



**Idaho High School Activities
Association**

**2026-2027
Football Coaches Packet**

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2026 Football

Classification based on grades 9-12

6A	1,400- over	3A	349-175
5A	1,399-700	2A	174 -90
4A	699-350	1A	89-below

2026 Football Season

First Day of Practice	August 10
First Competition	After 10 days of practice
Round of 12	October 31
Round of 8	November 7
Round of 4	November 14
Milk Bowl Championship	November 21

* Teams must enter rosters, schedules and scores on MaxPreps.

Football Sports Practice Model

The IHSA Board of Directors has adopted the fall sports practice model for football.

Ten Day Practice Rule

Ten days of practice, in the sport, must be conducted before an athlete participates in a contest regardless of when they become a participant on the team. Helmets may be worn on the first day. Each player must have at least two (2) days of practice without any pads. Shoulder pads may be worn on the third (3rd) day and full pads on the fifth (5th) day.

Game Limitations for Each Team

No team may play more than nine games maximum for regular season play. No interschool football game will be approved unless at least five days have elapsed from the date of the previous game by that team. The term "football team" includes freshman, junior varsity, and varsity teams in grades 9-12. With approval, a team may play on the fifth day following competition.

Game Limitations for Individual

6A, 5A, and 4A football players are permitted to play a maximum of four quarters per day and five quarters per week. 3A, 2A and 1A football players are permitted to play a maximum of five quarters per day and six quarters per week provided they are not a varsity starter on offense or defense. Participating on special teams does not count as a quarter played.

The week in which the five/six quarters may be played is measured from Sunday to Sunday. A student who played in two quarters of the varsity game on Friday night could play in three quarters of the JV game the following Saturday. Once a player enters the game during a given quarter, they are credited with one quarter of participation, regardless of how long they remain in the game during that quarter. Participating on special teams does not count as a quarter played.

When playing two games the same day 6A, 5A, and 4A schools may request a waiver of the four quarters per day, to five quarters per day rule. 3A, 2A, and 1A schools may request a waiver of the five quarters per day rule, to six quarters per day.

A letter requesting a waiver of the one-day quarter rule must be submitted to the IHSA. It must be signed by the principal and athletic director, that verifies:

1. There are 44 or fewer participants in the program at the 6A, 5A, 4A, 3A classifications, and 32 or fewer participants in the program at the 2A and 1A classifications, and the program desires to field two teams, or
2. There are 61 or fewer participants in the program at the 6A, 5A, 4A, 3A, classifications, and 32 or fewer participants in the

program at the 2A and 1A classifications, and the program desires to field three teams; and

3. The lack of participants will cause the loss of a sub-varsity program; and
4. The lack of participants will cause the school to cancel scheduled games at the sub-varsity level; and
5. A minimum of 15 'varsity only' players must be designated for 6A, 5A, 4A, and 3A schools, and 7 'varsity only' players for 2A and 1A schools. The designated 'varsity only' players will be limited to four quarters per day in 6A, 5A, 4A, and 3A, and five quarters per day in 2A and 1A; and
6. The school's coaching staff has not, and will not, cut players or discourage anyone from participating in football, regardless of their ability.

A football player who exceeds the limitations of regular season participation will become ineligible for district, state or any other additional IHSA sponsored competition of that sport.

Scheduling Requirements

All member schools that sponsor football are required to participate in the statewide scheduling of varsity football games in order to provide all schools a full and competitive schedule.

Football Rules

Football in Idaho is governed by National Federation (NFHS) rules. Rule Books and Case Books must be picked up and signed for by a school representative at the district rules clinic.

Eleven-Man Mercy Rule:

If a 40-point differential is reached at any point during the game, the mercy rule will go into effect at the start of the fourth quarter. Once in effect, the game clock will run continuously and will only stop for injuries, team timeouts, or when a team scores.

The mercy rule does not apply to IHSA playoff or championship games.

Eight-Man Football Rules

Eight man football is played under the same rules as eleven man football, except for the modifications specified in the NFHS Rules Book. All eight man games must be officiated by a minimum of three certified officials.

Eight-Man Mercy Rule: If a 40-point differential is reached at any point during the game, the mercy rule will go into effect at the start of the third quarter. Once in effect, the game clock will run continuously and will only stop for injuries, team timeouts, or when a team scores. After halftime, if the mercy rule is in effect, the coach or administrator of the losing team may call a timeout to end the game.

The mercy rule does not apply to IHSA playoff or championship games.

Coaches and officials from both teams are strongly encouraged to meet before the contest to discuss potential mercy rule scenarios. During this meeting, they may agree to end the game at a specified point differential or establish a plan if the mercy rule is reached.

Resolving of Ties

Games ending in a tie will use the NFHS 10 yard line overtime procedure unless the result does not affect playoff representation. In those cases, both schools must agree before the game whether to play overtime or allow the game to end in a tie.

Safety

To help protect participants, the IHSAA recommends the following:

1. Principals and activity directors should prepare a letter instructing the football coach not to teach face tackling or butt blocking. A copy of this letter should be maintained on file at the school.
2. Coaches should include a clear description of legal blocking and tackling techniques in their player and/or coaching manuals. Head coaches are responsible for ensuring that all assistant coaches consistently teach these proper methods. Protect yourself and the integrity of the profession by emphasizing safe and legal techniques.
3. A coach or trainer should check helmets and other equipment periodically for damage or improper adjustment.
4. Participants must be informed of any reasonably foreseeable dangers. This includes clear warnings about the risk of catastrophic injuries, such as paralysis or death.
5. All game rules should be clearly identified, strictly followed, and promptly reinforced whenever violations occur.
6. Documentation is critical. Keep detailed records of all instructions and guidance provided, including who was involved, when and where the communication occurred, and how it was delivered. Maintain these records in a secure location and submit a copy to the school administration office.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke has caused fatalities in American football in recent years. These are preventable deaths. This information is provided to Idaho coaches and trainers as a guide for the prevention, recognition, and proper response to heat-related illnesses.

