

2011-12 TSSAA Handbook

FOOTBALL REGULATIONS

I. CLASSIFICATION PLAN

In Division I, TSSAA schools shall be divided into six classes for football; in Division II, TSSAA schools shall be divided into two classes for football. (See "Classification" in this Handbook for the plan used for determining classification for TSSAA schools.)

II. GENERAL REGULATIONS (Division I and Division II)

- A. All regular-season games must be completed by the Saturday preceding the first-round play-off games to be counted in the play-off standings.

The play-off bracket is set by noon on Saturday preceding the first round of the play-offs.
- B. In the event of a tie for a championship, second place, or qualifier, should one of the team's opponents play 11 games, only the first 10 games played shall be counted. Should two teams play each other twice, only the first game will be counted in district/region standings or will be considered in the event of a tie in the district/region to determine which team will advance to the playoff series. Any team ineligible to participate in the play-off series will not figure in a tie for a district/region championship.
- C. Schools shall have 10 weeks to play 10 or fewer regular-season games. After the first Friday of the season there can be no change in the schedule unless such change is approved by the state office. Schools may play one week earlier than the scheduled starting date provided both schools agree.
- D. Schools that do not qualify for the play-offs may schedule an additional game, bringing the total number of games to 11. No member school shall schedule a game that conflicts with the play-off games.
- E. No school will be permitted to schedule an 11th game, a bowl game or an additional game if there is any possibility that the school may qualify for the play-offs.
- F. Schools that decide not to participate in the play-off series at the beginning of any classification period may not participate until the next reclassification period. Schools that decide not to participate in the play-off series must notify the state office in writing by October 1 of the year preceding the start of a new classification period.
- G. A school must participate in the play-off series and win at least five games in order to be eligible to participate in a bowl game.
- H. Schools that decide not to participate in the play-off series are not obligated to participate against other teams within the district nor are other teams obligated to participate against that school.
- I. The season for a team shall end when a team is eliminated from the play-off series or wins the state championship.
- J. If a Tennessee team plays an out-of-state opponent, the home team's state association rules will apply. Out-of-state teams coming into Tennessee should be advised that Tennessee does provide for breaking ties and that all regulation games that end in a tie in Tennessee shall be broken. (Should a team have a tie on its record, it shall be considered as one-half game won and one-half game lost.)
- K. No schools may tape or film a practice or a game involving two other teams. A school may tape or film its own practice or its own game.
- L. **NFHS Football Rule 3-1-2 (Mercy Rule);** Beginning in the second half, if the point differential is 35 points or more, a continuous clock will be used. The clock will only stop for charged time-outs, injuries, and scores. The try will always be an un-timed down. The clock shall start when the ball is kicked on the kickoff. If the point differential goes below 35 points, go back to regular timing rules.
- M. **Official Clock:** The controls for the electric clock operator must be on the field rather than in the press box. If the controls for the clock become inoperable after the officials arrive at the site of the contest, the officials may keep the clock in the press box. Schools may request permission from the Executive Director to keep the clock in the press box as an option if, in the opinion of the Executive Director, the school has made a valid attempt to meet the requirement of having controls for the ECO on the field. In all cases where an official goes to the press box, adequate security must be provided by the home school's administration for the officials going to and from the press box. The home team is responsible for making sure the controls for the ECO are on the field and in working

2011-12 TSSAA Handbook

order. This applies to city stadiums and college stadiums that might host high school football games. In 2010, fields that do not have controls for the ECO on the field cannot host a play-off unless permission is granted by the Executive Director.

- N. Video taping or filming is permitted if the taping or filming is for private use or use by the two schools involved and not for public or commercial use. Video taping or filming must be done from the individual's seat. Individuals will not be allowed to use tripods. A school taping or filming its own game may use a tripod. A school will not be allowed to tape or film a game unless its team is involved in the game. All taping or filming by a school may be approved by the local Game Director, and the Game Director shall assign space, when available, from which the school may tape or film.

