Delinquent" Fee period.

FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE ONLINE RULES MEETING by August 16th will result in the following sanctions:

First Offense in Three-Year Period

The head coach will be suspended from coaching in any competition in that activity until:

- (1) *The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA'S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$100;*
and
- (2) The head coach successfully completes the open book (Part I) test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school's administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information.

During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

Second and Subsequent Offenses in Three-Year Period

The head coach will be suspended from coaching in all NSAA end-of-season play (sub-districts, districts, playoffs, and state competition).

- (1) *The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA'S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$200;*
and
- (2) The head coach successfully completes the open book (Part I) test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school's administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information.

During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

Softball Rules Meetings

ONLINE Softball Rules Meetings Available:

July 22, 2024 – August 14, 2024
August 15, 2024 – August 16, 2024

No Charge to Officials and Head Coaches
Late/Penalty \$50 Fee - Officials and Head Coaches

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. In order to determine if the NSAA can authorize such an accommodation, the school administration should contact the NSAA to request an accommodation hearing.

Music Licenses. Generally, music used for contests (warm-up, half-time, "walk-up" music, etc.) needs to be licensed. Some music may be in public domain; however, most music is not and will require a license. This season, take the necessary time to verify your music is licensed through the proper entities. Visit www.nfhslearn.com to view the video course to understand copyright and compliance.

Playing Rules. All contests shall be conducted under the official softball rules of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), or those approved by that organization with modifications approved by the Nebraska School Activities Association. Each school is provided with one NFHS Softball Rules Book.

The National Federation Rules Book contains several references to rules, which may be altered "by state association adoption." The following are the approved state association adoptions regarding Nebraska high school competition:

Regular Season	District Championships	State Championships
<u>8, 10 & 12-Run Rules</u>	<u>8, 10 & 12-Run Rules</u>	<u>8, 10 & 12-Run Rules</u>
National Tie-Breaker – 8 th Inning	National Tie-Breaker – 8 th Inning	National Tie-Breaker – 8 th Inning
Double First Base (Required)	Double First Base (Required)	Double First Base (Required)
Suspended Game	Suspended Game	Suspended Game
<u>Time Limit</u> - Permitted for Varsity Triangular & Tournament Play Only; NO Time Limit – Varsity Single Games, Doubleheaders & Double Duals	NO Time Limit	NO Time Limit

Time Limit. There is no time limit for single-game varsity contests or varsity doubleheaders or double duals. A time limit of one and one-half hours (1 1/2-hours) is *permitted* for triangular, and tournament play during the regular season, but not during district and State Championship play. No new inning may be started once the time limit has elapsed regardless of the number of innings

played, unless tied in tournament play. A time limit is permitted for sub-varsity level games. Time limits shall be determined prior to the beginning of play and remain consistent throughout the respective competition.

Eight, Ten and Twelve-Run Rules. Softball games are scheduled for seven innings. A game shall end after two and one-half innings or three innings when a team is 12 or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat; or shall end after three and one-half or four innings, when a team is 10 or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat; or shall end after four and one-half or five innings, when a team is 8 or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat. These rules apply to regular season, district and State Championship play.

Tie-Breaking Procedure. The national tie-breaking procedure will be used in all games. If the score is tied after seven innings, or the 1 1/2-hour time limit has expired in tournament play, the following procedure will be used:

During each half inning of the inning used to enforce the tiebreaker, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat ninth in the respective half inning being placed at second base (i.e., if the number five batter is to lead off the inning, the number four hitter in the batting order will be placed at second base). A substitute may be introduced for the runner.

Uniform Policy. Participants must keep their uniforms on while in the competition area. Coaches who are in the live-ball area to perform coaching duties must wear either a team uniform or appropriate coaching apparel in school colors or the colors of black, white, gray or khaki.

Suspended Game Policy. A regular season game called for any reason where a winner cannot be determined, or any game called at anytime for mechanical failure (i.e., artificial lights, water systems, etc.) prior to becoming an official game will be treated as a suspended game. If the game is to be completed it will be continued from the point of suspension with the lineup and batting order of each team exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension and subject to the rules of the game. Both schools involved in the game must agree to the suspension. Any game tied, but not completed, will be treated as no game from a team win/loss standpoint.

Last Date for Playing Regular Season Games. All scheduled and postponed regular season varsity contests must be played prior to the start of sub-district/district competition. Once sub-district/district competition begins, no regular season varsity contests shall be permitted.

Forfeits. Teams shall receive wildcard points for forfeited losses if the forfeit was due to extenuating between the two schools. No wildcard points shall be awarded for losses when the forfeit is required by the Executive Director or Board of Directors; an appeal to the Executive Director would be heard if the infraction leading to the NSAA required forfeiture was self-reported by the school.

Reporting Scores. Report all varsity scores to MaxPreps.com. Each individual school is responsible for reporting scores. If playing outside of Nebraska, scores will need to be reported by the Nebraska school. Teams who compete against out-of-state opponents are responsible for reporting all out-of-state opponents' current win-loss records to the NSAA throughout the season and prior to districts and state seeding.

Protests. The Board of Directors will honor only protests based upon eligibility of players. Protests based upon play situations and those which involve judgment on the part of umpires will not be accepted. Schools mutually agree in advance on the umpires to be used. After the contest has begun, the decisions of the officials are final.

