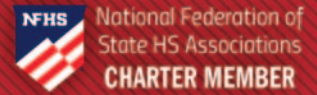




# BULLETIN



Vol. 101 | Issue No. 3 | February 2025

WIAAWI.ORG

## Board Authorizes Football Qualifying & Seeding Changes; Other Fall Sports Changes

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Board of Control approved recommendations by the fall coaches' advisory committees, including a plan that replaces the 11-player and 8-player football playoff qualifying and seeding system, at its Feb. 5 meeting.

The Board voted to support the plan created by the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association at the recommendation of the Football Coaches Advisory Committee, reflecting a shared commitment to improving the football playoff selection and seeding process.

Prior to the 2025 season, teams will be divided equally in seven divisions based on enrollment and application of the performance factor for 11-player football programs. Teams will qualify and be seeded for 11-player and 8-player football according to a ranking point system. Programs earn points for each win based on the division of their opponents (Tier 1) of all games. In addition, teams will be rewarded points for each Tier 1 victory of their defeated opponents for all games played (Tier 2). The sum of each tier is divided by the

total number of games played. The total points calculated for each tier is added to determine a team's total point value for ranking within its own division.

The four teams with the highest total points in each division are designated the top seed in the four groupings. Subsequent seeded teams will be added to the groupings in each division based on the nearest expected travel to higher-seeded teams. A detailed summary of the playoff qualification and seeding plan is available on the WIAA website.

"We commend the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association leadership in conjunction with the WIAA Football Coaches Advisory Committee on their communications with our staff and the football coaches across the state on this redesigned qualification and seeding process," WIAA Executive Director Stephanie Hauser said. "They provided tutorials and welcomed feedback from coaches and member schools.

"This process is a reflection of WIAA's mission to be  
**See Board Authorizes, page 18 >**

## Shafranski Announces Retirement from Assistant Director Position

Assistant Director Tom Shafranski announced his retirement from the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association to the executive staff, effective Feb. 7, 2025.



Tom Shafranski

"To serve the WIAA membership and to work with so many quality student-athletes, coaches and school administrators has been an honor and a privilege," Shafranski said. "No one has had more 'fun' in their job than I have had at the WIAA.

"I could not have asked to work in a better industry than high school athletics in Wisconsin as this 42-year career has been a dream come true," he continued. "My wife, Lori and I are very excited to spend more time with our two young granddaughters."

Shafranski began his work on the executive staff in June of 2002. During his tenure he has served as the administrator for several sports of football, golf, gymnastics, hockey, lacrosse, swimming & diving, and tennis. Other administrative duties included the direction of the prestigious WIAA Scholar-Athlete program and serving as the staff liaison with the Sports Advisory Committee and the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association.

"The service that Tom has provided to the member schools during his tenure of over 22 years has positively impacted the lives of so many," Executive Director Stephanie Hauser said. "Our staff and the association will miss him and be forever indebted to what he has given to all of us."

In 2009, he was honored as the Wisconsin High School Golf Coaches Association Friend of Golf  
**See Shafranski Announces, page 4 >**

## Kuhn Remembered as a Trailblazer for Girls Sports

The WIAA family is deeply saddened by the loss of Karen Kuhn, 82, who was one of the first and greatest girls' interscholastic sports pioneers in Wisconsin and the nation.

Kuhn became the first woman to serve on the WIAA executive staff when she joined the association as an administrative assistant to the executive director in 1971. She was the WIAA's first sports coordinator responsible for administration of girls' sports programs.

She was promoted to the assistant to the director in 1973, and in 1992, Kuhn was elevated to associate director. Prior to her retirement in June 2002, she was instrumental in assisting with the enhancement



Karen Kuhn

and growth of girls' high school athletic opportunities statewide. Later, she would extend her expertise to boys' sports responsibilities as well.

"The impact that Karen has had on this organization and education-based athletics in this state has been tremendous and her legacy will last forever," WIAA Executive Director Stephanie Hauser said.

During her 31-year career with the WIAA, Kuhn was responsible for coordination of administrative efforts, playing rules, season regulations, tournament planning procedures and officials' assignments for the sports of basketball, track & field, cross country and volleyball. She also served as the coordinator for swimming and diving, girls' golf and girls' tennis in

**See Kuhn Remembered, page 2 >**

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# Deadline to Announce Candidacy for Board of Control and Advisory Council Positions

Administrators at WIAA member senior high schools are reminded that Feb. 27, 2025 is the deadline to announce their candidacy for positions on the Board of Control and Advisory Council.

District administrators, high school principals and assistants at these levels who are interested in becoming candidates in their district (Board of Control) or large/medium/small classification (Advisory Council) should complete this [google form](#). Note: Candidates must have (1) Department of Public Instruction licensure allowing placement in the eligible set, (2) must be employed full-time or part-time in a qualifying position and (3) cannot be members of the teachers' bargaining unit.

Primary ballots (if needed) will be emailed March 4 with a completion date of March 25. General election ballots will be emailed April 1 with a completion date of April 15. Results will be announced April 25 at the WIAA Annual Meeting. Ballot notifications will be emailed to the district administrator, principal and athletic director. Only athletic directors will be able to submit the ballot on behalf of their school. All school administrators will be able to view the submitted ballot.

For complete information regarding powers and duties of the Board of Control and Advisory Council, please refer to pages 14-20 of the WIAA Senior High Handbook.

All positions are for a three-year term beginning with the 2025-26 school year, unless otherwise noted. Positions open for which candidates must file by Feb. 27, 2025 are as follows:

## BOARD OF CONTROL

**District 1** - for position now held by Cory Hinkel of Luck (eligible for re-election).

[See Deadline to Announce, page 16 >](#)

## Kuhn Remembered from page 1

addition to supervising the WIAA's Junior High/Middle Level. Additional supervisory responsibilities included gender equity issues and cheerleading.

Her experience and knowledge of girls' interscholastic athletics made an impact at the national level, which earned her the respect of colleagues throughout the country. Kuhn was inducted into the National Federation of State High School Associations Hall of Fame in 2002. Her work at the national level included being a member of the Girls' Advisory Council for the Division of Girls and Womens' Sports, and she conducted presentations on various topics at the NFHS meetings, civic groups, banquets and college classes. Other NFHS committees she served on included the rules writing committees for track & field, volleyball, swimming and diving, and basketball.

At the state level, she served on WIAA task forces to study gender equity as it related to equal seasons and the imbalance of girls' sports in fall, winter and spring seasons; seeding team sports; and out-of-season rules and regulations.

Kuhn received many honors and awards during her illustrious career. In 1996, she received the United States Volleyball Association Meritorious Service Award, and she was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Women's Sports Advocates of Wisconsin, Inc., in 1994. Kuhn was given the Award of Merit by the Wisconsin High School Track Coaches Association in 1995 and was presented with the Citation Honor Award by the Wisconsin Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance in 1992 and 2000. In addition, she received Recognition and Leadership Awards from the Milwaukee Association of Swimming Officials, Wisconsin Cross Country Coaches Association, Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association, Wisconsin Track and Field Coaches Association, the NFHS and the United States Olympic Committee.

Upon her retirement, former WIAA Executive Director Doug Chickering praised Kuhn for her many accomplishments.

"Karen is more than a pioneer; she is a giant in the development of sports programs for high school girls," he said. "Her skills, though, should not be overshadowed by her gender associated reputation. She is truly a model for future athletic administrators, male or female.

"Her unselfish willingness to do whatever it takes to succeed, coupled with an enviable work ethic, served this membership for more than 30 years," he continued. "Karen's legacy will always be her determination to "stay the course" through good times and bad. She will continue to be an inspiration."

Kuhn's commitment to education and interscholastic athletics spanned almost four decades, including seven years as a teacher. She began her career in education at Steuben Junior High School in Milwaukee from 1964-66. She then taught at St. Francis High School for two years from 1966-1968 before teaching physical education at Whitefish Bay High School from 1968-71.

Kuhn's contributions and legacy at the WIAA and the NFHS will never be forgotten. ●

## 2025 NFHS Baseball Points of Emphasis

The NFHS Baseball Rules Committee and the NFHS Board of Directors believes there are areas of the game of interscholastic baseball that need to be addressed and given special attention. These areas of concern are often cyclical – some areas need more attention than others, and that is why they might appear in the rules book for consecutive editions. These concerns are identified as "Points of Emphasis." For the 2025 high school baseball season, attention is being called to: Use of Authenticated Mark Program balls, Proper Pitching Positions, Bench Decorum, Use of Props, and Improper Use of Electronic Communication Equipment. When a topic is included in the Points of Emphasis, these topics are important enough to reinforce throughout the academic year because additional attention is warranted.

### Use of Authenticated Mark Program Balls

The use of baseballs that have the Authenticated Mark printed on them proves that the conforming equipment is essential to the integrity of contests played under the NFHS rules. This program helps to promote a level playing field by ensuring consistency in the equipment being used. Using baseballs that hold the authenticating mark allows for the development of more sophisticated standards in balls and clearly communicates to administrators, coaches and officials that these standards are being met.

### Pitching Positions

The premise of the pitching positions is very basic, it has evolved over the years to stay current with existing teaching styles and the increasing skill levels of high school age students. It is one of the most talked about and modified rules in the history of NFHS rules writing. We should always be cautious and concerned that the reasons to change the rule is never associated to the whims or trends of other levels of baseball. Pitchers are required to use one of two positions: the wind-up or the set. It is important that umpires, coaches and players know what position the pitcher is using so they know which part of Rule 6 is in play. The position of the pivot foot determines which of the pitching positions is being used. In the wind-up posi-

tion, the pitcher's pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate and is not parallel to it. They may only deliver a pitch or step backward off the pitcher's plate with the pivot first. In the set position, the pivot foot is in contact with or directly in front of and parallel to the pitcher's plate.

### Bench Decorum

Sportsmanship, or good sporting behavior, is about treating one another with respect and exhibiting appropriate behavior. It is about being fair, honest and caring. When these types of appropriate behaviors occur, competitive play is more enjoyable for everyone. Coaches set the tone at athletic contests with their display of sportsmanship and respect. If these individuals act in a sportsmanlike manner, manage the students in their dugout/bench area, their behavior sets a positive tone for players, spectators and others.