1. Acclimatization and Conditioning: The most important force operating to prevent heat stroke is acclimatization. Players should be encouraged to start workouts 14-21 days prior to the first practice session. The best single activity is running, and this should start with 20-to-30-minute workouts twice daily.
2. Proper Clothing: Jerseys should be short sleeved and lightweight. Cotton socks are recommended.
3. Fluid Intake: Fluids should always be readily available on the practice field. A manager should weigh athletes before and after every practice. Players who lose more than five pounds should rehydrate by consuming adequate fluids to replace the loss.
4. Practice: Use caution when temperatures reach 85°F or higher.
5. Forced Weight Loss: Athletes should never be required to wear plastic suits during workouts in hot conditions, whether conducted indoors or outdoors.

Recognizing Clinical Syndromes

1. Heat Exhaustion - This condition is marked by weakness, excessive sweating, and often a headache. Symptoms typically improve within a few minutes when the individual is cooled with fans and given small amounts of fluid to drink.
2. Heat Stroke - This condition is marked by unconsciousness and dry, hot skin, accompanied by an elevated body temperature. It is a medical emergency requiring immediate action. The patient should be cooled quickly using ice or cold cloths. Do not remove from ice bath until body temperature is stabilized. Arrange transport to a hospital.
When in doubt, always treat as heat stroke.

State Football Championship Site Rotation

Final round games will be played at a site determined by the IHSAA Board of Directors. When possible, state championship games will be held at Idaho's three university facilities.

Prioritized Factors for Selecting Milk Bowl Sites, Dates, and Times

1. A region may not host in consecutive years unless both teams are from that region. .
2. Site Availability
 - a. University of Idaho: A maximum of three games per day may be scheduled at the Kibbie Dome. Final game times and dates will depend on the U of I's football schedule.
 - b. Boise State University: A maximum of two games per day may be scheduled at Albertson Stadium. Final game times and dates will depend on BSU's football schedule. The 4A, 3A, 2A, and 1A Milk Bowl games in District III will be held at an area high school. If a 4A, 3A, 2A, or 1A game can be scheduled at BSU in conjunction with a 6A or 5A game, it may be scheduled accordingly.
 - c. Idaho State University: A maximum of four games per day may be scheduled at the ICCU Dome. Final game times and dates will depend on ISU's football schedule.
3. The team traveling the farthest will have the first choice of available game times.
4. Games will not be scheduled to start after 9:00 pm.

IHSAA representatives will determine the sites, dates, and times for each Milk Bowl game, with final decisions made on the Sunday before the state championship game.

Home/Visiting Team Designation for Championship Games

The team traveling the greatest distance to the site will be designated the visiting team and will wear white jerseys. Visiting team will be assigned the largest locker room, equipped with the most showers and restrooms, and placed on the same side of the field as the press box. If both teams are from the same city, the higher-seeded team will be designated the home team. Locker room assignments, sideline placement, and student sections will be determined at the discretion of the site manager.

6A / 5A Financial Plan — Semi Final Round

All 6A and 5A games except championship games.

1. Per game reimbursement
 - a. Travel: \$3.00 per mile (one way) towards the cost of transportation regardless of number of buses a school wishes to send.
 - b. Meals and/or lodging: (1) up to 200 miles one way - \$250, (2) 200-300 miles one way - \$500*, (3) Over 300 miles one way - \$2,000.
*Any contest between District II and District III will fall into category 3 due to the type of roads.
2. Trophy and medal costs will be shared by participating schools.
3. Reasonable local expenses - if the game is held in a non-school facility, rent will be paid.
4. IHSAA will receive 15% of gate receipts after sales tax deduction.
5. If the gate receipts are not sufficient to cover the on-site expenses, the travel reimbursement will be proportionate to the income.
6. Net receipts from all semi-final games will be divided among participating schools. Each participating school will receive one share for each game it plays.
7. The IHSAA will be in control of all media rights for the rounds of 8 and 16. All media money from these rounds will be returned to the participating schools.

4A/ 3A / 2A / 1A Financial Plans – Quarter/Semi Final Rounds

1. Plan when the game is played at a host site:
The following expenses will be deducted before the revenue is shared.
 - a. Percentage to State Association (a) 10%, (b) 15%, (c) 20%
 - b. Officials
 - c. Percentage of cost of awards based upon the number of games in playoff
 - d. \$3 per mile one way for traveling team
 - e. Sales tax
 - f. The host team will be allowed up to \$400-4A/3A, \$300-2A/1A for on-site expenses.
The remaining revenue will be divided as follows:

a. \$1-\$1000	Home Team	45%
	Visiting Team	55%
b. \$1001-\$4000	If travel is over 200 miles, teams split 35-65 in favor of traveling team; otherwise, split is 45-55.	
c. Over \$4000	Home Team	48%
	Visiting Team	52%
2. Plan to be used when the contest is played at a site other than home site:
The following expenses will be deducted before the revenue is shared.
 - a. Percentage to State Association (a) 10%, (b) 15%, (c) 20%
 - b. Officials
 - c. Percentages awards costs based upon the number of games in playoff
 - d. \$3 per mile one way for traveling team
 - e. Sales TaxThe remaining revenue will be divided as follows:
 - a. 0-100 mile difference - 50/50
 - b. 101-200 mile difference - 45/55
 - c. 201-up mile difference - 35/65
3. If the gate receipts are not sufficient to cover the on-site expenses, the travel reimbursement will be proportionate to the income.
4. The IHSAA will be in control of all media rights for the round of 16. All media money from this round will be returned to the participating schools.

Financial Plan for Championship Finals

The following financial plan is for the state football championship finals only.

Meal allowance based upon one way mileage:

	<u>0-200</u>	<u>201-300</u>	<u>301-450</u>	<u>Over 450</u>
1A	\$150	\$500	\$750	\$900
2A	150	500	750	900
3A	240	800	1,200	1,600
4A	270	900	1,400	1,900
5A	300	1,000	1,600	2,200
6A	360	1,200	2,000	2,800

In addition to the above amount, each school that travels will receive \$3.00 per mile one way for travel. Example: Moscow travels to Pocatello for final round. Moscow is 524 miles from Pocatello. Therefore, they would receive $524 \times 3 = \$1572$ for mileage. Because they are a 4A school traveling over 450 miles, they would receive \$2200 additional.