Umpires. The NSAA will register umpires. Only umpires registered with NSAA are eligible to officiate varsity games.

USA Bat Standard. NFHS Rule 1-5-1d reads: "The bat shall bear either the 2000, 2004 or the USA Softball All Games certification mark and not appear on the USA Softball's Non-Approved Bats with Certification Marks list" as found [HERE](#).

NSAA Bat List Requirement. As stipulated by the National Federation, the NSAA mandates that softball playing schools and umpires keep a current copy of the *USA Non-Approved Bat List*. Member schools shall check the USA website periodically throughout the season to ensure that only legal USA bats are used for NSAA competition. [USA Bat List](#)

NSAA POLICY ON COMMENTS AND NEGATIVE ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICIALS AND JUDGES

The National Federation of State High School Associations has devised Code of Ethics guidelines for high school coaches. The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competitions. The coach or sponsor should respect and support contest officials and judges. The coach or sponsor shall not indulge in conduct that would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials, judges or players is unethical.

The Nebraska School Activities Association has embraced that Coaches Code of Ethics and has established policies and standards that will cultivate the ideals of good sportsmanship, professionalism, and conduct. It shall be the responsibility of each member school to ensure that all individuals directly associated with the interscholastic program conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike and professional manner.

The high school coach or director is a representative of the school at interscholastic activity events. It is the responsibility of all coaches and directors to serve as role models for students and the public.

It is the expectation that all coaches, directors, administrators, and student participants shall refrain from negative criticism of NSAA member institutions, officials, adjudicators, judges, etc. in public statements before, during or after interscholastic events. The appropriate public response to media questions at all venues regarding officiating/judging is "per NSAA policy, I am unable to comment." Any other response is a violation of this board policy and is subject to penalty.

It would be considered a violation of this NSAA policy to include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Making degrading and/or critical remarks about officials or adjudicators or the officiating or judging before, during or after an event either on or off-site, via social media, or through any public means.
- b. Detaining the officials/adjudicators/judges during or following the event to request a ruling or explanation of actions or evaluation by the official(s)/adjudicator(s)/judges.
- c. Entering the officials dressing area following the contest.

Negative actions by an individual directly associated with the program shall be reported to the NSAA office by the school and/or by the head contest official, adjudicator, judge, or manager. The school shall document the results of their investigation and actions taken, where necessary and appropriate. The NSAA Executive Director shall determine the appropriate penalties for violation of this board policy.

MEDIA-RADIO, TELEVISION & PHOTOGRAPHY

All media operations (admission, access and accommodations) for **Regular Season** contests are at the Host School discretion.

The NSAA Media Manual outlines policies for Media Credentials, Student Media, Broadcasting Policies and other specifics surrounding NSAA post-season contests. Post-season contests include Districts, Sub-Districts, District Finals, Playoffs and State Championships.

[NSAA Media Info](#)

DISTRICT & STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Classification of Schools

1. Schools shall be divided into three classes for Softball.
2. This classification is based on grades 9-11 enrollment from September of the year which immediately proceeds the classification period. Class A will be classified based on a total enrollment of 850 and above with the total enrollment figures doubled for unisex schools. The remaining schools will be divided evenly into Class B & Class C using the girl only enrollment (If there is an uneven number of schools, the larger number of schools will be in Class C. Schools can petition to play up a class in all activities. Classifications will be done on a yearly basis, except for Class A, which is classified on a two-year basis. **2024-2025 is the 1st year of the two-year Class A classification period. No schools will be added or removed from Class A during this period regardless of enrollment.**
3. If schools are tied in enrollment for the last position or positions of a class, the following tiebreaker will be applied:
 - a. The first tiebreaker will be a three-year average of enrollment which includes the year on which the current year's classification is based and the two previous years. The higher three-year average will be in the larger class.
 - b. If the tie still exists, then the school with the higher immediate previous year's enrollment will be placed in the larger class.
 - c. If a tie still exists, it will be decided by a coin flip in the NSAA office.
4. Opting Up – a school may opt up one classification. The deadline for submitting a request to the NSAA is one week from when classifications are released. No team will move up to fill the void made by a school opting up a classification.

Schools registered for softball with a total enrollment of 850 and above will be placed in Class A.

District Assignment Procedures. All Class A schools in softball are to be placed into seven districts. All districts will be determined by a serpentine method (not modified), based upon the NSAA wildcard point system, within one week prior to the first district competition. The highest seed in each district will host the tournament.

Class A District Assignments & Seeding

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6	Group 7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	13	12	11	10	9	8
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
28	27	26	25	24	23	22
29	30	31	32			

Class B sub-district assignments – Class B schools are created using the total number of Class B Teams and based solely on geographic location starting West and moving East. The number of sub-districts and number of teams in each sub-district will be assigned as follows: number of total Class B teams; Sub-District Assignments Greater than forty (40); Ten (10) sub-districts will be four teams with sub-districts of five teams being created for the extra teams over forty (40). The five team sub-districts will be the teams that are furthest East. Equal to forty (40); Ten (10) sub-districts will be four (4) teams. Less than forty (40); The number of sub districts will be the result of dividing the total number of teams in class B by four (4) rounded down to the nearest whole number. Sub-districts will be four (4) teams with sub-districts of five (5) teams being created for the extra teams over the result of four (4) times the number of sub-districts. The five (5) team sub-districts will be the teams that are furthest East.