### Use of Props

There is no logical purpose to have props at an education-based athletic event. They are not enhancing the educational value of the contest. In fact, they deter from any valuable lesson gained from competing. Unlike the collegiate and professional models, the use of props or any items to demean or embarrass one's opponent is contrary to the reason the NFHS writes playing rules for high school age and skilled students.

### Improper Use of Communication Equipment

Last season was the first year of allowing one-way electronic communication devices from the dugout/bench to the catcher. It permits the coach to communicate with the catcher using an electronic communication device for the purpose of calling pitches and setting up the defense. The device would only be able to be one-way, meaning the player cannot use an electronic device to respond or communicate back to the coach. Various technologies, ear-piece style, electronic band or a smart watch could be used giving schools several options at varying costs. No other player would be able to wear or use this device nor would the coach be able to communicate with any other player using electronic communication. ●

# Congratulations!

## 2024 Fall State Tournament Officials

**Cross Country** – Steve Berg, West Salem (Meet Referee); Dennis Meyer, Waukesha (Starter); Joseph Rapacz, Iron River (Starter); Don Tolkacz, Hobart (Starter)

**Football** –

Mike Brewer, REF, Franklin; William Restock, UMP, Sussex; Brad Tittington, L, Oak Creek; Doug Dammann, LJ, Kenosha; Aaron Schramm, BJ, New Berlin

Gary Guendert, REF, Greendale; Anthony Sibley, UMP, Greenfield; Mike Scharber, L, Milwaukee; Michael Guendert, LJ, Milwaukee; Lee Kleszczynski, BJ, Greenfield

Steve Luedeman II, REF, Crivitz; Stephen Luedeman III, UMP, Green Bay; Kyle Christiansen, L, Cato; Casey Pivonka, LJ, De Pere; Ryan Alfson, BJ, Newton

Paul Lehmann, REF, River Falls; Brian Johnson, UMP, Hinckley, MN; James Celt, L, River Falls; Cole Tappe, LJ, New Richmond; Daniel Hoffman, BJ, River Falls

Kent Holmquist, REF, Madison; Justin Gilmore, UMP, Oregon; Corey Manlick, L, Hartford; Nathan Berg, LJ, West Bend; Robert Nolden, BJ, Belleville

Shawn Umland REF, Minocqua; Jacob Herbst, UMP, Park Falls; Kevin Kirby, L, Rhinelander; Randy Quade, LJ, Arbor Vitae; Thomas Meyers, BJ, Minocqua

Steve Binversie, REF, Little Chute; Donovan Salewski, UMP, Pound; John Jensen, L, Sherwood; Robert Schuettpehlz, LJ, Green Bay; Wade Turner, BJ, New London

**Football (8-player)** – Timothy Lee, REF, Viroqua; Kevin Erlandson, UMP, La Crosse; Jason Rood, L, Viroqua; Henry Bray, LJ, Boscobel; Brandon Lee, BJ, Viroqua

**Boys Soccer** –

Lucas Altman, Sheboygan; AR - Mike Walsh, Plymouth & Eric Stuart, Elkhart Lake

Tom Blau, West Bend; AR - Corey Beecher, Janesville & Jordan Dietrich, Neenah

Michael Carreon, Appleton; AR - Ben Nommensen, Appleton & Christopher Carreon, Appleton

Stephen Cavill, Madison; AR - Zachary Hallett, Janesville & David Frankson, Oregon

Fosem Ferengo, Sun Prairie; AR - Peter Morehouse, McFarland & Ian Loss, Verona

Mark Herdeman, West Bend; AR - Nolan Atkinson, Franklin & Jason Bettin, Waukesha

Steve Laack, Wausau; AR - Patrick Murphy, Wausau & Eugene Pliska, Waupaca

Parker LeMire, Eau Claire; AR - David Ripplinger, Eau Claire & James Deziel, Altoona

Jim McNamara, Waterford; AR - Jeff Burant, West Allis & Jonathan Schrantz, Waukesha

Rod Ottens, Green Bay; AR - Phillip Willems, Green Bay & Dario Abella, Green Bay

Thomas Rosenow, Fox Lake; AR - Matt Miles, Menomonee Falls & David Elgersma, Beaver Dam

Steve Van Deurzen, Neenah; AR - David Grable, Oshkosh & Michael Jones, Neenah

**Girls Swimming & Diving** – Beth Batiste Jackson, Slinger; Judy Linsley, Whitefish Bay; Tom Miller III, Menomonie; Stewart Oliver, Elm Grove; Susan Wagner, Delafield

**Girls Individual & Team Tennis – Meet Referee** - Liz Danner, Oneida. **Umpires** - Chip Asta, Williams Bay; Joyce Casey, Brookfield; Liz Danner, Oneida; Patty Fronberry, Germantown; Jana Graf, De Pere; Dave Hammelman, Castle Rock (CO); Jan Hammelman, Castle Rock (CO); Doug Knutzen, Fond du Lac; Deb Kremer, Sun Prairie; Katharine Marinan, Milwaukee; Jon Nicoud, Fond du Lac; Paula Riesch, Waunakee; Sharon Terry, Janesville; Joyce Tessiatore, Arbor Vitae; Henry Thomas, Milwaukee; Jim Yoshida, Madison

**Volleyball** – Nic Been, Hammond; Steven Binversie, Little Chute; Christine Brown, Elroy; Scott Campbell, Eau Claire; Randy Dahmen, Waunakee; Paul Dean, Marshfield; Rick Gloe, De Pere; Dave Huening, Rochester; Tim Joly, Seymour; Gary Kamin, Sun Prairie; Kelly Lehman, East Troy; Barbara Meyer, Deerfield; Rory Meyer, Deerfield; Patrick Mott, Milwaukee; Jon Mrdutt, Glenwood City; William Niebuhr, DeForest; Teague Prichard, Middleton; Mickey Reynolds, Madison; Jason Rieck, Mequon; Larry Schoenick, Waukesha; Jeffrey Scott, Marshfield; Kane Shutter, Arena; Adam Swanepoel, Glenwood City; Rita Tracy, Lavalley; Kevin Voge, Milwaukee; Tim Widiker, Hammond; David Willems, Wauwatosa; Tim Wirth, Kaukauna; Jody Wlitty, New Berlin; Lance Ystebo, Eau Claire ●

## 2025 NFHS Baseball Comments on the Rules

**Modified that resin, pine tar or any other drying agent is permitted on the bat in a specific area (1-3-2c1)** – This change allows the batter to have better control over their non-wood bat, so it does not slip out of their hands due to moisture or perspiration. It also makes the rule similar for wood bats and non-wood bats.

**Modified the definition of forfeiture (4-4-1c)** – There are seven criteria for forfeiture. This modification of the subsection “c” is the result when a coach, player or team personnel does not conform to the instructions of the umpire. An ejection is a serious violation of sportsmanship and game decorum. To aggravate the violation with a game forfeiture is egregious and contrary to the basic premise of education-based athletics. ●

## Clinics and School Facilities

Schools may not be involved in conducting clinics outside the season, with the following exceptions. So long as participation is voluntary and available to all interested students:

1. There shall be no restrictions upon schools, school teams and school coaches (grades 9-12) relative to assembling in the summertime, for up to 5 days, which do not need to be consecutive. Sanctioned school contact days must conclude no later than July 31 (July 26, 2025 for 11-Player Football).
2. During the school year, schools may conduct youth programming for students in grades 8 and below outside the season for providing camps or clinics.
3. During the summer, schools may conduct youth programming for students in grade 8 and below, where high school varsity and junior varsity coaches may use some or all of their high school athletes as clinicians. This may be done for a maximum of six days during the summer (when school is not in session) and must conclude no later than July 31 (except football with the dead period).
4. School facilities may be used for nonschool programs, according to board of education policy, which can result in clinics being conducted, outside the season, by nonschool groups. The nonschool group must request the facilities from the board of education or governing board, through normal procedures and are encouraged to provide their own insurance protection. (BL – Art. II and RE – Art. VI, Sect. 2) ●

## Officials Advisory Committee Openings

Openings for the 2025-26 Officials Advisory Committee will exist in the following: Basketball, Baseball, and Volleyball.

Interested officials need to submit a letter of interest along with officiating background information by **April 11, 2025** to Chad Schultz at the WIAA to receive consideration for one of these openings. This information can be emailed to [cschultz@wiaawi.org](mailto:cschultz@wiaawi.org).

The position holds a 3 year commitment and requires officials to attend one meeting annually at the WIAA office. This meeting is typically held the Wednesday after Thanksgiving.

If you have any questions regarding the Officials Advisory Committee, please contact Chad. ●

## 2024 WCCA Officials of the Year

**District 1 – Northwest**  
Norm Knauf, Weston

**District 2 – Northeast**  
Mark Jandrin, Luxemburg

**District 3 – Southwest**  
Jeff Giese, Beaver Dam

**District 4 – Southeast**  
Paul Szelc, Wauwatosa

# 2024-25 NFHS Soccer Points of Emphasis

## Official's Toolbox for Game Management

A referee's "toolbox" for game management consists of various skills, techniques, and strategies they can employ to effectively officiate a match and maintain control over the players, coaches and game environment. Here are a few items in a referee's toolbox:

- **Communication:** Clear and effective communication with players, coaches, and the officiating team is key. Referees can use verbal and non-verbal cues to convey decisions, instructions, and warnings. Working constructively and in cooperation with game site administration is important to facilitating a positive game environment.
- **Game Control:** Referees use their authority to manage the tempo and flow of the game. They may intervene to calm tensions, prevent conflicts, or address unsporting behavior. This can include issuing verbal warnings, cautions, ejections or temporarily suspending the game and working with administrators to deal with spectators or outside interference.
- **Development:** With the requirement to explain misconduct incidents to both coaches, an educational atmosphere is an important component of the high school game and officials should approach interactions positively with respect and professionalism. Officials should clearly and concisely state the specific nature of the misconduct fostering a positive learning environment in the face of difficult situations.
- **Adaptability:** Every game is different, and referees must adapt to changing circumstances. They may need to adjust their officiating style based on the level of play, the behavior of the players, or unexpected developments during the match.