III. GENERAL REGULATIONS (Division I: Class 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, 6A)

- A. There shall be 24 teams in the Class 1A and Class 2A play-offs. There shall be 32 teams in the Class 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A play-offs.
- B. Each district/region shall be comprised of teams from two subdivisions.
1. In Class A, districts/regions will be comprised teams from two subdivisions: Class 1A and Class 2A
 2. In Class AA, districts will be comprised of teams from two subdivisions: Class 3A and Class 4A.
 3. In Class AAA, districts shall be comprised of teams from two subdivisions: Class 5A and Class 6A.
- C. Teams are required to play all other teams in their district/region unless the district/region is comprised of nine teams. In the case of a nine team district/region, the district/region can vote to play a "pod schedule". The nine teams would be placed in three groups of three teams. Each team would play the other two teams in their pod and two teams from the other two pods for a total of six district/region games. The six district/region games in the pod schedule shall be designated as district/region games for each team. If a team chooses to play a game against a team in the district/region that is not a designated district/region opponent, the game shall count as a non-district/non-region game for the purpose of district/region standings.
- D. Teams shall qualify for the play-offs by finishing 1st or 2nd in their district/region or by placing high enough in the state wide standings for their classification based on a set criterion.

If the 1st place team in the district is under disciplinary action from TSSAA and, as a result, is not eligible for the play-offs then the 2nd place team shall be moved up to 1st place and the 3rd place team shall be moved up to 2nd place. If the 2nd place team in the district is under disciplinary action from TSSAA and, as a result, is not eligible for the play-offs then the 3rd place team shall be moved up to 2nd place.

For the purpose of district/region standings, the following tie-breaking procedures shall be applied and all regular season games, both district/region and non-district/non-region, shall count. If at any point when the following tie-breaking procedures are applied, one team has beaten all the other teams that are tied for a play-off position, that team shall be rated above the others. After any position in the district/region standings has been determined, the tie-breaker procedure shall begin all over again to determine the next position. This procedure shall be repeated to determine all places in the district/region.

Tie-Breaker Procedures:

1. The team with the greatest number of victories.
2. The team who plays the greatest number of team who win 50 percent or more of their games.
3. The team who has the greatest number of victories over teams winning 50 percent or more of their games.
4. The team whose opponents have earned the most victories.
5. The team whose opponents have received fewer defeats.
6. The team who has the greatest number of victories over teams in its own class.
7. Ten yard-line overtime procedure at neutral site Monday night at 7:30 P.M.

Once the district/region champions and runners up have been determined, the remainder of the 32 team bracket in 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A and the remainder of the 24 team bracket in 1A and 2A shall be completed with teams as

2011-12 TSSAA Handbook

they appear on the overall standings within each classification (1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A). The standings will be determined with the following criteria:

Note: Some of the tie-breaker criteria below involve games against non-Division I opponents. If a team plays a school that is not in Division I, the following criteria will be used to determine that schools' classification for the purpose of breaking ties. Non-Division I being non-TSSAA schools, TSSAA Division II schools, and out-of-state schools.

The non-Division I school's enrollment will be used. That school's enrollment will then be applied to the current TSSAA enrollment breakdowns of 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A. If the school is non-public, its enrollment will be multiplied by 1.8. If the school is a single sex private school, the enrollment will be doubled and also multiplied by 1.8.

1. The team with the greatest number of victories.
2. The team who plays the greatest number of teams who win 50 percent or more of their games.
3. The team who has the greatest number of victories over teams winning 50 percent or more of their games.
4. The team whose opponents have earned the most victories.
5. The teams whose opponents have received the fewest defeats.
6. Total wins by the opponents of teams defeated.
7. The team with the greatest number of victories in their own classification.
8. The team who has the greatest number of victories over teams in their own classification winning 50 percent or more of their games.
9. The team whose opponents in their own classification have earned the most victories.
10. The team whose opponents in their own classification have received fewer defeats.
11. Total wins by the defeated opponents within their own classification.
12. The team with the greatest number of victories over teams in a larger classification.
13. The team who has the greatest number of victories over teams in a larger classification winning 50 percent or more of their games.
14. The team whose opponents in a larger classification have earned the most victories.
15. The team whose opponents in a larger classification have received fewer defeats.
16. Total wins by the opponents of teams in a larger classification defeated.
17. Coin toss