Class B district championship assignments will consist of the ten (10) sub-district champions and the six (6) teams (that did not win a sub-district) with the highest wildcard point averages following sub-districts. The districts will be a one day, best of three (3) series with the higher seed hosting the district unless they choose not to host. Seeding will take place after all the games within class B sub-districts are completed. Pairings for districts will be based on wildcard point averages following sub-districts (1 v 16, 2 v 15, 3 v 14, 4 v 13, 5 v 12, 6 v 11, 7 v 10, 8 v 9).

Class C sub-district assignments –

1. Class C schools in softball are to be placed into ten districts.
2. The ten districts will be determined using a serpentine method (not modified), based upon the NSAA wildcard point system, on the Monday of week 13, prior to the first district tournament. The top seed in each district will be offered a contract to host the district tournament. If the higher seed is unable to host the district tournament, the subsequent seed shall be offered a contract until a location is secured.
3. If the total number of teams is not divisible by four (4), then sub-districts of five (5) teams will be created for extra teams over that number divisible by four (4). Class C sub-districts will be single elimination with the winner qualifying for district finals. The highest seed will be the host unless they choose not to host.

Class C district championship assignments will consist of the ten (10) sub-district champions and the six (6) teams (that did not win a sub-district) with the highest wildcard point averages following sub-districts. The districts will be a one day, best of three (3) series with the higher seed hosting the district unless they choose not to host. Seeding will take place after all the games within class C sub-districts are completed. Pairings for districts will be based on wildcard point averages following sub-districts (1 v 16, 2 v 15, 3 v 14, 4 v 13, 5 v 12, 6 v 11, 7 v 10, 8 v 9).

Bands & Artificial Noisemakers.

1. Bands are permitted during sub-district, district, and state contests.
2. Members MUST pay regular admission for sub-district, district, and state contests.
3. The use of artificial noisemakers is prohibited. (Examples: air horns, whistles, bells, etc.) Megaphones are to be used by cheerleaders only. Band instruments, including drums, are not to be played at any time other than when the entire band is playing. Bands should not be permitted to play except prior to the game, at intermissions and time-outs.

DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

District Championships. In Class A the district championships will be double elimination with the winner qualifying for the state championship. In Classes B and C, the district championships will consist of the ten (10) sub-district champions and the six (6) teams (that did not win a sub-district) with the highest wildcard point averages following sub-districts.

If, due to weather, the championship (Class A) or sub-district/district final (Classes B & C) format is changed to single elimination, all schools will be notified. The championship director and the Executive Director of the NSAA will make the decision. If a single elimination tournament is played, the wildcard point system will be computed for the number of games played. For example, if District 1 must play single-elimination and other districts play double-elimination, no adjustment will be made in computing wildcard points.

Handicapped Accessibility. Facilities used as a district site must provide reasonable accommodations to people with special needs.

District Dates. Class A: October 9-10, 2024

Class B/C: October 7 (sub-districts), October 11 or 12 (districts), 2024

District & Sub-District Brackets –Teams shall be placed on brackets by the NSAA. All Class A districts will be scheduled over a two-day period (double elimination) and per the following game schedule. Class B/C sub-districts will follow the one-day, single elimination format.

**30 minute break in between each game (to include warm-ups)*

Double Elimination Formats

a. A (4) four-team district will be scheduled as follows:

Day 1 -Game 1- Seeds #1 vs #4

Day 2 -

Game 2- Seeds #2 vs #3

Game 3- Loser 1 vs Loser 2

Game 4- Winner 1 vs Winner 2

Game 5- Winner 3 vs Loser 4

Championship: Game 6- Winner 4 vs Winner 5

Game 7 (if necessary)

b. A (5) five-team district will be scheduled as follows:

Day 1 -Game 1- Seeds #4 vs #5,

Day 2 -

Game 2- Seeds #2 vs #3,

Game 3- Seed #1 vs winner 1

Game 4- Loser 1 vs Loser 2

Game 6- Loser 3 vs Winner 4

Game 5- Winner 3 vs Winner 2

Game 7- Loser 5 vs Winner 6

Championship: Game 8- Winner 5 vs Winner 7

Game 9 (if necessary)

c. A (6) six-team district will be scheduled as follows:

Day 1 -Game 1- Seeds #4 vs #5

Day 2 -

Game 2- Seeds #3 vs #6

Game 3- Seed #1 vs Winner 1

Game 4- Seed #2 vs Winner 2

Game 5- Loser 1 vs Loser 4

Game 6- Loser 2 vs Loser 3

Game 7- Winner 3 vs Winner 4

Game 8- Winner 5 vs Winner 6

Game 9- Loser 7 vs Winner 8

Championship: Game 10- Winner 7 vs Winner 9

Game 11 (if necessary)

d. A (7) seven-team district will be scheduled as follows:

Day 1 -Game 1- Seeds #4 vs #5

Day 2 -

Game 2- Seeds #3 vs #6

Game 3- Seed #2 vs Seed #7

Game 4- Seed #1 vs Winner 1

Game 5- Winner 2 vs Winner 3

Game 6- Loser 2 vs Loser 3

Game 7- Loser 5 vs Loser 1

Game 8- Loser 4 vs Winner 6

Game 9- Winner 4 vs Winner 5

Game 10- Winner 7 vs Winner 8

Game 11- Loser 9 vs Winner 10

Championship: Game 12- Winner 9 vs Winner 11

Game 13 (if necessary)

e. A (8) eight-team district will be scheduled as follows:

Day 1 - Game 1- Seeds #1 vs #8

Day 2 -

Game 2- Seeds #4 vs #5

Game 3- Seeds #3 vs #6

Game 4- Seeds #2 vs #7

Game 5- Loser 1 vs Loser 2

Game 6- Loser 3 vs Loser 4

Game 7- Winner 1 vs Winner 2

Game 8- Winner 3 vs Winner 4

Game 9- Loser 8 vs Winner 5

Game 10- Winner 6 vs Loser 7

Game 11- Winner 7 vs Winner 8

Game 12- Winner 9 vs Winner 10

Game 13- Loser 11 vs Winner 12

Championship: Game 14- Winner 11 vs Winner 13

Game 15 (if necessary)

Single Elimination Formats

a. A (3) three-team district will be scheduled as follows:

Day 1 – Game 1 – Seeds #2 vs #3

Championship: Game 2 – Seed #1 vs Winner 1

b. A (4) four-team district will be scheduled as follows:

Day 1 – Game 1 – Seeds #1 vs #4

Game 2 – Seeds #2 vs #3

Championship: Game 3 – Winner 1 vs Winner 2

c. A (5) five-team district will be scheduled as follows:

Day 1 – Game 1 – Seeds #4 vs #5

Game 2 – Seeds #1 vs Winner 1

Game 3 – Seeds #2 vs #3

Championship: Game 4 – Winner 2 vs Winner 3

A request for a modification of the above format must be approved through the NSAA Office with all participating schools agreeing to the change in format. At any point in which a team would be confronted with playing games back-to-back, a 30-minute break (including warm-up) shall be allowed into the schedule.

District & Sub-District Seeding. District competition shall be seeded based upon wildcard points. No changes to seeding can be made once the district seeding is complete. All Class A schools in softball are to be placed into seven (7) districts. The districts will be determined using a serpentine method (not modified), based upon the NSAA wildcard point system within two weeks prior to the first district.

Games through the Saturday before districts (October 5th) will be counted for seeding Class A with tournament seeding announced the Monday, (October 7th) before districts. Class B: Games through the Tuesday, (October 1st) before sub-districts will be counted for seeding sub-districts with the seeding announced on Thursday, (October 3rd). Class C: Games through the Saturday, (September 28th) before sub-districts will be counted for seeding sub-districts with the seeding announced on Thursday, (October 3rd).

Home Team Designation: During district and state tournament play, the home team shall be determined by the highest seeded team based on power points. If additional games are needed to determine a winner, the home and away team status will be alternated for the next game of the series until a winner is determined.

Out-of-State win-loss records will be included thru the following dates for seeding purposes:

- a. Class B/C Sub-district seeding – September 28th
- b. Class A district seeding – October 5th
- c. Class B/C district final seeding – October 5th
- d. State Championship seeding – October 10th

District Entry Deadline. NSAA entry forms are accessed and submitted online. The athletic/activities director will give the certified coach the login to this activity. Go to the NSAA web site (www.nsaahome.org) and click on “School Login.” Select your school, enter your login, and then choose “View/Edit Your Form” to complete your entry form (detailed instructions can be obtained from the web site). You may make changes to this form up until the due date. After that, you will need to contact the NSAA. This entry form is due September 30th.

Admission Prices. Admission prices for district tournaments are \$6.00 for adults per session, \$5.00 for students.

Finances. An online financial form from each district site must be filled out and submitted to the NSAA. This softball financial form is accessible through your NSAA home page by using the Activities Director login code. Under District Host Information, you will find the “Softball” financial form to complete and submit. After paying the umpires, any other expenses incurred, plus the NSAA portions, the remaining receipts are for your school to keep. To complete this online form you will need: 1) the approximate attendance; 2) total gate receipts; 3) total game fees for officials; and 4) total mileage for officials. If the host school does not meet expenses, the schools in the district may be assessed a fee to equal the deficit.

Eligible Players. Players listed on the district entry form will be eligible to play in district or State Championship games. Substitutes can be listed, but no more than twenty (20) players may be in uniform for district or State Championship games. If substitutes are made, inform your district director as soon as possible. Anyone substituted must be eligible according to all NSAA rules. Once the tournament begins no substitution may be made unless an athlete is injured or ill, which a physician must verify.

Suspension of Play. Play during district tournament contests may be suspended when the umpires consider the weather or ground conditions unfit to play. Tournament officials and umpires will determine when play is to resume. Once play has been resumed, the game will continue from the point of suspension with the lineup and batting order of each team exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment play was suspended.

Umpires. Assigned by NSAA. \$65 per game, per umpire, \$1.00 per mile one-way given to the ump traveling the furthest. The crew may split this mileage fee between/among themselves in any manner they determine. Officials living in the host city will not be paid mileage.

Softball. The Baden Optic Yellow 2BSFPY – NFHS Approved ball will be used for all NSAA district and state contests.