By utilizing these tools effectively while managing emotions and remaining calm and composed, referees can promote fair play, ensure player safety, and contribute to a positive and enjoyable experience for everyone involved in the game.

### Stopping a Promising Attack

The inclusion of the considerations for a promising attack serves as a crucial clarification in the rules, specifically addressing what was previously referred to as "tactical fouls". While the considerations are clear for obvious goal-scoring opportunities, promising attacks may be more difficult to recognize. The strategy of tactically fouling with the aim to interrupt the attacking team's progress without necessarily denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity is a form of misconduct. Sections 7 and 8 in Rule 12 highlight the importance of discerning the nature of these types of tactical offenses for consistent and fair officiating.

Like DOGSO situations, fouls that stop a promising attack (SPA) might not be severe in nature, but the offense's impact on the attacking team's potential needs to be recognized and dealt with accordingly. Officials need to understand the nuanced dynamics of play and maintain a tactical awareness of the advancing phase of play to recognize SPA incidents. Referees are tasked with evaluating multiple factors to determine the promise of an attack, encompassing elements like player positioning, ball control, defensive presence, skill, and the pace of the game. Importantly, any foul that unfairly stops or interrupts a promising attack is considered misconduct, warranting a caution and a yellow card for the offending player. If SPA occurs within the offender's penalty area, and the foul

is an attempt to play the ball, the player is not cautioned if the referee awards a penalty kick. In other SPA circumstances inside the penalty area (e.g. holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball, etc.) the offending player must be cautioned.

### After a Goal

After a goal is scored, officials must stay alert as there are several important considerations and tasks to manage. In addition to lower priority administrative tasks, officials must be vigilant after a goal for any signs of escalating tension or potential misconduct and address any issues promptly to prevent situations from escalating. Key aspects of concern include:

- Working as a team with other officials (i.e., lead assistant referee) to determine if the ball was, in fact, scored properly by wholly crossing the goal line, under the crossbar, and between the goal posts. The crew must ensure that the goal was legally scored and there were no infringements or violations during the buildup to the goal. This includes checking for any potential offside offenses by the attacking team that would prompt the goal to be disallowed.
- Observing players' reactions and behaviors after the goal to identify and address any unsporting actions or misconduct. This includes potential con-

frontations, dissent, or provocative actions. If the team that scored is behind, they may try to quickly retrieve the ball from the goal or grab it out of an opponent's hands. The defense that was setting an offside trap may swarm around the assistant referee to argue about a non-call. These can be volatile situations and proactive officials will intervene quickly to make their presence known. Encourage attackers to return to their side of the field promptly or remind defenders the decisions of

See 2024-25 NFHS Soccer Points of Emphasis, page 20 >

## Shafranski Announces from page 1

recipient. In 2022, Shafranski was the recipient of the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association Andy Anderson Award, presented to individuals who best serve the Association with unselfish dedication, time and effort.

In addition to his contributions at the State association level, he has been active and influential on the national level. He received the National Federation of State High School Associations Citation in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the mission of the association in 2017. Shafranski was a member of the NFHS Ice Hockey Rules Committee from 2003-04 and again from 2008-2014. He served as the chairman of that committee from 2010-14, and he also served as a member of the NFHS Swimming & Diving Rules Committee from 2005-2009. Most recently, he served on the NFHS Hall of Fame Selection Committee from 2021-23.

Prior to joining the WIAA, he served as athletic director at Stevens Point Area High School for one year. Prior to his appointment at SPASH, he held an associate principal position at Wausau East High School for one year.

From 1996-2000, Shafranski was the activities director for grades 6-12 in the Rhinelander School District after serving as the associate principal and activities director for just the senior high school from 1993-96. Other high school administrative experience included a one-year stint as principal at Hortonville High School from 1992-93. He taught business education classes at West Bend East from 1982-87 when he was named the district's AODA coordinator in 1987. He was chosen assistant principal in 1989, a position he held from 1989-1992.

In addition to his school responsibilities, Shafranski had been active in state and conference affiliated activities. He was an American Sport Coaches Education Program and a Program for Athletic Coaches Education instructor. He served on the WIAA Scholar-Athlete Selection Committee from 1998-2000 and was a mentor for new athletic directors for the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association. He also has served as the chairman of the Wisconsin Valley Conference Sportsmanship Committee.

Shafranski received a bachelor's degree in business education from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 1982. He earned a master's degree in education from National Louis University in Evanston, Ill., in 1985. In 1991, he received an Administrative Leadership Certificate in School Administration from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. ●

## 2024-25 NFHS Soccer Rules Changes

**4-1-4d:** Clarifies there is not a limitation on the color of tape or sock worn at or below the ankle.

**Rationale:** Athletes have the flexibility to modify socks within the existing regulations. Frequently, they remove the foot of one sock to layer another underneath, enhancing comfort or grip inside their shoes and fastening the top sock around the ankle. Any tape or similar material used above the ankle must match the sock's color, while at or below the ankle, any color is allowed. Referees are no longer required to oversee socks below the ankle.

**Rule 12:** Reorganized the rule for clarity and consistency.

**Rationale:** The Fouls and Misconduct rule has been revised to eliminate duplicate language and improve usability. The main changes involve reorganizing the existing rule for clarity. Sections have been rearranged to enhance ease of reference, and a new section addressing Stopping a Promising Attack (SPA) has been included. Certain general language in the rule has been modified to align with other rules codes. Section 6, Ejections, provides an ordered list of offenses by severity to allow associations more flexibility for determining post-game sanctions for misconduct. Additionally, an article has been added to clarify that all necessary conditions must be met for DOGSO (Denial of an Obvious Goal-Scoring Opportunity) to be applicable.

### 2024-2025 Editorial Changes

3-4-3, 6-2-3, 12-9-1g

### 2024-2025 Points of Emphasis

1. Official's Toolbox for Game Management
2. Stopping a Promising Attack
3. After a Goal ●

# Annual Meeting Amendments

Listed below are the amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Eligibility under consideration for the Board of Control to advance to a membership vote at the Annual Meeting in April. The actual amendments that will be advanced and placed on the ballot for a membership vote will be determined by the Board at its March meeting.

## BYLAWS

### NUMBER 1 – SPECTATOR NFHS SPORTSMANSHIP CLASS

In addition to the current one-game suspension requirement, this amendment would require a spectator who has been ejected from a contest to complete the free, online NFHS Sportsmanship course available on the NFHSLearn.com website and submitting the completed course certificate to school officials before attending any future home athletic events.

#### Article X – Game Control

##### Section 1– School – p. 27

- C. A spectator, who is ejected from a contest, in addition to a one-game suspension, must complete the free NFHS Sportsmanship Class prior to attending the next home game for the school associated with the spectator.
- D. It shall be the responsibility of a school to eliminate such pranks and/or mischief, as ripping or cutting nets from basketball goals, tearing down goal posts, stealing batons, or marking flags or any other activity involving destruction and/or theft of game equipment and materials.

## RULES OF ELIGIBILITY

### NUMBER 2 – SUMMER COACHING CONTACT

This amendment would expand the opportunities for coaching contact in all WIAA sponsored sports throughout the months of June and July.

#### Article VI– Nonschool Participation

##### Section 2 – Out-of-Season – p. 34

- B. With school consent, in the summertime, members of a school's team may voluntarily assemble with their teammates and coaches for purposes of instruction and/or competition for up to five days (do not need to be consecutive) in all WIAA sports sponsored by the school, without restriction between June 1 through June 30 and July 7 through July 31.

Note: Whether an opportunity is school-sponsored or not, coach contact outside the actual school season may not exceed occur outside the Board of Control approved contact days calendar.

- C. Other than during the actual school season and those days designated as sanctioned school coach contact days in the summertime, the following provisions shall apply to nonschool participation in accordance with Section 2A above.
  - 1) An acceptable nonschool program or activity is one.....
  - 2) The person who will be coaching a student in the following school season shall not be permitted to coach that student other than during the designated school season and Board of Control approved coach contact days in the summertime. An exception is that coaches can have coaching contact with students who have just completed 8th grade up until these 8th graders start their 9th grade year as a student or first attends a day of fall practice (whichever comes first). Board of Control approved summertime coach contact is as follows:
    - a. Sanctioned School Coaching Contact – Coaches in all WIAA recognized sports (baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, gymnastics, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, volleyball, and wrestling) have been afforded up to five days of sanctioned school coaching contact between the end of school and June 1 through June 30 and July 7 through July 31, in accordance with the Bylaws and as described in item B of this section. The five days do not need to be consecutive.
      - (1) There must be a minimum of one calendar week (Sun.-Sat.) of no sanctioned ....
      - (2) Football must follow the WIAA Fall Acclimatization policy.
    - b. Nonschool Programming – Coaches in all sports except foot-

ball have been afforded nonschool program contact beyond the five sanctioned school contact days that is permitted to continue throughout the summertime (when school is not in session from the last day of school to the start of school) in accordance with the Bylaws and as described in Section 2 – A and C-1) of this section.

- c. This provision shall not prevent a coach from having supervisory responsibilities ...
- d. Coaches are allowed to recreate ...
- e. Coaches are allowed to use some or all of their athletes, as clinicians, when conducting a clinic for youngsters who have just completed 8th grade on down. This may be done for a maximum of six days, during the summer (when school is not in session), and must conclude no later than June 1 through June 30 and July 7 through July 31.
  - Note: There must be a minimum of one calendar week (Sun.-Sat.) of no sanctioned school coaching contact prior to (i.e. the week immediately preceding) the first allowed practice in a fall sport. This does not affect nonschool programming.
- f. A member school is permitted to supervise ...

*Corresponding changes to the following:*

#### Bylaws, Article III – All-Star Prohibition

##### Section 1 – Out-of-Season - Nonschool Use – p. 25

- A. In the summertime, with approval of its governing body, a school may issue its own protective equipment, uniforms, and other apparel for use by athletes in training or nonschool competition at its own discretion.