Once the 24 teams have been selected in the Class 1A and 2A playoffs, the teams will be geographically grouped into four six-team quadrants. Once the 32 teams have been selected in the Class 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A playoffs, the teams will be geographically grouped into four eight-team quadrants. This grouping will be done without regard to district/region alignments.

Priority for seeding once the teams have been placed in their geographic quadrants shall be as follows:

1. Teams finishing 1st in their district will receive first priority.
2. Teams finishing 2nd in their district will receive second priority.
3. Teams who do not finish 1st or 2nd in their district and qualify based on their position in the football play-off standings shall receive last priority.

2011-12 TSSAA Handbook

IV. THE PLAY-OFF GAMES (DIVISION 1: Class 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A)

- A. The first-round games in all classifications shall be played on the 11th Friday of the football season. The second round shall be played on the 12th Friday, the quarterfinals on the 13th Friday, the semifinals on the 14th Friday, and the championship games shall be played on either the following 15th Thursday, Friday or Saturday.
- B. In Class 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A and 6A the higher seeded team shall be the host school. If the two schools are the same seed, in odd numbered years the top team in each bracket shall be the host team. In even-numbered years the bottom team in each bracket shall be the host team.
- C. The host school is to hold the games in stadiums with adequate facilities and large enough to handle the crowds. Adequate facilities include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Separate dressing rooms for both home and visiting teams with access to restrooms and shower facilities.
 - 2. Separate dressing areas for officials with access to restrooms and shower facilities.
 - 3. A restraining fence around the field or a stadium configuration that allows for control of spectator access to playing area.

If the host school does not feel that its facilities are acceptable for a football play-off game, then it shall be the responsibility of the host school to secure adequate facilities. If additional facilities are secured, then the visiting school and TSSAA must be notified by noon on Saturday preceding that week's play-off game.