REMINDER:

- Starting January 1, 2025, new ball specifications will be required for high school competition. Balls manufactured with the current specifications will be permitted for use through 2024.

	SIZE	COR	COMPRESSION	WEIGHT & CIRCUMFERENCE
Before January 1, 2025	12"	.47 max	375 lbs. max	6 ¼ to 7 ounces 11 ⅞ to 12 ¼ inches
After January 1, 2025	12"	.47 max	325 lbs. +/- 50	6 ½ to 7 ounces 11 ⅞ to 12 ¼ inches

Awards. The winner and runner-up of each district tournament will receive plaques. Wildcard qualifying teams will also receive plaques.

State Qualifiers. Each district tournament champion qualifies for the State Championships. Other teams will qualify for the State Championships via wildcards in Class A. In Classes B and C, no teams will qualify for the State Championships via wildcard points. Basis for selection will be a point average achieved by dividing the number of games played into the points accumulated by the following:

Wildcard Criteria

The results of all games played against the varsity teams of schools located within Nebraska and against the varsity teams of schools located in other states will be used to:

- Calculate point averages.
- To determine the win and loss record for designating a team as a first, second, third, or fourth division team.
- Wildcard criteria shall be used for district and state championship seeding and pairings.

All games played by a school's varsity team, regardless of the location of the opposing school, will count toward the number of permitted contests in a particular sport.

ALL CLASSES

- Seven teams in Class A, eight teams in Class B and eight teams in Class C will qualify for the state championships by winning their respective district finals.
- One additional team in Class A that fails to qualify through district tournament competition, will be chosen to complete the eight-team tournament field.
- These wildcard teams will be selected in the following manner:
 - All games played against the varsity teams of schools located within Nebraska and against the varsity teams of schools located in other states will be used to determine the wildcard point average.
 - All win-loss records for out-of-state opponents will be updated through the above-mentioned schedule.
 - The results of all such contests played through the district tournaments shall be used.
 - This includes regularly scheduled contests, tournament contests, and district contests.
- FORFEITS: Teams shall receive wildcard points for forfeited losses if the forfeit was due to extenuating circumstances between the two schools. No wildcard points shall be awarded for losses when the forfeit is imposed by the Executive Director or Board of Directors; an appeal to the Executive Director would be heard if the infraction leading to the NSAA imposed forfeiture was self-reported by the school.
- FORFEITS: When a school's varsity team is unable to complete the season, those remaining teams on that school's regular season schedule may either:

- a. Receive forfeit wins for those scheduled contests and shall be awarded wildcard points for those forfeit wins. Wildcard points will be determined by the forfeiting team's record at the time of seeding for post-season competition. If a team declares to participate in the postseason and does not participate, forfeit wins will be issued to their opponents for those postseason matches.
- OR
- b. If more than seven days remain before any level of postseason seeding is to take place in that sport, a school may replace the forfeited contest on their schedule with another opponent/contest. Replacements that may be added to the schedule are limited to either teams similarly affected by the forfeiting team, or, teams that have an unfilled, allowable contest opening on their schedule. Replacement contests must be scheduled a minimum of seven days in advance of any postseason seeding and will count towards postseason/wildcard seeding.

6. Varsity teams of schools located out of the state if Nebraska will be converted to a Nebraska classification using enrollment figures obtained from that state's activities association.
7. The following point evaluation scale will be used to determine a team's total points:

	1 st Division	2 nd Division	3 rd Division	4 th Division
	Team	Team	Team	Team
Victory Over	50	47	44	41
Loss To	39	36	33	30

- a. A first division team is a team which has won at least 75% of its games played. Examples: 20-0, 19-1, 18-2, 16-4, and 15-5.
 - b. A second division team is a team which has won at least 50% but less than 75% of its games played. Examples: 14-6, 13-7, 12-8, 11-9, 10-10.
 - c. A third division team is a team which has won at least 25% but less than 50% of its games played. Examples: 9-11, 8-12, 7-13, 6-14, and 5-15.
 - d. A fourth division team is a team which has won less than 25% of its games played. Examples: 4-16, 3-17, 2-18, 1-19, 0-20.
8. No points are deducted for playing teams that are classified below your classification.
 9. In competition with schools one classification above yours, 2 bonus points will be awarded.
 10. In competition with schools two classifications above yours, 3 bonus points will be awarded.
 11. Class A schools will be awarded 2 bonus points when competing against other Class A schools.
 12. A team's point average will be determined by dividing the total number of points by the number of contests played.
 13. The teams failing to qualify through district competition in their class but having the highest point average based on the year's record after the completion of all the district tournaments will be selected as the wildcard qualifiers.
 14. If a tie exists for one or both qualifying spots, the following procedure will be used to select the team or teams.
 - a. If only two teams have identical point averages and are tied for one of the qualifying spots and the teams have played each other, the team that won the contest or the majority of contests between the two teams in question will qualify for the state championships or higher seed.
 - b. If the two teams have not played each other or if more than two teams are tied, step C will be used to determine which team qualifies for the state championships or higher seed.
 - c. If two or more teams have identical point averages and are tied for one or both of the remaining qualifying spots or higher seed, the team or teams playing the greatest number of first division teams (Class A: "in their classification") will be selected. If only two teams remain after this step and the two teams tied have played each other, step A will be used to determine the qualifier for the state championships or higher seed.
 - d. If a tie still exists, the team's opponents' wins and losses will be totaled, and the winning percentages calculated. The team whose opponents have the highest percentage based on this calculation will be chosen.
 - e. If a tie still exists, the representative will be decided by a coin flip in the NSAA office.