The Board has no adopted formula for division of gate revenues for doubleheaders and tripleheaders. The Board will review each on an individual basis.

Football Preliminary Playoff Sites

The Board of Directors will approve the sites, dates, and times for all football playoff games during its January board meeting. In all playoff rounds, the designation of a host team does not guarantee the game will be played on that team's home field

The host school may hold the game at its own facility or at another location that meets IHSAA state playoff requirements. However, schools must obtain IHSAA approval before scheduling playoff games at the ICCU Dome, Albertsons Stadium, or the Kibbie Dome.

Playoff Site Requirements

Each district Board of Control must submit a list to the IHSAA of all potential sites that meet the requirements for hosting state football playoffs.

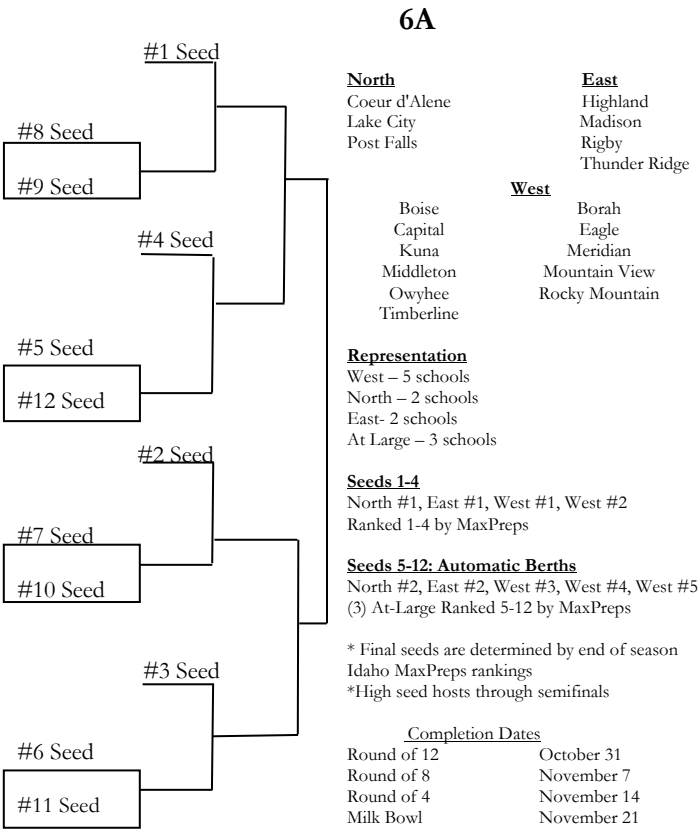
1. Adequate parking
2. Adequate spectator seating for the following classifications:
 - o 1A: Home team: 200; Visiting team: 150
 - o 2A: Home team: 200; Visiting team: 150
 - o 3A: Home team: 400; Visiting team: 200
 - o 4A: Home team: 600; Visiting team: 250
 - o 5A: Home team: 800; Visiting team: 300
 - o 6A: Home team: 1000; Visiting team: 500
3. Appropriate number of sites for ticket sales.
4. Football playing field area prepared to meet the existing weather conditions.
5. Adequate locker rooms with restrooms and showers with handicapped accessibility. Player restrooms shall be separate from spectators.
6. Adequate number of restrooms for spectators.
7. Adequate security to maintain crowd control. Playoff site management shall take necessary measures to prohibit home team fans from being in the visiting team spectator area.
8. The football field must be enclosed by a barrier positioned at least seven yards from the out-of-bounds lines. This barrier may consist of fencing, rope, or other safe materials that do not pose a risk to spectators. It must stand at least 36 inches high and be actively monitored by game security to ensure that no fans or spectators come within seven yards of the playing field.

Pre-Tournament Practice

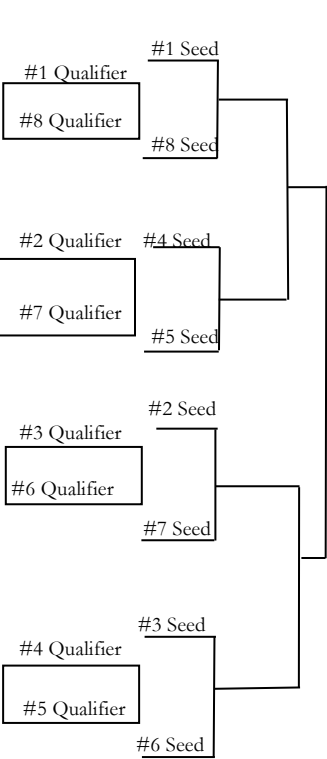
Teams are not allowed to practice in the ICCU Dome, Kibbie Dome, or Albertsons Stadium during the state playoffs, except for the championship game. For the championship, if one team has used the facility during the current season and the other has not, the team without prior access may request a practice opportunity from the tournament director. Approval is subject to facility availability, as determined by the tournament manager. If approved, practice will be scheduled only for the day before the championship game.

2026 Brackets

The top team in the bracket will be designated as the home team and will have the first option to provide halftime performances.



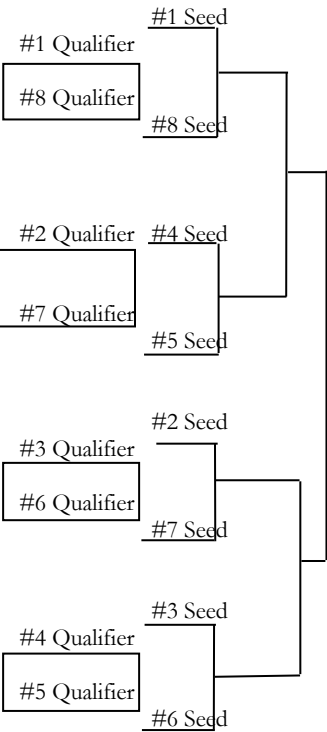
2A 8 Man



1. Seeding will be determined by the end of season Idaho MaxPreps rankings
2. Top 4 seeded conference champions receive a first round bye.
3. The 5th seeded conference champion will earn a berth to the round of 12.
4. Remaining 7 bids will be determined by highest final Idaho MaxPreps rankings.
5. Quarterfinals are re-seeded with the remaining teams
6. High Seed hosts through semifinals. If a conference champion is playing a non-conference champion in the quarterfinals, the conference champion would host.