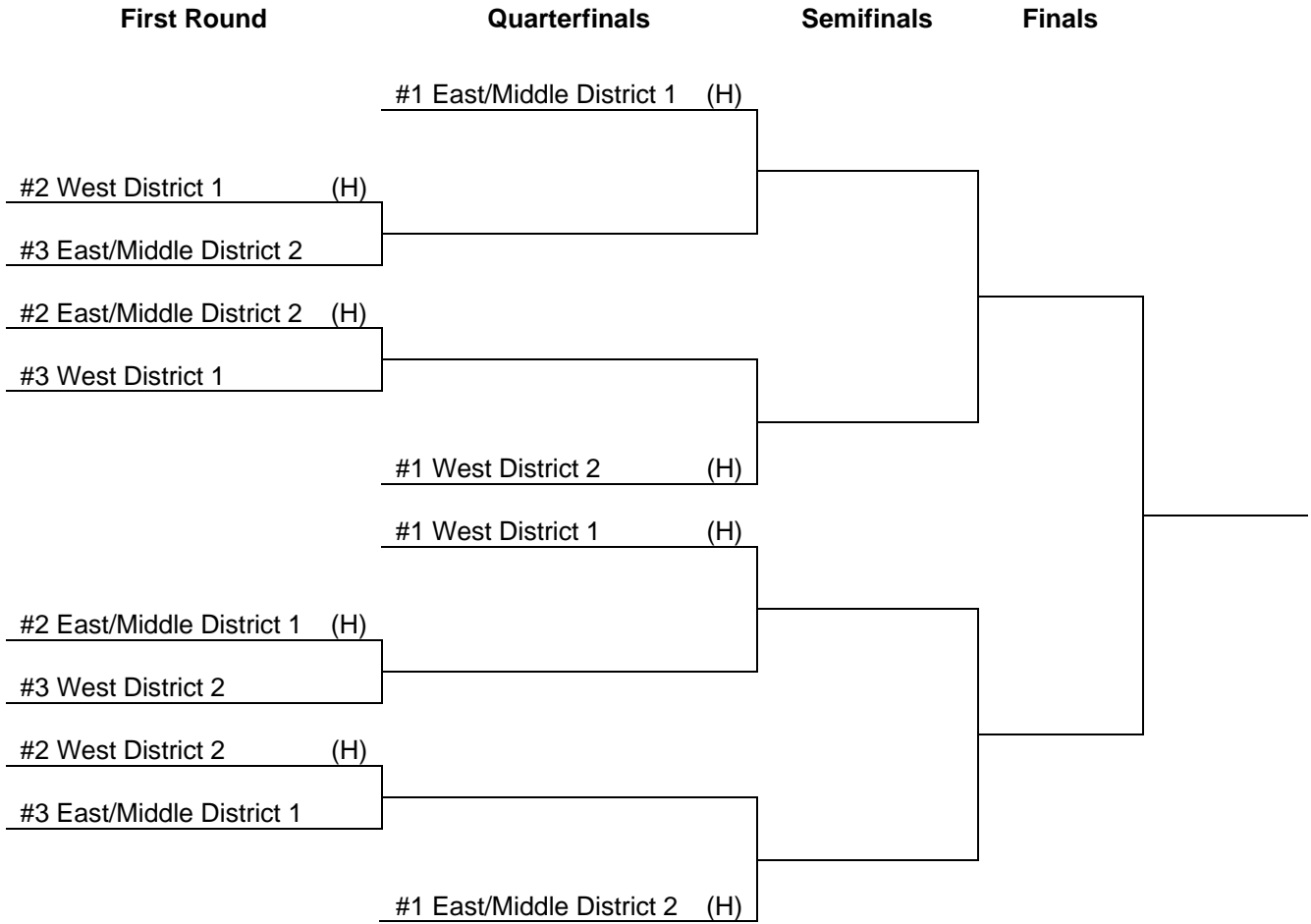
- D. The principal of the host school shall be the Game Director provided the game is played at his or her field. If additional facilities are secured other than those of the host team, the Game Director must be approved by the TSSAA state office. It shall be the duty of the Game Director to handle all financial arrangements for the game and to make a financial report to the state office and the participating teams.
- E. Game officials for all play-off games shall be approved by the state office.

2011-12 TSSAA Handbook

V. GENERAL REGULATIONS (DIVISION II: CLASS A and CLASS AA)

A. In Class A, there will be an East/Middle and a West Region. The Regions shall be split into two districts. There shall be twelve total teams that qualify for the football play-offs. The top three teams in each district shall qualify for the football play-offs. To determine the place of each team, follow the play-off series criteria as set forth in III D (Tie-Breaker Procedures).