Classification of Out-of-State Schools for Wildcard Consideration

When determining the classification of an out-of-state school for wildcard purposes, if the school's three-grade enrollment is less than the lowest enrollment in a particular class, the out-of-state school shall be classified in the immediate lower class. The enrollment of Nebraska schools opting up to play in a higher class will not be considered when comparing out-of-state schools for classification purposes.

Classification of Out-of-State Schools for Wildcard Consideration When Enrollment is Identical to Schools in Two Different Classes

In determining classifications for NSAA activities, if two or more schools are tied for the final place in a particular class, the tie is broken by using the schools' three-year average enrollment for the most recent three years. When determining the classification of an out-of-state school for wildcard purposes, if the out-of-state school's three-grade enrollment is identical to the enrollments shared by schools in two different classes, the out-of-state school shall be placed in the higher class.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

Dates. The state championships will be held October 16, 17, and 18 at the Bill Smith Softball Complex in Hastings. The championship final will be held October 21 at Connie Claussen Field at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Home Team Designation: During district and state tournament play, Throughout the tournament, the home team shall be determined by the highest seeded team based on power points. When there is an "if necessary" game required, the home and away status will be alternated.

The state championships will be double elimination. Refer to state championship brackets within this manual.

Seeding. Teams in the state championships will be seeded according to wildcard points calculated through the end of the district tournaments. The first-round pairings will match the following seeded teams: 1 vs. 8, 2 vs. 7, 3 vs. 6, and 4 vs. 5. If teams are tied, the wildcard tie-breaking procedure will be used to break the tie. No changes to seeding can be made once the state seeding is complete.

Suspension of Play. Play during state championships contests may be suspended when the umpires consider the weather or ground conditions unfit to play. Championship officials and umpires will determine when play is to resume. Once play has been resumed, the game will continue from the point of suspension with the lineup and batting order of each team exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment play was suspended.

Postponement of Play. Should inclement weather threaten the championships, the decision to postpone play will be made by the championship directors. The revised schedule will be worked out and the coaches will be notified during a meeting with championship officials. Should play be postponed so the event cannot be completed on Friday, the remainder of the games for the class or classes affected will be played Saturday unless there is a direct conflict with the Band Master's State Marching Band Contest. If a conflict exists, the championship will be completed on Monday.

Reimbursement. Mileage reimbursements will be based on the number of participants (qualifiers, number on roster) and one coach. (Note: Student Managers will not be included.) A school's mileage reimbursement will be figured using the following formula: (#miles one way x # trips) x appropriate amount listed below:

Amount per mile	Number of participants/coaches
\$0.85	1-6
\$1.70	7-12
\$2.55	13-18
\$3.40	19-24

Lodging. If lodging is used, \$20 per participant and one coach will be paid based on the following criteria: (Note: Times listed are scheduled competition start times.)

Night before competing—

Before 10:00 a.m., 76 + miles away

Between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., 150+ miles away

At or after 3:00 p.m., 250+ miles away

Night of (still competing in State Championships)—

76+ miles away

Final Night (day eliminated)—

5:00 p.m. or later, 200+ miles away

Admission Prices. State championship admission prices for an all-day in-and-out pass shall be \$10.00 for adults and \$7.00 for students ages five through high school.

Team Pass Gate. No player or coaches' passes will be issued. Players and coaches must enter through the team pass gate. Only players and coaches listed on the official team roster, as submitted to the NSAA, will be allowed access to the state championship site free of charge through the team pass gate. Up to two trainers or bench personnel will also be allowed admittance. Each team shall be allowed no more than 25 individuals (20 players, 5 individuals made of coaches, additional trainers or bench personnel).

Awards. The winner and runner-up in the state championships will receive trophies. Members of the state championship team will receive gold medals and the championship team's coach will receive a special award. Members of the state runner-up team will receive silver medals.

Expected Behaviors at Awards Ceremonies. Education-based activities give students the ability to train, participate and compete in a structured setting. With that, students often learn lessons that are sometimes not taught in the traditional academic classroom. Some of those lessons include learning to win and lose with dignity and grace. As such, the following guidelines have been developed for awards ceremonies at the conclusion of sub-district, district and state contests.

Only one team can win a district or state championship, yet the NSAA provides trophies, plaques and medals to the losing teams in many of the postseason activities. It shall be the expectation that both teams shall accept their medals and trophies in a sporting and willing manner. Some losing teams have been reluctant to step forward and accept their awards, and coaches and administrators need to assure sporting behaviors for their student athletes. It is natural to be disappointed in losing the contest, but stepping forward at this time of disappointment is a life lesson that helps mold proper and sporting behaviors. It is the expectation!