Completion Dates	
Round of 12	October 31
Round of 8	November 7
Round of 4	November 14
Milk Bowl	November 21

1A 8-Man



1. Seeding will be determined by the end of season Idaho MaxPreps rankings
2. Top 4 seeded conference champions receive a first round bye.
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4. Remaining 7 bids will be determined by highest final Idaho MaxPreps rankings.
5. Quarterfinals are re-seeded with the remaining teams
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Completion Dates	
Round of 12	October 31
Round of 8	November 7
Round of 4	November 14
Milk Bowl	November 21

2026-28 FOOTBALL CLASSIFICATION & ALIGNMENT

District	6A 1400 & Above	5A 1399-700	4A 699-350	3A 349-175	2A 174-90	1A 89 & below
I (16)	Coeur d'Alene Lake City Post Falls	Lakeland Sandpoint	Bonnors Ferry Timberlake	Kellogg Priest River St. Maries**	Lakeside Wallace	Clark Fork Coeur du Christ Kootenai** Mullan**
II (18)		Lewiston	Moscow	Grangeville Logos Orofino	Clearwater Valley Kamiah Lapwai Potlatch Prairie	Culdesac Deary Genesee** Highland-C** Kendrick Nezperce** Timberline-W Troy
III (44)	Boise Borah Capital Eagle Kuna Meridian Middleton Mountain View Owyhee Rocky Mountain Timberline-B	Bishop Kelly Caldwell Centennial Columbia Nampa Ridgevue Skyview Vallivue	Cole Valley Christian Emmett Fruitland Homedale McCall-Donnelly** Weiser	Marsing Melba Nampa Christian New Plymouth Parna Payette	Centennial Baptist Garden Valley Idaho City North Star Charter Notus Rimrock Tri-Valley (Cambridge/Midvale) Wilder	Cascade Council Horseshoe Bend Meadows Valley** Salmon River
IV (27)		Burley Canyon Ridge Jerome Minico Mountain Home Twin Falls	Filer Gooding Kimberly Wood River	Buhl Declo Wendell	Glenns Ferry Hagerman Murtaugh Oakley Raft River Shoshone Valley	Camas County Carey Castleford Dietrich Hansen Lighthouse Christian Richfield
V (16)	Highland - P	Century Pocatello	American Falls Bear Lake Preston Snake River	Aberdeen Malad Marsh Valley Soda Springs West Side	Grace	North Gem Rockland Sho-Ban
VI (22)	Madison Rigby Thunder Ridge	Blackfoot Bonneville Hillcrest Idaho Falls Shelley Skyline	South Fremont Sugar-Salem Teton	Firth North Fremont Ririe Salmon West Jefferson	Butte County Challis	Clark County** Mackay Watersprings**
(143)	(18)	(25)	(20)	(25)	(25)	(30)

** Was Previously in a Co-op

IHSAA Coaches Code of Ethics

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. Interscholastic programs should be designed to promote citizenship and enhance the academic mission of the school.

The Coach Will

- Be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.
- Uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. The coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct. The coach/school will honor contracts regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss.
- Master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
- Demonstrate respect and support for officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct, which would incite players or spectators against the officials. The coach will not make statements concerning officials' decisions after a game.
- Work with school faculty to promote overall educational growth of the student. The coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration.
- Honor the commitment to student based programs that supplement the educational growth of each student-athlete.
- Be professional in association with other coaches. The coach should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.
- Exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship of all extracurricular activities.
- Cooperate with different media sources in an appropriate manner that promotes all aspects of the sport, school and community. Public criticism of officials, opponents or players is unethical.
- Uphold all policies and procedures of the school, district, IHSAA and the National Federation.



NEWS RELEASE

Prohibition on Slapping the Head Now Applies to All Players in High School Football

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bob Colgate

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (February 4, 2026) — In an ongoing focus on minimizing risk of injury in high school sports, the NFHS Football Rules Committee strengthened a rule related to illegal personal contact. Both revisions recommended by the committee were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The Football Rules Committee is composed of one member from each NFHS member state association that uses NFHS playing rules, along with representatives from the NFHS Coaches Association and NFHS Officials Association.

Previously, Rule 9-4-7 stated that defensive players could not use the hand(s) to slap the blocker's head. This year, the Football Rules Committee approved language to apply the prohibition equally to the offense and defense.

"By eliminating the words 'defense' and 'blocker's' from the rule prohibiting slapping an opponent's head, the prohibition now applies to all players," said Bob Colgate, NFHS director of sports and sports medicine and liaison to the Football Rules Committee.

The other revision approved by the committee for the 2026 NFHS Football Rules Book concerns play cards worn primarily by quarterbacks. Previously, play cards could be worn only on the wrist or arm. This year, the committee approved wearing the play cards on the belt as well.

"The Football Rules Committee added the belt to the choices for players as the belt poses no health risk issue to the player and poses no danger to the opponent," Colgate said.

"From a rules perspective I believe the committee feels like the high school football game is in pretty good shape," said Steve Roberts, chair of the NFHS Football Rules Committee and associate executive director of the Arkansas Activities Association. "The two proposals that passed do not present significant changes to the game but do clarify and add options to enhance the overall value of the sport to all participants."

The four points of emphasis identified by the committee for the 2026 season are Flagrant and Unsportsmanlike Fouls, Helping the Runner, Sideline Management and Control, and Identification of the NFHS Authenticating Mark on Game Balls.

In addition to the two major rules revisions noted above and several editorial changes, two rules changes approved in 2025 will become effective during the next two seasons.

Last year, the committee approved two new additional requirements in Rule 1-5-1d(5) for tooth and mouth protectors, which are required in high school football. **Effective in 2026**, tooth and mouth protectors a) shall not include any attachment(s) that do not serve a purpose and function in protecting the teeth or mouth, and b) shall not include anything that is a health or risk issue and could pose danger to themselves or other players.