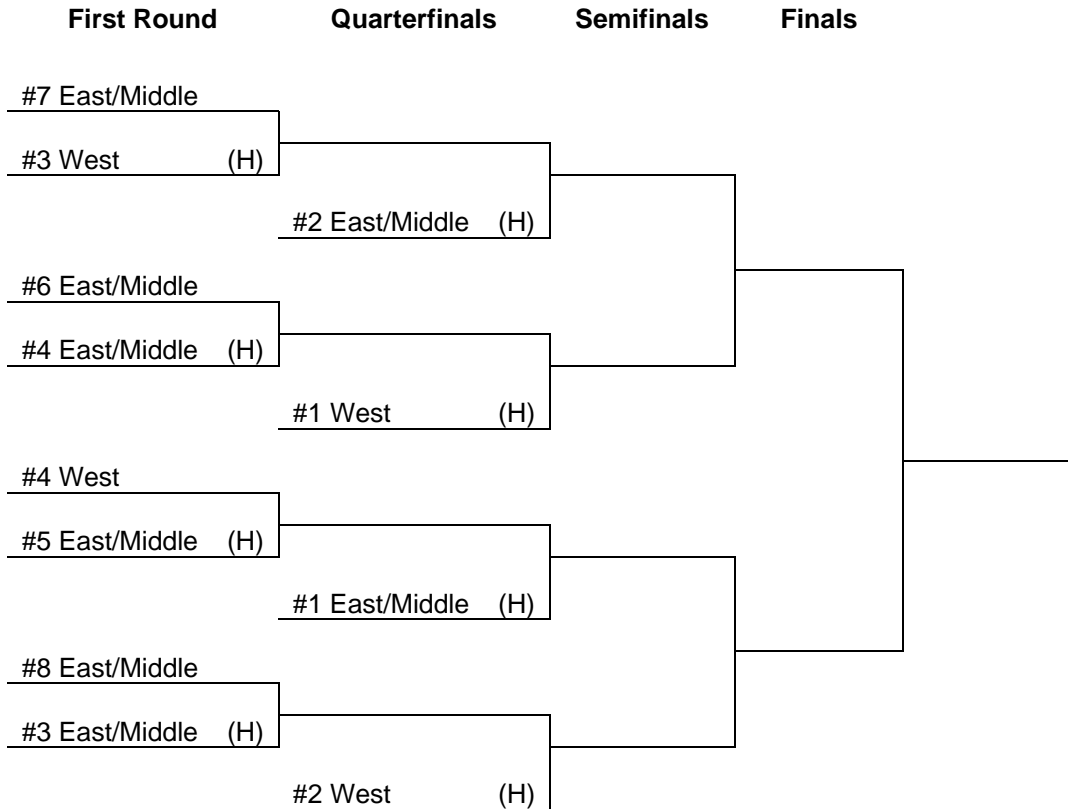
The bracket shall be as follows:



In the semifinal round the higher seeded team in each bracket shall host. If the two teams are the same seed, in odd-numbered years the top team in each bracket shall be the host team. In even-numbered years, the bottom team in each bracket shall be the host team.

2011-12 TSSAA Handbook

- B.** In Class AA, there will be an East/Middle and a West Region. There shall be twelve teams that qualify for the football play-offs. The top eight teams from the East-Middle Region and the top four teams from the West Region shall qualify for the football play-offs. To determine the place of each team, follow the play-off series criteria as set forth in III D (Tie-Breaker Procedures). The bracket shall be as follows.



The bottom of the bracket will host the First Round and Quarterfinal Round. The higher seeded team will host the Semifinal Round. If two schools are the same seed, in odd numbered years the top team in each bracket shall be host the team. In even-numbered years the bottom team in each bracket shall be the host team.

VI. THE PLAY-OFF GAMES (Division II: Class A and AA)

- A.** The first round game shall be played the 11th Friday of the football season. The second round games shall be played on the 12th Friday. The semifinal games shall be played on the 13th Friday. The championship games during the 15th week.
- B.** The host school is to hold the games in stadiums with adequate facilities and large enough to handle the crowds. Adequate facilities include but are not limited to:
1. Separate dressing rooms for both home and visiting teams with access to restrooms and shower facilities.
 2. Separate dressing areas for officials with access to restrooms and shower facilities.
 3. A restraining fence around the field or a stadium configuration that allows for control of spectator access to playing area.

If the host school does not feel that its facilities are acceptable for a football play-off game, then it shall be the responsibility of the host school to secure adequate facilities. If additional facilities are secured, then the visiting school and TSSAA must be notified by noon on Saturday preceding that week's play-off game.

- C.** The principal of the host school shall be the Game Director provided the game is played at his or her field. If additional facilities are secured other than those of the host team, the Game Director must be approved by the TSSAA state office. It shall be the duty of the Game Director to handle all financial arrangements for the game and to make a financial report to the state office and the participating teams.
- D.** Game officials for all play-off games shall be approved by the state office.