Note: For school protective equipment, uniforms and other apparel, summertime shall be from the Friday before Memorial Day to the first day of school. Reminder: School sanctioned coaching contact is not allowed prior to the last day of school June 1.

*Corresponding changes to the following:*

#### Rules At A Glance

##### I. Coaches and Coaching Contact

- B. Coaching restrictions apply to all sports during the school year, except during the respective sport season. All coaches have five days of sanctioned school coaching contact in the summer, between the end of school June 1 and July 31, with no coaching contact July 1 through July 6; the days do not need to be consecutive. The five contact days must be the same for all levels within a sport program. Football must follow WIAA Fall Football Acclimatization rules and contact ends July 27, 2024 (11-player only). In 2025, July 26 will be the last day for football coaches contact (11-player only). 8-player teams must conclude by July 31. In addition, coaching restrictions do not apply in the summer beyond the five sanctioned school days in all sports except football, the summer being defined as when school is not in normal session, provided such nonschool programs are not limited to students on the basis of school or team affiliation. Other than during the actual school season and as specifically approved in the summer, coaches may not have coaching contact with their athletes other than as listed above; including practicing or competing with athletes, driving athletes to nonschool competition, driving athletes to camps, clinics, etc., or having basically anything to do with the athletes' nonschool participation. Further, coaches may not:
  - 1. Mandate athletes participate in nonschool competition, or determine who may or may not participate in nonschool activities.
  - 2. Require involvement in out-of-season activities as part of the requirements for making a school team, earning a school letter award, etc.

*See Annual Meeting Amendments, page 6 >*

- 3. Provide incentives such as T-shirts, etc., for participation in the off-season.

**CONSTITUTION**

**NUMBER 3 – ELIMINATING GAME MAXIMUM LANGUAGE SPECIFIC TO 9TH GRADE TEAMS**

*This amendment would allow 9th grade teams the ability to play the same number of contests as allowed in season regulations for JV and Varsity teams.*

**Article VI – Powers and Duties of the Board of Control**

**Section 2 – Authority – p. 17-18**

- A. The Board of Control shall have general control over all activity and persons involved with the official school teams in any sport sponsored by this Association.
  - 1) The Board shall have sole authority to interpret the provisions of the CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, and RULES of ELIGIBILITY, and any other regulations which are adopted.
  - 2) The Board shall have the authority to make changes, whenever necessary, in rules and regulations of this Association, except the CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, and RULES OF ELIGIBILITY.
    - a. **Any change approved by the Board of Control in maximum game/meet limits, or in WIAA adaptations to NFHS rules of sport, which by their enactment would result in additional cost to be incurred by schools, must be advanced to the Annual Meeting for a vote before taking effect.**

*Corresponding changes to the following:*

Respective Sport Season Regulations

Reference:

Games/Meet Maximums for WIAA Sports

**CONSTITUTION**

**NUMBER 4 – COMPETITIVE BALANCE - PETITION**

*This amendment brought forward by members of the Association would include Cross Country as the only team state qualifying sport to be excluded from competitive balance.*

**Article III – Membership**

**Section 3 – Classification – p. 14**

- B. After determining the school enrollment as described above (Art. III Sect. 3-A), a tournament performance factor and procedures outlined in Appendix N will be used to determine divisional tournament placement for all WIAA sports, except swimming & diving and track & field and cross country.

*Corresponding Language:*

Appendix N

Cross Country Tournament Regulations

**RULES OF ELIGIBILITY**

**NUMBER 5 – NAME, IMAGE AND LIKENESS**

*This change would allow student-athletes to enter into Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) opportunities for those activities not associated with their school team, school, conference or the WIAA. Taking into consideration the current NCAA landscape and member concerns, intentional language has been included to address undue influence.*

**Article IV – Amateur Status**

**Section 1 – Loss of Eligibility – p. 32**

- A. A student shall be an amateur in all recognized sports of this Association in order to compete in any sport, and he/she shall become ineligible for all further participation in the school's interscholastic program for violation of any of the amateur status provisions. The penalty may be reduced upon request of a school on the basis of documented extenuating circumstances, when accompanied by evidence of complete restitution made by the athlete (when applicable).
- B. A student shall be determined to be in violation if he/she:
  - 1) Accepts, receives...
  - 2) Signs a contract or agreement for services as a participating athlete.

- a. A student may be employed (but not self-employed) on a part-time basis as an instructor on the playgrounds, game official, lifeguard, e.g.
- b. This rule shall not prevent a student from signing 1) an agreement which binds him/her to play only for a particular team, or 2) an athletic tender with a university or college or 3) a Name, Image or Likeness opportunities as outlined in Article IV Section 1-C.

- 3) Receives compensation or benefit, directly or indirectly, for the use of name, picture, and/or personal appearance, as an athlete because of ability, potential, and/or performance as an athlete.
- 4) Receives free and/or reduced rates on equipment, apparel, camps/clinics/instruction and competitive opportunities that are not identical for any and all interested students.
- 5) Is identified as an athlete, provides endorsement as an athlete, or appears as an athlete, in the promotion of a commercial/advertisement and/or profit-making event, item, plan or service.

Note: When an athlete has been identified with or without permission and/or awareness resulting in a violation of this rule, the penalty may be reduced once the violation has been rectified.

- 6) Plays in any contest (school or nonschool) under a name other than his/her own name.

- C. An athlete forfeits amateur status in a sport by capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money, compensation, endorsements or gifts of monetary value in affiliation or connection with activities involving the student's school team, school, Conference or WIAA (scholarships to institutions of higher learning are specifically exempted).

- 1) This provision is not intended to restrict the right of any student to participate in a Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) commercial endorsement provided there is no school team, school, Conference or WIAA affiliation.

- 2) Prohibited NIL Activities:
  - a. The student shall not appear in the uniform of the student's school and does not utilize the marks, logos, etc. of the school team, school, Conference or WIAA as part of any endorsement.
  - b. The student shall not promote activities nor products associated with the following: gaming/gambling; alcoholic beverages, tobacco, cannabis, or related products; banned or illegal substances; adult entertainment products or services; weapons (i.e. firearms).

- c. The compensation is not contingent on specific athletic performance or achievement (ie. financial incentives based on points scored).

- d. The compensation is not provided by the school or persons associated with school as an inducement to attend a particular school ("recruiting") or to remain enrolled at a particular school.

Note: Definition of Persons Associated With School include, but are not limited to; current or former coaches, current or former athletes, parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver of current or former student/athletes (exception of one's own parent) , booster club members, alumni, spouses or relatives of coaches, teachers and other employees, coaches who become employed, active applicants for coaching positions, and persons who are employed by companies or organizations that have donated monetarily, athletic supplies, equipment or apparel to that school.

- e. The NIL activities do not interfere with a student-athlete's academic obligations.

- f. A student does not miss athletic practice, competition, travel, or other team obligations in order to participate in NIL opportunities.

See Annual Meeting Amendments, page 8 >

# 2025 State Individual Wrestling Championships



Thursday, Feb. 27 - Saturday, March 1, 2025  
Kohl Center, Madison

Doors open for fans one hour prior to the start of competition in sessions 1, 2, 3 & 4.

Doors open for fans 90 minutes prior to the start of session 5 (finals).

**ATTENTION: Fans should plan to allow extra time to enter. Metal detectors will be used on entry into the Kohl Center.**

## Session 1 Thursday, Feb. 27 - Eight Mats

Div. 1 & Girls Preliminaries - **2 p.m.** (Doors open at 1 p.m.) Weigh in: 12:30 p.m.  
(Div. 1 on mats 1, 2, 3, 4, Girls on mats 5, 6, 7, 8)

Div. 1 & Girls Quarterfinals - **Approximately 4:30 p.m.**

Div. 2 & 3 Preliminaries - **Approximately 6 p.m.** Weigh in: 4 p.m.  
(Div. 2 on mats 1, 2, 3, 4; Div. 3 on mats 5, 6, 7, 8)

Div. 2 & 3 Quarterfinals - **Approximately 8 p.m.**

**Note:** All weight classes will be wrestled in consecutive order from lowest to highest on next available mat.

## Session 2 Friday, Feb. 28 - Eight Mats

Div. 1 & Girls Weigh Ins: 8:30 a.m./Div. 2-3 Weigh Ins: 11 a.m.

Div. 1 & Girls Consolation Prelims - **10 a.m.** (Doors open at 9 a.m.)  
(Div. 1 on mats 1, 2, 3, 4, Girls on mats 5, 6, 7, 8)

Div. 1 & Girls Consolation Quarterfinals - **Approximately 11:30 a.m.**

Div. 2 & 3 Consolation Quarterfinals - **Approximately 1 p.m.**  
(Div. 2 on mats 1, 2, 3, 4; Div. 3 on mats 5, 6, 7, 8)

**Note:** All weight classes will be wrestled in consecutive order from lowest to highest on next available mat.

## Session 3 Friday, Feb. 28 - Eight Mats

Div. 1, 2, 3 and Girls Semifinals - **7 p.m.** (Doors open at 6 p.m.)  
(Div. 1 on mats 1 & 2; Girls on mats 3 & 4; Div. 2 on mats 5 & 6;  
Div. 3 on mats 7 & 8)

**Note:** All weight classes will be wrestled in consecutive order from lowest to highest on next available mat.

## Session 4 Saturday, March 1 - Eight Mats

All Weigh Ins: 8:30 a.m.

Div. 1, 2, 3 & Girls Consolation Semifinals - **10 a.m.** (Doors open at 9 a.m.)  
(Div. 1 on mats 1 & 2; Girls on mats 3 & 4; Div. 2 on mats 5 & 6;  
Div. 3 on mats 7 & 8)

Div. 1, 2, 3 & Girls Fifth Place\*

Div. 1, 2, 3 & Girls Third Place\*

\* Fifth-place and third-place matches will run concurrently by weight class following all consolation matches.