A new item was added to Rule 1-5-2d regarding a change in arm sleeve specifications. The new language, **effective with the 2027 season**, states that "arm sleeves, whether attached to a shirt or unattached, manufactured to enhance contact with the football or opponent, must meet the SFIA specification at the time of manufacture. Arm sleeves must have a permanent, exact replica of the SFIA arm sleeve seal (meets SFIA specification), that must be visible and appear legibly on the exterior of the arm sleeve."

The Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), in working with football arm sleeve manufacturers and the NFHS, has developed the new football arm sleeve performance specifications to be **effective with the 2027 season**. The new specifications closely align with the current NFHS rules for football gloves.

A complete listing of the football rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on "Sports" at the top of the home page and select "Football" and then "Rules." The print version of the 2026 Football Rules Book will be available for purchase in late April at www.NFHS.com, and the digital version will be available in April via NFHS Digital at www.NFHS.org.

According to the 2024-25 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, 11-player football is the most popular high school sport for boys with 1,029,588 participants in 14,269 schools nationwide. In addition, there were 35,097 boys who participated in 6-, 8- and 9-player football, along with 4,969 girls in all four versions of the game for a grand total of 1,069,654.

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 18 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,800 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 8.2 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

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Fall Sports Practice Model

Fall Sports Practice Model – Football only

During the fall football season, all student-athletes must adhere to the following practice regime.

1. Practice requirements
 - a. Schools may conduct multiple on-field practice sessions but student-athletes shall not engage in more than four hours of on-field practice activities each day. Two practices a day (two a days) on consecutive days will not be allowed after the fourth day of practice. Any two a day practices during the first four days must have a minimum of a one-hour break between practices.
 - b. Any practice session, after the fourth day, that is less than two hours in length must have at least two continuous hours of recovery time between the end of the first practice and the start of the next practice that day.
 - c. Each practice session will be a maximum of 2.5 hours in length, which starts as soon as the player is on the field, gym floor, weight room, etc. This includes all breaks, walkthroughs, conditioning, etc. Any practice, after the fourth day, that is more than two hours in length must have at least 2.5 continuous hours of recovery time between the end of the first practice and the start of the next practice that day.
 - d. There will be no more than 120 minutes of contact during practice per week. For the purposes of this rule, “contact” will be defined as drills run at the Thud and Live Action level. Drills run at the Air, Bags, and Control level would not be considered contact. Definition of levels of contact include:
 1. **Air** – Players run a drill unopposed without contact.
 2. **Bags** – Drill is run against a bag or another soft contact surface.
 3. **Control** – Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; one player is pre-determined the “winner” by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet.
 4. **Thud** – Drill is run at assigned speed through the moment of contact; no pre-determined “winner”. Contact remains above the waist, players stay on their feet, and a quick whistle ends the drill.
 5. **Live Action** – Drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time that players are taken to the ground.
 - e. During the recovery time, student athletes may not engage in other physical activities (e.g., weight training, conditioning or 7 on 7).
 - f. All practices shall allow for water breaks and general acclimatization to hot and/or humid weather.
 - g. During the first two days of practice, helmets shall be the only piece of protective equipment athletes may wear.
 - h. During the next two days of practice, helmets and shoulder pads shall be the only pieces of protective equipment athletes may wear.
 - i. Beginning on day five, athletes may participate in full pads.
2. Participation in Jamborees/Contests
 - a. An individual shall become eligible to participate in a jamboree or interscholastic contest after completing a minimum of ten days of actual on-field practice.

Fall Sports Practice Model – Cross Country / Soccer

During the fall sports season, cross country, and soccer athletes must adhere to the following practice regime:

1. Schools may conduct multiple on-field practice sessions but student-athletes shall not engage in more than four hours of on-field practice activities each day.
2. Any practice session, after the fourth day, that is less than two hours in length must have at least two continuous hours of recovery time between the end of the first practice and the start of the next practice that day.
3. Each practice session will be a maximum of 2.5 hours in length. Any practice, after the fourth day, that is more than two hours in length must have at least 2.5 continuous hours of recovery time between the end of the first practice and the start of the next practice that day.
4. During the recovery time, student athletes may not engage in other physical activities (e.g., weight training, conditioning or 7 on 7).
5. All practices shall allow for water breaks and general acclimatization to hot and/or humid weather.

Heat Stress and Athletic Participation

Early fall football, cross country, and soccer practices are frequently conducted in very hot and humid weather. During hot weather conditions the athlete is at risk for the following:

HEAT CRAMPS - Painful cramps involving abdominal muscles and extremities caused by intense, prolonged exercise in the heat and depletion of salt and water due to profuse sweating.

HEAT SYNCOPE - Weakness fatigue and fainting due to loss of salt and water in sweat and exercise in the heat. Predisposes to heat stroke.

HEAT EXHAUSTION (WATER DEPLETION) - Excessive weight loss, reduced sweating, elevated skin and core body temperature, excessive thirst, weakness, headache and sometimes unconsciousness.

HEAT EXHAUSTION (SALT DEPLETION) - Exhaustion, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps, and dizziness due to profuse sweating and inadequate replacement of body salts.

HEAT STROKE - An acute medical emergency related to thermoregulatory failure. It is associated with nausea, seizures, disorientation, and possible unconsciousness or coma; it may occur suddenly without being preceded by any other clinical signs. The individual is usually unconscious with a high body temperature and a hot dry skin (heat stroke victims, contrary to popular belief, may sweat profusely).

It is believed that the above-mentioned heat stress problems can be controlled or avoided provided certain precautions are taken:

1. Ensure the athlete is well hydrated prior to the start of any and all activity.
2. Acclimatization is the process of becoming adjusted to heat and it is essential to provide for gradual acclimatization to hot weather.
3. The most important safeguard to the health of the athlete is the replacement of water. Water must be on the field and readily available to the athletes at all times. It is recommended that a minimum 10-minute water break be scheduled for every twenty minutes of heavy exercise in the heat. Check to make sure athletes are drinking sufficient amounts of water.