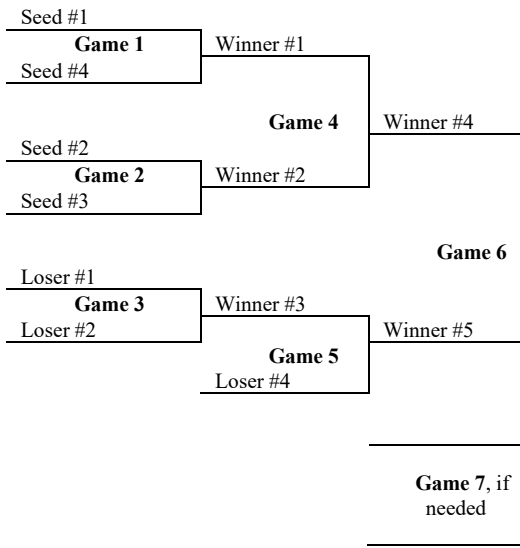
The executive director or the NSAA Board of Directors shall determine the type and severity of sanctions to schools that do not comply with these expectations.

State Championship Umpires. The NSAA office will hire umpires for the state championships, using recommendations from schools, NSAA evaluators, tournament directors, and officials' associations. Umpires must work high school games to be considered for state championship assignments.

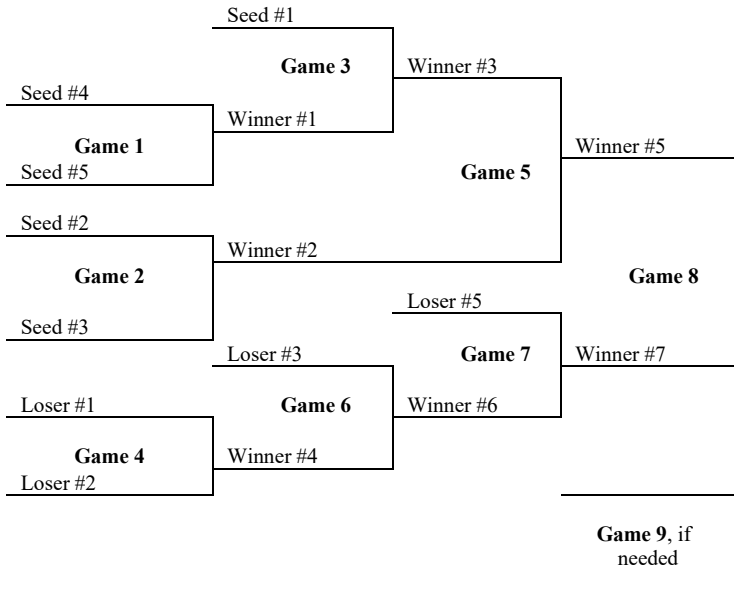
Additional Championship Information. Schools qualifying for the state championships will receive a letter of instructions (via e-mail) and a team packet upon their arrival at the state championship site.

SUB-DISTRICT/DISTRICT TOURNAMENT BRACKETS (Double Elimination)