## Session 5 Saturday, March 1 - Four Mats

**March of Champions - 5:30 p.m.** (Doors open at 4:00 p.m.)

Div. 1, 2, 3 & Girls **Championships** - (Div. 1 on mat 1; Girls on mat 2; Div. 2 on mat 3;  
Div. 3 on mat 4) ●

# 2025 State Team Wrestling Tournament Schedule



Friday-Saturday, March 7-8  
UW Field House, Madison

Doors open for spectators one hour prior to the start of competition each session.

**Teams will be seeded on Sunday, March 2 and posted after seed meetings.**

## Friday, March 7, 2025 (one session)

Weigh-ins - 4:15 p.m.  
Admission \$16 for one session

## Division 1 Quarterfinals - 5:30 p.m.

Match 1 - #1 Seed vs. #8 seed  
Match 2 - #4 seed vs. #5 seed  
Match 3 - #3 seed vs. #6 seed  
Match 4 - #2 seed vs. #7 seed

## Division 1 Semifinals - 7:30 p.m.

Match 5 - Match 1 winner vs. Match 2 winner  
Match 6 - Match 3 winner vs. Match 4 winner

## Saturday, March 8, 2025 (two sessions)

Weigh-ins all divisions - 8:45 a.m.  
Admission \$11 for each session

## Division 2/3 Semifinals - 10 a.m.

Match 1 - #1 Seed vs. #4 seed  
Match 2 - #2 seed vs. #3 seed

## Championships in all Divisions - 3 p.m.

All tickets may be purchased online through the GoFan ticket link. ●

# Regulations for Baseball Pitcher Instruction

Baseball conditioning for pitchers may be conducted for five (5) days during the week prior to the first date for baseball practice (Sun to Sat). There must be a day of rest for at least one calendar day before the season begins. This activity is considered out-of-season and voluntary.

1. Only one session per day per athlete permitted—the maximum length of the session is two hours per individual.
2. The program can be conducted indoors or out depending on the weather.
3. The conditioning program is limited to pitchers and catchers in grades 9 through 12.
4. Balls, gloves and catcher's protective equipment are the only equipment permitted. Portable pitching mounds are permitted. (Bats, batting tees, fungos, batting cages, pitching machines, etc., are strictly prohibited.)
5. The program may consist only of warm-ups, stretching, calisthenics, weight training, running, other conditioning exercises and throwing. Throwing is permitted only because it is an important aspect of conditioning the arm.
6. A coach must be present at all conditioning sessions.
7. Safety Precautions - Catchers should wear full equipment. Do not use anyone to assume a batter's position while pitchers are throwing, since although pitching control may be an outcome of the program, it is not a program objective.

NOTE: It is a violation of WIAA rules to allow work on fielding, covering bases, pick-offs or any other related fundamental, and therefore, these types of drills are strictly prohibited. In addition, it should not be used as a tryout, and team cuts are not permitted. ●

- g. A student can not utilize representation or contract an agent. High schools or its employees are not allowed to help facilitate deals for student-athletes.

Note: When an athlete has been identified with or without permission and/or awareness resulting in a violation of this rule, the penalty may be reduced once the violation has been rectified.

**EDITORIAL CHANGES**

Editorial changes are attempts to clarify existing rules without making any change in the interpretation of the rule. In some instances, the change may be merely a word(s) or the addition or deletion of a sentence, while in other cases the change may reflect Board of Control interpretation of membership wishes.

**CONSTITUTION**

**Article V – Board of Control Organization**

**Section 4 – Elections – p. 16-17**

- A. Representatives of Seven Districts and At-Large Gender, Ethnic Minority, and Nonpublic School Representatives
  - 1) Each member senior high school of this Association is entitled, when appropriate, to one vote for Board of Control member in its geographical district, one vote for an at-large gender member, one vote for an at-large ethnic minority member, and one vote for an at-large nonpublic school member. The vote must be cast by the administrator, high school principal, or a person designated by either of these persons.
  - 2) No later than the fourth Tuesday third Monday in January February, the WIAA office will announce that declarations of candidacy will be accepted from eligible administrators (Article V, Section 1-A-1) if there is a Board of Control vacancy in their elector district or for the at-large gender, ethnic minority or nonpublic school representative.
  - 3) No later than 5:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday first Monday in February March, any eligible school administrator may file a declaration of candidacy with the WIAA office.
  - 4) No later than the first Tuesday in March, the Executive Director shall verify the declarations of candidacy and certify the names of the candidates who have filed valid nominations.

- 5) The Board of Control shall require a primary election, if there are more than two candidates for any seat. If a primary is necessary, a ballot will be prepared and distributed to the appropriate schools on the third Monday in March. The return ballot must be signed and returned electronically submitted to the WIAA office, postmarked no later than the fourth Tuesday in March. If any eligible candidate receives 75% or more of the total votes that can be cast, that person shall be declared elected. Primary election ballots will provide a write-in option.
- 6) Before the first second Tuesday in April (unless the primary has determined an elected candidate) or immediately following the primary (if necessary), the WIAA office will issue ballots to the voting schools for purposes of the election. These ballots will contain the names of the top vote-getters in the primary, double the number to be elected, as well as a write-in option or, if there has not been a primary, the ballots will contain the names of all candidates, as well as a write-in option. The ballots must be signed and returned electronically submitted to the WIAA office, postmarked no later than the third Tuesday in April.
- 7) In both a primary and/or general election, at least 25% of the schools in the election set must have voted in order for a write-in candidate to be advanced or elected.
- 8) A special Elections Committee appointed by the Board of Control shall open and canvass the ballots. The results shall be announced at the Annual Meeting. In the event of a tie, a runoff election shall be conducted by mail-in ballot within two weeks following the Annual Meeting.

Corresponding Language:

Constitution, Article VII-Advisory Council Organization, Section 4-Elections (p. 19-20)

**Article III – Membership**

**Section 3 – Classification – p. 14**

- B. After determining the school enrollment as described above (Art. III Sect. 3-A), a tournament performance factor and procedures outlined in Appendix N will be used to determine divisional tournament placement for all WIAA team sports with multiple divisions, except swimming & diving and track & field. ●

## WIAA Fall Team Tournament Sportsmanship Awards Selected

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, in cooperation with Rural Mutual Insurance Company, has selected the team Sportsmanship Award winners for the 2024 fall State Tournaments.

The recipients of the awards are Lomira in football, Elkhorn in boys soccer, Eau Claire Immanuel Lutheran in girls volleyball, Appleton North in boys volleyball and Kohler in girls team tennis.

The WIAA/Rural Insurance Sportsmanship Award is presented to one school program and community—or communities in the case of cooperative programs—in each of the State team tournaments that demonstrates outstanding sportsmanship. Award winners are determined by the conduct and sportsmanship displayed by athletes, coaches, cheer and support groups, mascots, bands and spectators. Additional consideration is given for the effort of school administrators and chaperones to ensure support for their teams are positive and that the highest ideals of sportsmanship are demonstrated.

Lomira was chosen for the award with its display of outstanding sportsmanship at the State Football Finals, which was held at Camp Randall Stadium in Madison, Wis., on Nov. 21-22. The Lions earn the school's first Sportsmanship Award in any sport. Lomira won the Division 6 championship by defeating Grantsburg 26-19 in the program's first appearance in the championship game. Participants in the 8-player and 11-player finals receiving honorable mention are Catholic Memorial, Lena/St. Thomas Aquinas, Owen-Withee and Wrightstown.

Elkhorn receives the award in boys' soccer with its display of sportsmanship both on the field and in the stands during the State Boys Soccer Tournament at

Uihlein Soccer Park in Milwaukee on Nov. 7-9. The Elks finished runner-up after being on the short end of a 2-1 tally in a shootout following a 0-0 tie with Waukesha West in the Division 2 championship game. They advanced to the title game with a 1-0 victory over Homestead in the semifinals. The Elks earn the Sportsmanship Award for the second time with the school's first recognition awarded in boys soccer in 2011. DeForest, Homestead, Kiel, Lake Country Lutheran and Marquette received honorable mention.

Eau Claire Immanuel Lutheran is the recipient of the award for the State Girls Volleyball Tournament, which was held at the Resch Center in Green Bay on Nov. 7-9. The Lancers earned the school's second Sportsmanship Award in girls volleyball, which also accounts for their overall total. They received their previous honor in 2020. The sportsmanship and enthusiasm during a 25-10, 23-25, 25-19, 25-21 win in the first-ever Division 5 championship game against Columbus Catholic and the Lancers' 25-21, 21-25, 25-20, 25-19 semifinal victory versus Sheboygan Christian contributed to excellent evaluations. Schools receiving honorable mention were Bay Port, Columbus Catholic, Lake Country Lutheran, Mineral Point, Newman Catholic, Oak Creek, St. Thomas More, Shawano and Sheboygan Christian.

Appleton North was the winner of the award for the State Boys Volleyball Tournament held in conjunction with the girls tournament. The Lightning are being recognized for their sportsmanship above the other seven schools participating in the one-division tournament. They fell in their quarterfinal match to Germantown by scores of 30-28, 25-21, 25-17. It's the first time Appleton

**See WIAA Fall Team Tournament Sportsmanship Awards Selected, page 16 >**



## Boys & Girls Basketball Tournament Information

The time is near! Girls and boys basketball teams across the state are working toward the opportunity to play for a championship in March! As conference titles are still up for grabs, the WIAA is preparing to host a memorable Tournament Series for the student-athletes, coaches, administrators and communities! We hope that this will be an exciting and memorable journey.

Here is a breakdown of what this year's Tournament Series will look like:

### Girls Basketball

- Regional Quarterfinals – Tuesday, Feb. 25
- Regional Semifinals – Friday, Feb. 28
- Regional Finals – Saturday, March 1
- Sectional Semifinal – Thursday, March 6
- Sectional Finals – Saturday, March 8
- STATE – March 13, 14, 15

### Boys Basketball

- Regional Quarterfinals – Tuesday, March 4
- Regional Semifinals – Friday, March 7
- Regional Finals – Saturday, March 8
- Sectional Semifinal – Thursday, March 13
- Sectional Finals – Saturday, March 15
- STATE – March 20, 21, 22



### 3-Point Challenge

Once again, Wisconsin's best long-range shooters will have the chance to compete for the title of champion. This year, coaches are only required to enter the statistics of their best 3-point shooters once in order to be considered for the final competition. All stats must be entered on WisSports.net. No late entries will be considered; so mark your calendars. WisSports is creating excitement around

this event, by posting a leaderboard on their website! Follow along as we journey through the season. The deadline for complete statistics are listed here.