4. Athletes should weigh each day before and after practice and weight charts checked. Generally a 3 percent weight loss through sweating is safe.
5. Observe athletes carefully for signs of trouble, particularly athletes who lose significant weight and the eager athlete who constantly competes at his/her capacity.
6. Some trouble signs are nausea, incoherence, fatigue, weakness, vomiting, cramps, weak rapid pulse, visual disturbance and unsteadiness.
7. Warn your athletes about the use of any products that contain ephedra. Ephedra speeds metabolism, increases body heat, and constricts blood vessels in the skin preventing the body from cooling itself. By making the user feel more energetic it keeps him/her exercising longer when the he/she should stop.

WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

Heat Stroke - A Medical Emergency - Delay Could Be Fatal. Immediately cool body while waiting for transfer to a hospital. Remove clothing and immerse torso in ice/cold water. Immersion therapy has the best cooling rates. A plastic baby pool can be available at all practices and games, and can always be ready for immersion procedures. If not available apply ice packs in armpits, groin and neck areas. Continue cooling efforts until EMS arrives. Heat Exhaustion - Obtain Medical Care At Once. Cool body as you would for heat stroke while waiting for transfer to hospital. Give fluids if athlete is able to swallow and is conscious.

SUMMARY

The main problem associated with exercising in the hot weather is water loss through sweating. Water loss is best replaced by allowing the athlete unrestricted access to water. Water breaks two or three times every hour are better than one break an hour. Probably the best method is to have water available at all times and to allow the athlete to drink water whenever he/she needs it. Never restrict the amount of water an athlete drinks, and be sure the athletes are drinking the water. The small amount of salt lost in sweat is adequately replaced by salting food at meals. Talk to your medical personnel concerning emergency treatment plans.

Air Quality

In the event of a high fire season and air quality is compromised, the IHSAA Sports Medicine Committee recommends that students be monitored closely, especially those with respiratory issues. All schools must have an air quality check site. For game situations, both administrations will meet before the game to determine what air quality site to use. The host school's administration will have the official site for this. The site airnow.gov is recommended. It is suggested that in instances where the Air Quality Index is over 150, the games be suspended or cancelled.

Lightning

NFHS GUIDELINES ON HANDLING PRACTICES AND CONTESTS DURING LIGHTNING or THUNDER DISTURBANCES

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school activities association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a. When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for thirty minutes and take shelter immediately.
 - b. Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
5. Inform student athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.



Safety courses are required for all coaches on even numbered years. Courses must be taken after May 1, 2026. Submit certificate of completion to your administration.

Required Safety Courses:

- *Coaching Mental Wellness
- *Sudden Cardiac Arrest
- *St. Luke's Concussion Course

Follow these instructions to access the free, courses.

- ✓ Go to the IHSAA website - www.idhsaa.org
- ✓ Click school / Coaches
- ✓ Fill in required information to sign-in or create account
- ✓ Follow instructions to start course
- ✓ At the conclusion of the course, **PRINT / SAVE CERTIFICATE.**

NFHS Learn Help Desk
(317) 565-2023



For more information on IHSAA and NFHS coaches education

- ▶ Idaho Coaches Education – www.idhsaa.org
- ▶ NFHS Learning Center – www.nfhslearn.com
- ▶ Follow Idaho Coaches on Twitter @IHSAAcoach

IHSAA Coach Education

The Idaho High School Activities Association is committed to the promotion of coaches' education programs as well as providing resources toward continuing education for all of Idaho's coaches.

✓ Requirements for Idaho Coaches

ALL COACHES

- CPR/1st Aid Certification
- St. Luke's Concussion Course (fall of even numbered years)
- NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course (fall of even numbered years)
- NFHS Coaching Mental Wellness (fall of even numbered years)

NON-CERTIFIED TEACHER

- NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching
- NFHS Teaching & Modeling Behavior

CHEER/DANCE/MUSIC/DRAMA/ADMINISTRATION

- NFHS Understanding Copyright & Compliance

POLE VAULT COACHES

- NFHS Coaching Pole Vault

✓ NFHS/IHSAA Educational Recommendations for Interscholastic Coaches

- Complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course (prior to coaching)
- Complete necessary courses to become and NFHS LEVEL 1 Coach within the first year of coaching
- Maintain current certification in CPR, AED and 1st Aid Safety
- Complete online courses or professional development specific to the sport in which they are an interscholastic coach
- Know the playing rules of their sport(s) and understand state association rules and policies governing their sport
- Encourage the participation of team building activities and community service projects with your team
- Pursue NFHS Certified LEVEL 3 credential within two years
- Read, understand and agree to the national and state Coaches Code of Ethics

NFHS Learning Center Coaches Education Courses

SPORT/ACTIVITY SPECIFIC COURSES

Coaching Baseball
Introduction to Pitch Smart – **FREE**
Coaching Basketball
Coaching Cheer & Dance
Spirit Safety Certification
Coaching Football
Blocking, Shoulder Tackling & Equipment
Fitting USA Football Tackling & Contact
Coaching Golf
Coaching Cross Country
Coaching Soccer
Coaching Softball
Coaching Swimming
Coaching Tennis
Coaching Track & Field
Coaching Pole Vault – **FREE**
Coaching Volleyball
Coaching Wrestling
Coaching Adapted Sports – **FREE**
Coaching Unified Sports – **FREE**
Adjudicating Speech & Debate – **FREE**
Introduction to Music – **FREE**
Introduction to Music Adjudication – **FREE**
Introduction to Esports – **FREE**
Speech & Debate Event Management – **FREE**
Theater Safety – **FREE**
Band Safety – **FREE**

ISSUES IN ACTIVITIES/SCHOOLS COURSES

Fundamentals of Coaching
Engaging Effectively with Parents – **FREE**
Appearance & Performance Enhancing Drugs – **FREE**
Bullying, Hazing and Inappropriate Behaviors – **FREE**
FREE NCAA Eligibility – **FREE**
Mental Training for Performance
Middle School Sports
Positive Parenting Within the School – **FREE**
Social Media – **FREE**
Implicit Bias – **FREE**
Sportsmanship – **FREE**
Sports Nutrition – **FREE**
Strength & Conditioning
Teaching and Modeling Behavior
Teaching Sports Skills
Captains Course – **FREE**
Supervising After School Activities – **FREE**
Interscholastic Music Event Management – **FREE**
Title IX – **FREE**
Understanding Copyright & Compliance – **FREE**
Understanding Vaping & E-Cigarettes – **FREE**
Protecting Students from Abuse – **FREE**
P.A. Announcing – **FREE**