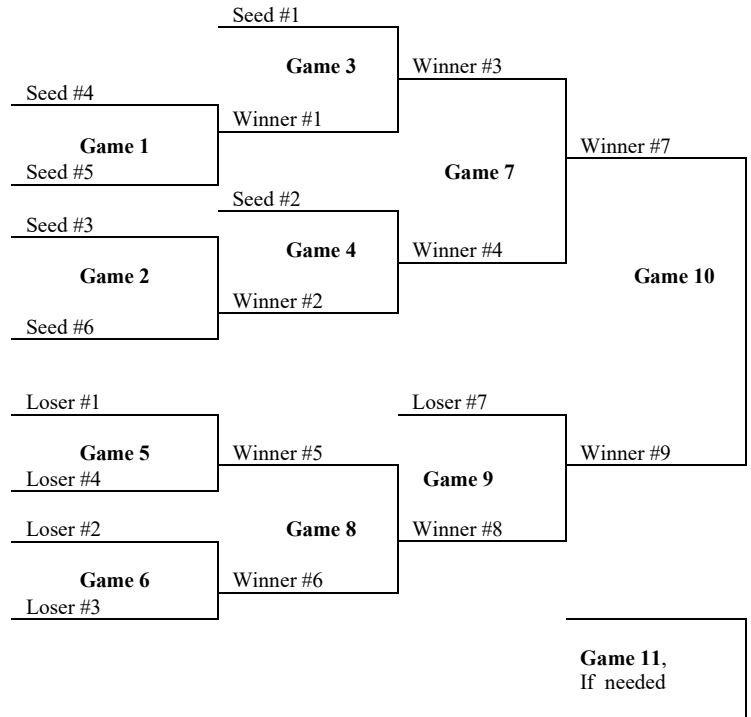
FOUR-TEAM BRACKET



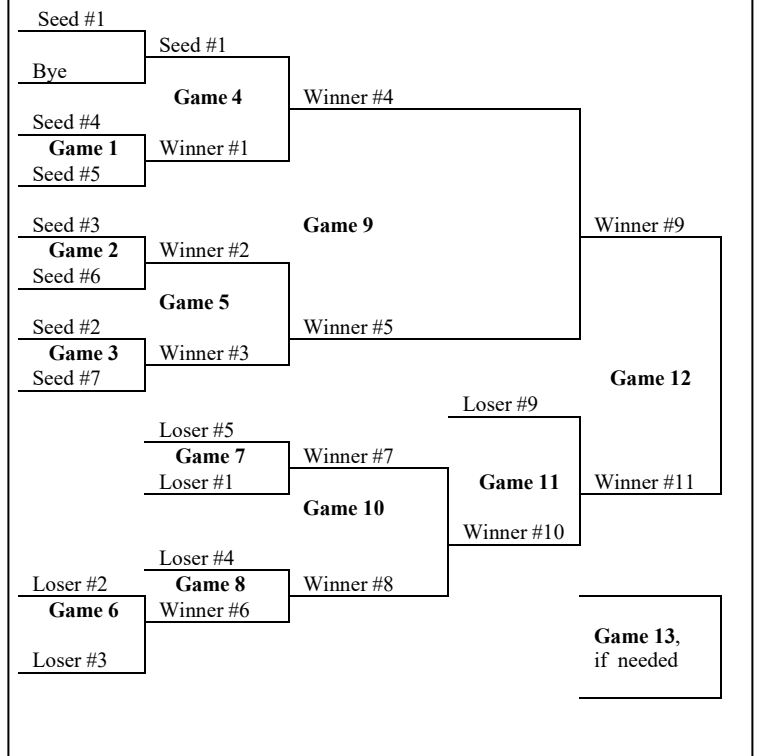
FIVE-TEAM BRACKET



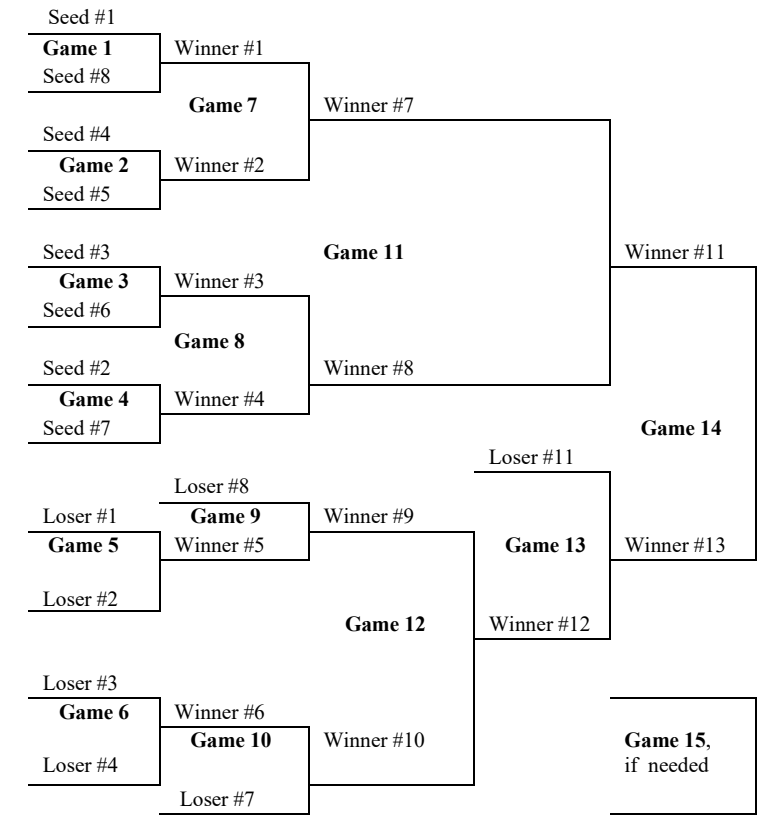
SIX-TEAM BRACKET



SEVEN-TEAM BRACKET

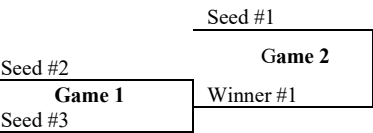


EIGHT-TEAM BRACKET

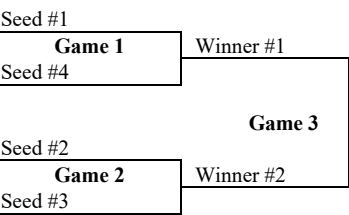


SUB-DISTRICT TOURNAMENT BRACKETS (Single Elimination)

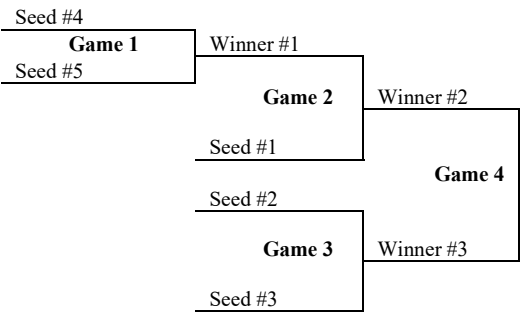
THREE-TEAM BRACKET



FOUR-TEAM BRACKET



FIVE-TEAM BRACKET





Certified USA Equipment

Approved/Non-Approved USA Softball Bats: [HERE](#)

- Select “Menu”
- Under the “PLAY USA SOFTBALL” heading, select “Certified Equipment”
- Scroll down the page and select “BATS”
- In the middle of the page, there is a scroll bar entitled “USA Softball Bat Testing & Certification Program”
- Scroll down the page under “APPROVED BATS: 2000, 2004 and 2013” and click “GO” next to the “Display All” or Choose the Brand from the dropdown box.
- [NON-APPROVED BATS: 2004 and Beyond](#)