**GIRLS:** Monday, Feb. 24, 2025 – Midnight

**BOYS:** Monday, March 3, 2025 – Midnight

### Rally Your Fans for Girls Basketball

We are fortunate to be partnered with the Green Bay Stadium District for the Girls State Basketball Tournament. RUSH TO THE RESCH, is a promotion which will allow the four qualifying schools in each division to compete to see who can sell the most tickets for their semifinal game. The winners in each division will be awarded a \$2,000 check, courtesy of the Stadium District. Schools are encouraged to have their fans purchase tickets through the school in order for the sales to qualify toward the grand total. The WIAA would like to thank the Green Bay Stadium District, which has donated \$10,000 each of the past several years, to fund this terrific competition. Let's get your fans to the games!

### Electronic Seeding

Both girls and boys basketball are in the fourth year of electronic seeding. Seeds are no longer determined by the voting of the coaches, but instead, are determined by the computer using a seeding formula. After a successful reveal last year, the State Tournament Series Brackets will once again be released during a broadcast on the WIAA State Network stations. The girls playoff bracket will be released on Feb. 16 at 11 a.m., and the boys on Feb. 23 at 10 a.m. Our thanks to Allen Media Broadcasting for helping us to drive the excitement surrounding the release of the 2025 State Basketball Tournament fields.

### State Tournament Tickets

State Tournament tickets are on sale NOW! Let's make this a year to remember by supporting the amazing young people who will compete in the 2024-25 State Basketball Tournaments. We are striving for a record-breaking year! ●

## 2025 State Gymnastics Tournament Schedule

**Friday-Saturday, March 7-8**  
**Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln Fieldhouse**

### Friday, March 7 – Team Competition

- 10:30 a.m. – Building opens for competitors
- 10:45 a.m. – Judges Meeting
- 11-11:30 a.m. – General stretching and bar settings
- 11 a.m. – Facility Opens for Spectators
- 11:30-11:40 a.m. – All gymnasts gather in balcony for march in preparation
- 11:45 a.m. – March in (Note: Athletes must be attired in school-approved warm-ups and/or leotards).
- Noon – Competition begins

### Saturday, March 8 – Individual Competition

- 8:30 a.m. – Building Opens for Competitors
- 9-9:30 a.m. – General stretching and bar setting
- 9 a.m. – Facility Opens for Spectators
- 9:15 a.m. – All gymnasts gather in balcony for march in preparation
- 9:30 a.m. – March in (Note: Athletes must be attired in school-approved warm-ups and/or leotards).
- 10 a.m. – Competition begins ●



## 2025 NFHS Softball Points of Emphasis

### TEAMS' ROLE IN PACE OF PLAY

Coaches play a vital role in creating and maintaining pace-of-play standards for their individual players and teams. Every effort should be made to educate players on the rules involved and the timing protocols related to breaks between innings, as well as during gameplay.

Between innings, 60 seconds is provided for (a) the defense to take the field and throw warm-up pitches, and (b) the offense to prepare to bat. There are several ways that coaches can expedite this process with simple instructions to players. For example, if the catcher was batting when the third out was made, have another teammate or coach prepared to receive warm-up pitches while the catcher gets equipped. For the team coming to bat, coaches should encourage their lead-off batter to gather their batting equipment while the remainder of the team huddles in an appropriate area that doesn't pose a safety risk for the defense warming up.

There are prescribed penalties associated with excessive time between innings. Once the allowed 60 seconds has passed, the offensive team has 10 seconds for its batter to enter the batter's box (NFHS Rule 7-3-1). Similarly, once the allowed 60 seconds has passed, the pitcher has 20 seconds to legally deliver a pitch (NFHS Rule 6-2-3). The respective penalties for violations of these time constraints are either a strike or a ball on the batter, depending on the tardy party.

These same time constraints exist on each pitch thrown. Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch, the pitcher has 20 seconds to

release the pitch. Coaches who delay in calling pitches risk a penalty for exceeding the allowed 20 seconds. The same applies to the offense when a batter fails to enter the batter's box within 10 seconds after the ball is returned to the pitcher.

### SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Participant well-being should be a priority for all those involved in game management. Coaches and umpires can help minimize risk and injury to players by understanding and enforcing existing bench and field conduct rules. NFHS rules stipulate that once the game has begun, only the batter, runner(s), on-deck batter, coaches in the coach's box, bat/ball shaggers or one of the nine players on defense are permitted to be outside the designated dugout/bench or designated warm-up areas (i.e. batting cage or bullpen). Additionally, during game play, hitting the ball to teammates on defense is prohibited. Between innings, bench personnel are permitted to engage in throwing and running activities.

Field structure and dugout protection vary from facility to facility. Team personnel should assess and be aware of potential hazards associated with foul balls and overthrows. For example, if a bullpen is in an area where a foul ball or over-throw could contact the pitcher or catcher, the team might assign bench personnel with a glove to stand nearby to shield those warming up.

On-deck batters should be mindful of potential foul balls and overthrows and be prepared to move as necessary to avoid contact. On-deck batters must use the on-deck circle closest to their own dugout. (NFHS Rule 7-5-1) ●

# Coaching Contact

*NOTE: Proposed coaching contact amendment may be on the 2025 Annual Meeting agenda.*

**During the school year**, coaches are restricted to coaching contact within the sport season only.

Nothing has changed in regard to the time period of contact. During the school year, coaches may not have out-of-season coaching contact with the athletes they will coach the next season. Coaches may only have coaching contact with their athletes during the sport season while school is in session. The additional non-school coaching contact is only for the summer time that is defined as the last day of school to the first day of school.

**During the summer time** (last day of school to the first day of school), coaching contact is defined as Sanctioned SCHOOL contact and NONSCHOOL program contact.

**Sanctioned SCHOOL Coaching Contact** - All sport coaches have five days of sanctioned school coaching contact opportunity during the summer, between the end of school and July 31 (except 11-player Football: July 26, 2025); the days do not need to be consecutive. Sanctioned school contact opportunities allow you to use school support and facilities as you would during the season. Sanctioned means teams can assemble with coaches, school monies and resources can be applied, and schools can sponsor the events/activities. The five contact days must be the same for all levels within a sport program. Sanctioned school contact days are open to any interested student in your school. They are not allowed during the school year.

**NONSCHOOL Programming** - In all sports except

football, unlimited "non-school" program contact maybe used by coaches during the summertime. The summer being defined as when school is not in normal session, provided such non-school programs are not limited to students on the basis of school or team affiliation. An "acceptable non-school program" is one which is not limited based on school and/or team status. Nonschool contact is open to any and all interested students in your community and other communities. No school monies and resources can be applied, and schools cannot sponsor the events/activities. Use of school support and facilities must be done in the same manner as any other non-school group such as 4-H, boy scouts, or local rotary.

## School and Coach Involvement

Students may assemble out of season in any manner they choose during the school year and during the summer time. However, their high school coaches and high schools many not be involved. The assembly must be open to any and all along with being voluntary.

The fundamental rule with coaching contact has not changed. Coaches may not have coaching contact with any athletes they will be coaching the following school season during restricted times (except their own children). Coaches include head coaches, assistant coaches, volunteer coaches, and coaches who may be coaching the next year. Coach involvement does include organizing, determining nonschool rosters, providing instruction, coaching at the contest, etc.

Coaches are not allowed to organize nonschool activity during the school year. Organize includes (but is not limited to):

- Holding player meetings outside the established season to discuss nonschool teams.
- Making contact with nonschool leagues to enter a team into the league during the school year.
- Paying entry fees for nonschool leagues and/or tournaments during the school year.
- Transporting to nonschool leagues or tournaments during the school year. Coaching at non-school leagues or tournaments during the school year.
- Helping determine rosters for nonschool teams in nonschool leagues or tournaments.
- Directing others (ie: parents, players, community members, non-school coaches) to determine rosters, assignments, or make up of teams.
- No school monies and resources can be applied, schools cannot sponsor the events/activities.
- Use of school support and facilities must be done in the same manner as any other non-school group such as 4-H, boy scouts, or local rotary.

In short, coaches should be hands off during the summer and school year unless contact is during the school sport season, within the five sanctioned school contact days during the summer before July 31 (July 26, 2025 for 11-player football), or is classified as nonschool contact during the summertime (from the last day of school to the first day of school). ●

## High School Out-of-Season Concerns

WIAA Bylaw, Article II, Section 2, A., 2), indicates "A school may not assemble athletes or prospective athletes in physical education classes, or some other manner, for purposes of teaching fundamentals, techniques, plays, etc., except during the designated school season of a sport." This includes the summer period, meaning that schools cannot conduct a **summer school class**, or community education program, on basketball fundamentals, for their basketball players. It doesn't matter if the class is open to all students. The one exception is in the summertime during the Board of Control approved unrestricted contact period between the end of school and July 31\* (5 days in all WIAA sports). \*Unrestricted coach contact ends July 26, 2025 for football.

This same Bylaw has another provision, indicating "A school may not organize conditioning programs limited to students with athletic team status, or to prospective athletes, except during the designated school season of a sport." Off-season weight-training programs are fine, as long as they are **not sport specific**. If a weight-training program is conducted, and is available to anyone interested, and the activities that go on are not sport specific, then it is acceptable under WIAA guidelines. There **cannot, however, be incentives** put in place to encourage athletes to be involved in these off-season programs. For example, it is not appropriate to indicate that any football player attending a given number of weight-training programs, will receive a T-shirt. It is also unacceptable for schools to provide a T-shirt to a basketball player, who attempts so many shots during the off-season. Another example, of **unacceptable incentives**, would be to include off-season activities into the determination of who gets to start during the season, or who gets to play, or for participation in these activities to be included in eligibility for a letter in that particular sport.