STUDENT COURSES - FREE

Concussion for Students
Hazing Prevention for Students Learning Pro:
Homework Helper
Reading & Learning
Strategies Research Skills
Test Taking Tips
Captains Course
Social Media for Students
The Student Experience
Student Mental Health – **FREE**
SAFETY COURSES
Sudden Cardiac Arrest – **FREE**
Heat Illness Prevention – **FREE**
First Aid, Health and Safety Concussion in Sports – **FREE**
Protecting Students from Abuse – **FREE**
ACL Prevention – **FREE**
The Collapsed Athlete – **FREE**
Band Safety – **FREE**
Afterschool Safety
COVID-19 for Coaches – **FREE**



GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING CONTESTS DURING **LIGHTNING DISTURBANCES**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a default policy to those responsible for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of contests based on the presence of lightning.

Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during events.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby shelters.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a. When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.
 - b. Thirty-minute rule: Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Hold periodic reviews for appropriate personnel.

For more detailed information, refer to the *Guidelines for Lightning Safety* section contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook www.nfhs.org.

4-3 EJECTIONS

4-3-1 In any athletic contest, including jamborees, any coach or player ejected for an unsportsmanlike or flagrant act will be suspended for the remainder of the contest/game/jamboree – and, will be suspended for the next regularly scheduled contest at that level of competition, and all other games/meets/matches in the interim, in any sport, at any level of competition. Any staff or parent/fan/spectator associated with a member school ejected for an unsportsmanlike or flagrant act will be suspended for the remainder of the contest/game/jamboree – and, will be suspended for the next two regularly scheduled contests at that level of competition, and all other games/meets/matches in the interim, in any sport, at any level of competition.

Note: Jamborees shall not be considered a regularly scheduled contest.

- a. At the time of ejection, the person/s must leave the field of play and assume a position that will not enable him or her to see or be seen.
- b. During the suspension of the next regularly scheduled contest, the player is permitted to watch the contest, but may not participate. The coach is not allowed at the contest. The parent/staff/fan/spectator is not allowed at the next two contests.
- c. Players will also be required to take the NFHS free, online sportsmanship course and submit a certificate of completion to school administration prior to reinstatement. The course must be completed between ejection and reinstatement.
- d. Coaches will also be required to take the NFHS online Teaching and Modeling Behavior course and submit a certification of completion to school administration prior to reinstatement. The course must be completed between ejection and reinstatement.
- e. Parents will also be required to earn the NFHS National Parent Credential which includes the free, online Positive Parenting Within School Programs course and The Parent Seat. Credential Certificate must be submitted to school administration prior to reinstatement. The credential must be completed between ejection and reinstatement.
- f. Other Persons (staff/fan/spectators that are not parents) will also be required to take the NFHS free, online sportsmanship course and submit a certificate of completion to school administration prior to reinstatement. The course must be completed between ejection and reinstatement.

4-3-2 A second violation will result in being suspended for the next two (2) regularly scheduled contests. The third ejection will result in suspension for the remainder of that season. If penalties are imposed at the end of the sport season and no contest remains, the penalty is carried over to that particular sport until the next school year. In the case of a senior student, the penalty will continue to the next IHSAA sponsored sport.

4-3-3 The procedure for suspension and notification is:

- a. The officiating crew must approve any additional suspension by a majority vote at the conclusion of the contest.
- b. The official/ commissioner shall report an ejection to the school's principal and athletic director when a player/coach/staff/parent/fan/spectator is ejected from a competition.
- c. The report must be submitted within a 24-hour period of the conclusion of the competition in which the infraction occurred.
- d. The game official that disqualifies an individual for an unsportsmanlike act must notify the District Commissioner with a written report by the conclusion of the next day.
- e. The District Commissioner, upon receipt of the report, shall notify the District Secretary, President of the District Board of Control, the school, and the IHSAA with a written report of the incident by the conclusion of the next school day.

4-3-4 The responsibility to enforce the penalty for being suspended lies with the school principal. Any dialogue concerning the suspension should come from the school principal and be directed to the President of the District Board of Control of the region in which the contest took place. The President of the District Board of Control (of the region in which the contest took place) may appoint a hearing committee to hear any appeals within 48 hours of the receipt of a complete report of the incident. It is the responsibility of the secretary of the District Board of Control in which the hearing took place, to notify the district Board of Control secretary in which the student athlete or coach resides. Appeals may not deal with decisions made by contest officials.

4-3-5 When an individual is suspended for the next contest, the interpretation of "contest" is as follows:

Football: next game	Volleyball: next match
Basketball: next game	Cross Country: next meet
Wrestling: next contest	Softball: next game
Baseball: next game	Track: next meet
Tennis: next match	Golf: next match
Soccer: next match	Swimming: next meet

4-3-6 Any ejection that is the result of physical contact or excessive verbal abuse by a player/coach on a game official will be referred to the local District Board of Control for review to determine if any additional reprimand or suspension is warranted.

4-3-7 If a coach is ejected from an IHSAA contest, the designated school administrator must appoint an appropriately qualified adult to supervise the remainder of the contest or forfeit the contest.



IHSAA

IDAHO HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

IHSAA and MaxPreps Partnership FAQ

IHSAA and MaxPreps Partnership Background

The IHSAA has partnered with MaxPreps to efficiently collect schedules, scores, rosters and team photos, to highlight member school information. MaxPreps' industry leading platform provides schools with various desktop, tablet and mobile options to keep their team information accurate. Once team information is submitted to MaxPreps it will be automatically made available to the IHSAA.

--- Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What do coaches need to do?** In order to accurately manage important IHSAA initiatives, coaches are required to enter their team rosters and team photos on MaxPreps. Coaches are also required to enter their scores into MaxPreps immediately after each game throughout the season to help compile accurate regular-season standings and statewide leaderboards and post-season seeding.
2. **How do coaches sign up to get free access to their administrative account on MaxPreps for the first time?** Coaches or Athletic Directors can follow [this link](#) to become a MaxPreps member and follow the prompts to request their unique access code. Your one-time access code will identify you as the coach or AD with permission to your team/school account. You can enter this access code in the "Set up Admin Accounts" link of your member account profile page.
3. **Can coaches allow a team statistician or assistant coach to help manage their team information?** Yes! Once the coach has access to their team admin page, they can give other individuals access to their page to help keep their team information accurate.
4. **What if I already have a MaxPreps account?** Coaches and ADs with an existing account will simply need to continue submitting information.
5. **What do Athletic Directors need to do?** Athletic Directors simply need to clearly communicate with coaches to keep their scores and other team information updated on MaxPreps. ADs should direct any new coaches or coaches currently not using MaxPreps to contact MaxPreps at 800-329-7324 x1 or support@maxpreps.com, to sign up immediately.
6. **Can Athletic Directors control their MaxPreps team pages, if desired?** Yes. Athletic Directors can control every single team page from their free "School Administration" page on MaxPreps. While MaxPreps recommends coaches are responsible for their own team information, MaxPreps provides 100% free reporting, communication and school management tools for athletic directors, if desired. In order to gain access to your school administration page, please contact MaxPreps at support@maxpreps.com, to sign up today.



IHSAA

IDAHO HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

7. **Which sports are included in the partnership?** At this time, football, girls' volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' soccer, baseball and softball are included for score and statistics entry. All sports are required to enter team rosters and team photos.
8. **What about other sports?** Coaches from any other sports may still choose to use MaxPreps' free platform.
9. **Is MaxPreps compatible with other stat programs?** In addition to MaxPreps' own mobile, tablet and desktop tools, MaxPreps is compatible with more than 80 different stat companies across multiple sports.
10. **Does MaxPreps have an app to manage team information?** Yes! An app called Teams by MaxPreps is coming soon and will be available to download for both iPhone and Android devices. ADs and Coaches will be able to communicate directly with athletes and parents, sync their game schedule to their phone's calendar, enter complete schedules, rosters, scores, stats and more. Visit maxpreps.com/teams for more information.
11. **How can fans participate with their teams?** This season the IHSAA is encouraging all teams to assign Official Team Reporter responsibilities to a trusted program volunteer. The **MaxPreps fan app** allows the program volunteer to provide live scoring updates on their mobile device during the game, to keep your high school community engaged and informed. All scores and updates will be available statewide on the IHSAA Scoreboard. The app is available for [iOS devices](#) and [Android devices](#).
12. **What do I label my game type as?** All games should be labeled as conference, non-conference, conference tournament or tournament. **Do not label games as "playoff". In Idaho, the state tournament games are considered "playoffs".**
13. **What is the consequence for school's that do NOT enter game results/scores?** All regular season and district tournament game scores must be entered by each member school on MaxPreps by midnight, Pacific Time, on the Saturday preceding the state tournament. Schools that fail to meet this deadline will be fined \$1,500 per sport. Any scores submitted or modified after the deadline will not be included in the final rankings.
14. **Who can I contact with additional questions?** Coaches and ADs may contact MaxPreps Idaho representative Alisa Dancer at alisa.dancer@playonsports.com, or may direct questions to MaxPreps coach support at support@maxpreps.com, or 800-329-7324 x1. MaxPreps also has a support website at support.maxpreps.com that can help answer specific questions such as how to enter a schedule or a roster, or how to upload a team photo, etc.



MaxPreps Rankings

IHSAA State tournament brackets for girls' soccer, boys' soccer, volleyball, girls' basketball, boys' basketball, baseball and softball will be seeded using MaxPreps Final Idaho Rankings.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do playing out of state school effect the rankings?

- There is no difference in playing a team from your state or an out of state opponent. We do not use the state played for in the calculation. You will want to make sure that the opponent school has an up to date schedule on MaxPreps but that goes with any team you play. If an opponent's schedule is not up to date, reach out to Alisa Dancer, alisa.dancer@playonsports.com or 530-957-1575 to get the schedule fixed.

Does playing a lower or higher division team have any impact on the rankings?

- MaxPreps rankings does not take into account the division or league a team is playing in. Playing a 5A school is the same as playing a 2A. Playing a school **ranked** lower than you and losing could hurt your ranking.

What is the rating?

- Calculated using your win/loss and quality of win. Quality of win is based on where your opponent is ranked and if you won or lost.

What is the strength of schedule?

- Is the average rating of all your opponents.

Is there a Margin of Victory?

- Yes, each sport has a small margin of victory. Should you run up the score? No, it is capped and does not have a high impact on your rating.
- Margin of Victory maximums for each sport:
 - Baseball – 10 runs
 - Basketball – 20 points
 - Football – 21 points
 - Soccer – 5 goals
 - Softball – 10 runs

Do forfeits count?

- **“No-Fault” Forfeits** (both school administrations agree that the game can’t be played) do NOT count in the rankings. **Do not select the forfeit button**. Game can be deleted from schedule.
- **“At-Fault” Forfeits** (one school violates a rule and/or contract to participate) count in the rankings and should be entered with a game score that is the maximum margin of victory per sport. If you do win as an “At-Fault” forfeit mark the score as – Football 21-0, Volleyball 3-0, Soccer 5-0, Basketball 20-0, Softball and Baseball 10-0. If the District Board of Control determines a breach of contract has occurred, schools will enter a “forfeit” into MaxPreps or Track Wrestling, whichever is applicable.

What is the consequence for school’s that do NOT enter game results/scores?

- All regular season and district tournament game scores must be entered by each member school on MaxPreps by midnight, Pacific Time, on the Saturday preceding the state tournament. Schools that fail to meet this deadline will be fined \$1,500 per sport. Any scores submitted or modified after the deadline will not be included in the final rankings.

MaxPreps rankings are run twice a week. Each time it is run, it starts from the beginning of the season. If a team you played is ranked high at the beginning of the season and they lose their best player and start losing games, their rating could drop along with yours if you played them.

The more games you play helps but you can still be ranked high even if you are playing less games than your opponents. Especially if you are winning the games you do play.

Coaches and ADs may contact MaxPreps Idaho representative Alisa Dancer at alisa.dancer@playonsports.com or 530-957-1575