Captains Practices: WIAA Rules of Eligibility allow students to voluntarily assemble during the school year and in the summertime without school and/or coach involvement. These assemblies may sometimes be referred to as "captains' practices." ●

## 2025 State Boys & Girls Hockey Tournament



Thursday-Saturday,  
March 6-8  
Bob Suter's LEGACY20  
Arena, Middleton

### Thursday, March 6

#### Boys Division 2 Semifinals

Game 1 9:30 a.m. #1 Seed vs. #4 Seed  
Game 2 1:30 p.m. #2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

#### Girls Semifinals

Game 3 4:30 p.m. #1 Seed vs. #4 Seed  
Game 4 7:30 p.m. #2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

### Friday, March 7

#### Boys Division 1 Semifinals

Game 5 10 a.m. #1 Seed vs. #4 Seed  
Game 6 2 p.m. #2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

### Saturday, March 8

#### Boys Division 2 Championship

Game 7 11 a.m. Winner Game 1 vs.  
Winner Game 2

#### Girls Championship

Game 8 3 p.m. Winner Game 3 vs.  
Winner Game 4

#### Boys Division 1 Championship

Game 9 7 p.m. Winner Game 5 vs.  
Winner Game 6

# Open Gyms

The purpose of open gyms is to provide an opportunity for the students from a school to get together to play and recreate with one another. Coaches and schools cannot be involved in out-of-season practice for athletes. However open gyms do not violate WIAA rules if they are conducted according to the following guidelines:

1. The open gym is made known and available to any student in the designated population of that school that is interested in attending. Open gyms may be gender specific. It is also acceptable to include people from the community. Schools may conduct "open gyms" in any activity. It is not acceptable to include athletes from another school, public or nonpublic.
2. Keep in mind that **softball and baseball** protective equipment may be used. Protective equipment for other sports (football, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, etc.) may not be issued. Softball and baseball coaches may not: pitch batting practice, drop balls into the pitching machine, hit grounders, or perform any task that is used in a practice.
3. There is **no instruction** during the open gym **by a coach or anyone else**.
4. Coaches may supervise open gyms, but they may not instruct, organize drills, etc. Coaches can also recreate with students in school sponsored, open gym settings that are purely recreational in nature, i.e., there is no instruction by the coach or anyone, sport skill demonstration, organized drills or resemblance of a practice being conducted.
5. There is no organized competition, such as established teams participating in round-robin competition, etc.
6. A member school is permitted to supervise conditioning programs under the open gym provisions, which may include weight lifting, speed, agility, fitness. The program must be limited to non-sport and non-sport-skill-specific instruction. Basic 'instruction' e.g., safe lifting, safe spotting, training regimen and rationale, are permitted. No sport implements and/or sport specific movement/drills should be part of the open gym or weight room. These conditioning programs must be made known and accessible to all interested students and must be voluntary. **Open weight room attendance must not be required or mandated by a coach, and attendance may not be recorded.** Schools and coaches must clearly understand that the philosophy of the open gym is that youngsters from that school may attend, for wholesome **recreation**, or for purposes of improving their skills if they choose, but it's something they do on their own. It would be a violation of WIAA rules to mandate attendance at open gyms, or to provide incentives for athletes to attend open gyms, or to limit participation based on athletic status, or to allow athletes from other schools to come and work out or compete against your school's athletes. (BL – Art. II and RE – Art. VI, Sect. 2)

## Q: What is the school population?

A: The students from that school in grades 9-12.

## Q: Can students from the middle school in the district participate?

A: No. MS and HS students can attend separate open gyms. The HS students attend a HS open gym and the MS students attend a MS open gym. Students who have completed 8th grade may attend a high school open gym during the summer before their 9th grade year.

## Q: What would the definition of "people from your community" mean?

A: People from the community (adults and alumni) may attend. Graduates/alumni - home on break/summer vacation are typically afforded status as "members of the community." Most traditionally, members of the community will be parents and/or former students, as well as non-students, who come and recreate with the kids.

## Q: Can students from another school participate in our open gyms?

A: Open gyms are only for students and community members of that school. Your player cannot attend an open gym at another member school. The other school may not open the gym to students from other schools. With the co-op, students involved in the co-op may be allowed since they participate in your co-op program.

## Q: Can coaches recommend workouts for open gyms by posting programs?

A: No. Keep in mind this is designed for play and recreation, not workouts.

## Q: What is the designation of weight rooms?

A: Weight rooms are considered open gyms and should be operated as such. Here's the rule: A member school is permitted to supervise conditioning programs under the open gym provisions, which may include weight lifting, speed, agility, fitness. The program must be limited to non-sport and non-sport-skill-specific instruction. Basic 'instruction' e.g., safe lifting, safe spotting, training regimen and rationale, are permitted. No sport implements and/or sport specific movement/drills should be part of the open weight room. These conditioning programs must be made known and accessible to all interested students and must be voluntary.

## Q: I have a student that is interested in lifting weights after school; however, the bus that would take him home doesn't drop him off at his house (our late bus doesn't go door to door, just to drop off points). The nearest drop off point is close to six miles from his house. My question is, could our school district provide him with a ride home in a school vehicle right to his house or is that a violation of the rules?

A: The only way this would be possible is if you have a late bus (or something similar) which takes any and all interested students home after school. If it is something for only one athlete or other athletes, then it would not be allowed. Schools may pay expenses and provide transportation to similar in-season activities in that sport and during unrestricted contact days in the summer. Students must pay their own expenses, including transportation, to any nonschool (out-of-season) camps, clinics, or specialized training. Schools may pay expenses and provide transportation to similar in-season activities in that sport and during unrestricted contact days in the summer.

## Q: Our football coach has proposed the following: 1) Require football players to sign in when reporting to the weight room in the off-season, and 2) Send a letter to football players who do not regularly attend open weight room regarding possible removal from the roster if their attendance does not improve. Is this allowed? Can the coach collect workout information at the end of a lifting session?

A: What your football coach has proposed would be a violation of the membership open gym regulations and out-of-season coaching contact rules. Collecting workout information is akin to taking attendance.

Simply stated, attendance may not be collected and/or used to determine team status, playing time, earning a letter, etc. (See #5 above)

## Q: Can a coach run with their voluntary team of runners in the winter at places like the XYZ Center?

A: First, you cannot have a voluntary team out of season. The rule states "...students may voluntarily assemble at any time without school and/or school coach involvement" on page 34 of the Senior High Handbook. Open runs may be conducted the same as open gyms provided they are school organized, open to any and all interested students, limited to the school population, voluntary, and follow all open gym rules. In open runs, the coach could recreate in school sponsored open gym settings. However, if the running program is located at the XYZ Center; is not school run/organized; and is not limited to the school population, then a coach could not run with the athletes because it is not a school sponsored open gym. If a school open run was designated at the XYZ Center, then the limitations of your own students would enter into the equation. If you run at the XYZ Center with your friend and have zero interaction with your team, you could run there. ●

## 2025 NFHS Softball Rules Changes

**1-8-6 EXCEPTION & PENALTY:** A high school softball coach is now able to use electronic devices in the dugout for one-way communication to the catcher while the team is on defense. The penalty from Rule 3-6-11 was added to Rule 1-8-6 as well, with violators subject to ejection unless the offense is ruled to be of a minor nature.

**Rationale:** The committee has made these changes to support the use of emerging technology within the sport of softball. Being a permissive rule, the use of this one-way electronic communication will allow those who choose to embrace the technology an additional option to communicate with the catcher while on defense.

**3-6-11:** This rule change specifies that coaches are prohibited from using the device to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member while on offense and the coach cannot use the device outside the dugout/bench area.

**Rationale:** Clarifies that a coach may use an electronic device for one-way communication to the catcher while the team is on defense.

**9-3-2b:** When a baserunner who is declared out for being hit by a fair batted ball, the batter-runner is credited with a fielder's choice in the scorebook.

**Rationale:** This change corrects an error in the rules book that awarded a base hit in this instance.

### 2025 SOFTBALL EDITORIAL CHANGES

Figure 1-1, Figure 1-3, 1-3-4, 1-3-5, 1-6-6, 1-7-1, 2-4-7, 3-2-3, 3-2-12 NOTE, 3-6-12, 5-1 Table, 5-1-10, 6-1-2c, 8-1-2a EFFECTS 3, 8-6-4, 10-1-6

### 2025 SOFTBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Team's Role in Pace of Play
2. Situational Awareness ●

# Wisconsin Cross Country Coaches Receive National Honor

Kevin Hopp, boys co-head coach at Stevens Point Area Senior High and Terrence Krall, girls co-head coach at Slinger High School were two of 24 recipients of the 2023-24 National Coaches of the Year by the Coaches Association of the National Federation of High School Associations.



Kevin Hopp



Terrence Krall

The NFHS, which has been recognizing coaches through an awards program since 1982, honors coaches in both girls and boys sports. Winners of the NFHS Coach of the Year awards must be active coaches during the year for which they receive their award. This year's awards recognize coaches for the 2023-24 school year.

Hopp has served on the Panthers' staff with long-time coach Donn Behnke since 2003, helping guide the program to six WIAA State championships and five runner-up finishes during that span. In the 2023 season, SPASH was undefeated in all meets and won the Division 1 WIAA State title with a state-record score of 36 points and a team average time of 15:44.

The Panthers added their third-straight State championship in 2024 to bring the program's total team titles to 14. Both Hopp and Behnke were selected as Division 1 Boys Cross Country Coaches of the Year by the Wisconsin Cross Country Coaches Association in 2024.

In addition, SPASH has had 124 cross country invitational victories and 21 conference championships during Hopp's tenure on the staff. Hopp was a member of the Panthers' 1994 State Boys Cross Country championship team, finishing 20th with a time of 16:48.

After coaching track & field and cross country at the junior high and high school levels in Wisconsin for 55 years, Krall won his first State championship with co-coach John Strand in 2023, leading the Owls to the 2023 State Girls Cross Country title. He has coached the boys track & field and cross country teams at Slinger since 1988, and the girls track & field and cross country teams since 2005. Previously, he coached at Oconomowoc Junior High School for 17 years and Oconomowoc High School for two years.

Krall was selected Girls Cross Country State Coach of the Year in 2023 by the WCCCA and will be inducted into the association's Hall of Fame in 2025. In 2015, Krall was inducted into the Slinger High School Athletic Hall of Fame. He has been named District 6 Coach of the Year by the WCCCA four times (two boys, two girls).

To be eligible for state, sectional or national Coach of the Year honors, the NFHS receives nominations from its member state associations, which works with the state coaches' association in its respective state. The state association then contacts the potential state award recipients to complete a coach profile form that requests information regarding the coach's accomplishments, affiliation with coaching and other professional organizations, involvement with other school and community activities and programs, and coaching philosophy. To be approved as an award recipient, an application must be completed by the coach or designee and then approved by the executive director (or designee) of the state athletic/activities association.

The next award level after state coach of the year is sectional coach of the year. The NFHS is divided into eight geographical sections, and Wisconsin is in Sec-

tion 4 with Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Michigan.

The NFHS Coaches Association has an advisory committee composed of a chair and eight sectional representatives. The sectional committee representatives evaluate the state award recipients from the states in their respective sections and select the best candidates for the sectional award in each sport category. The NFHS Coaches Association Advisory Committee then considers the sectional candidates in each sport, ranks them according to a point system, and

determines a national winner.

Along with the two national selections, Wisconsin high school coaches received five other sectional Coach of the Year honors, including:

Baseball - Mike Dee, Aquinas H.S.

Girls Basketball - Lora Staveness, Edgewood H.S.

Softball - John Ruffolo, Kenosha Bradford H.S.

Boys Tennis - Jon Vogt, Brookfield Central H.S.

Girls Track & Field - Jason Eisenman, Arrowhead H.S. ●

## 2025 State Girls Basketball Tournament Schedule



Thursday-Saturday  
March 13-15  
Resch Center  
Green Bay

### Thursday, March 13

#### Division 3 Semifinals - 1:35 p.m.

#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed

#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

#### Division 4 Semifinals - 6:35 p.m.

#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed

#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

### Friday, March 14

#### Division 5 Semifinals - 9:05 a.m.

#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed

#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

#### Division 2 Semifinals - 1:35 p.m.

#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed

#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

#### Division 1 Semifinals - 6:35 p.m.

#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed

#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

### Saturday, March 15

#### 3-Point Challenge - 9:30 a.m.

#### Division 5 Championship - 11:05 a.m.

##### Division 4 Championship

15 minutes following completion of Division 5 championship game.

##### Division 3 Championship

15 minutes following completion of Division 4 championship game.

#### Division 2 Championship - 6:35 p.m.

##### Division 1 Championship

15 minutes following completion of Division 2 championship game.

## 2025 State Boys Basketball Tournament Schedule



Thursday-Saturday  
March 20-22  
Kohl Center  
Madison

### Thursday, March 20

#### Division 3 Semifinals - 1:35 p.m.

#1 seed vs. #4 seed

#2 seed vs. #3 seed

#### Division 4 Semifinals - 6:35 p.m.

#1 seed vs. #4 seed

#2 seed vs. #3 seed

### Friday, March 21

#### Division 5 Semifinals - 9:05 a.m.

#1 seed vs. #4 seed

#2 seed vs. #3 seed

#### Division 2 Semifinals - 1:35 p.m.

#1 seed vs. #4 seed

#2 seed vs. #3 seed

#### Division 1 Semifinals - 6:35 p.m.

#1 seed vs. #4 seed

#2 seed vs. #3 seed

### Saturday, March 22

#### 3-Point Challenge - 9:30 a.m.

#### Division 5 Championship - 11:05 a.m.

##### Division 4 Championship

15 minutes following completion of Division 5 championship game.

##### Division 3 Championship

15 minutes following completion of Division 4 championship game.

#### Division 2 Championship - 6:35 p.m.

##### Division 1 Championship

15 minutes following completion of Division 2 championship game.



# Student Leadership Team Enacting Action Plans; Nominations Open for 2025-26

The WIAA will begin accepting applications for the 2025-26 Student-Athlete Leadership Team on Feb. 10, and athletic administrators are encouraged to share this information with students to take advantage of the educational opportunity.

The deadline for the WIAA executive office to receive applications for the 2025-26 Student-Athlete Leadership Team is March 31 at 11:59 p.m. Please visit the WIAA the Student-Athlete Leadership page on the WIAA website for the application form and to learn more about the program.

The team comprises 27 members from seven districts statewide, and 16 positions are available for student-athletes, who will be entering their junior year during the 2025-26 school year, to fill the vacancies of current seniors that are graduating in 2025.

The 2024-25 SALT identified the three focus areas of student-athlete mental health, participation in education-based athletics and school spirit, and recruiting and treating officials with respect. Over the course of the year, they are working in subcommittees to accomplish related action items in each of these areas.

Other involvement this year includes engaging

in four meetings per year, attending WIAA State Tournaments each season, planning and participating in the Fall Area Meetings, as well as assisting in organizing an Annual Student Leadership Conference beginning in December 2025.

Members of SALT develop and refine leadership skills for their growth, and for the benefit of supporting and advancing the purpose and ideals of education-based athletics. Other benefits are compiling diverse ideas and perspective from different areas of the state; learning more about the many career opportunities in sports professions; getting a better understanding of how the WIAA functions; sharing the many positive, life-enriching experiences the association creates each season; and creating the interest and growth of leadership groups at local schools.

The SALT was created in 2024 when the Board of Control authorized the Executive Staff to move forward with plans to establish the initiative. Representation on the team comes from each of the seven Board of Control districts based on a percentage of member schools within each district.

One of the prime purposes of the WIAA as stated in the membership's Constitution is to

organize, develop, direct, and control an inter-scholastic athletic program that will promote the ideals of its membership and opportunities for member schools' student-athlete participation.

In the 128 years since its inception, the strength of the association has been its membership-driven committee governance. The number of advisory committee stakeholders are numerous: Advisory Council consisting of school administrators, Sports Advisory Committee for athletic directors, Coaches Advisory Committees for coaches of sponsored sports, Medical Advisory Committee for medical professionals, Officials Advisory Committee for licensed officials, Sportsmanship Committee for school and athletic administrators and a Media Advisory Committee for members of the media.

All these have a significant role in enhancing the educational experience of school-based athletic opportunities, but how far into reading the list above that we realize an important stakeholder isn't listed? The voices of student-athletes themselves have only had a voice indirectly through school administration representation—until now. ●

## 2025 NFHS Girls Lacrosse Rules Changes

**4-1-2:** Establishes that the clock will stop on the official's whistle after each goal and when there is a foul called in the critical scoring area during the last minute of each quarter.

**Rationale:** Provides consistency in clock management at the end of each quarter and eliminates the potential for time to expire before a free position can be administered when there is a foul in the CSA at the end of each quarter.

**5-2 PENALTIES 1 & 2:** Moves the free position from the center line to the spot of the ball when one player draws illegally and maintains that a re-draw will occur at the center line when both players draw illegally.

**Rationale:** Improves the flow of the game by eliminating the need to bring the ball back to the center for a re-draw when a player draws illegally.

**9-1 PENALTIES for Violation of 9-1a, b and e-r; 4a, b; 13 Definition of Terms:** Eliminates the indirect free position for a minor foul by a defense player occurring in the 12-meter fan and allows the player who is fouled to shoot from a free position on the 12-meter fan.

**Rationale:** Simplifies the penalty application for minor fouls in the critical scoring area while maintaining a balance of offense and defense.

**10-1p, 13 Definition of Terms:** Establishes player body and crosse positioning for a legal pick.

**Rationale:** Clarifies the body and crosse positioning a player must have when setting a safe and legal pick.

**10-1r(1):** Expands the definition of a major foul for Illegal Stick Contact to include contact with the opponent's crosse when a player's crosse is held in a horizontal position.

**Rationale:** Clarifies that it is illegal for a player to make contact with an opponent's crosse or body when the player's crosse is in a horizontal position.

**10-1v(2):** Expands the definition of a Rough/Dangerous Check to include checking an opponent's hand.

**Rationale:** Clarifies a player's hand is part of their body and should be protected against rough and dangerous checking.

### 2025 Girls Lacrosse Editorial Changes

2-2-4; 2-5-2e; 2-7-5a; 2-7-7 NOTE; 2-9-4; 3-5-3g (NEW); 3-6-1; 4-3-3b, c; 4-7-1; 4-7-5a; 5-3; 5-4-4; 8-1-1 NOTE (NEW); 9-1m(6); 10-1 PENALTIES 6; 10-1 PENALTIES 13 (NEW); 12 NOTES 1 & 2 (NEW); 12-8 TEAM CARD PENALTIES ●

## 2025 NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules Changes

**1-9-1a:** Clarified chin strap is to be worn on the chin, not under.

**4-3-1:** Returned to previous language to ensure clarity.

**4-16:** Rewritten for clarity.

**4-22-4:** Clarified that on every restart near the substitution area, the ball must be moved into the field of play 5 yards.

**4-24-7:** Clarifies that a whistle shall be blown on the loss of any mandatory equipment in the scrimmage area.

**5-4-5:** Distinguishes intentional versus unintentional checks involving the head or neck.

**5-4-7:** Provided an editorial change to the situation changing fight to flight.

**5-5-h:** Rewritten for clarity and understanding.

**7-8-3:** A slow whistle will be implemented on a personal foul during a pass or shot.

**7-13-3:** Clarifies how a restart will take place in the event of an inadvertent whistle before a faceoff has ended. Conforms to other situations as to why a reface will take place. ●

# Baseball Pitch Count Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: A pitcher throws 78 pitches and goes to a different position, is he allowed to pitch again later in the game?**

A: Yes. The count is a daily total. In fact, he could pitch in the second game of a double header. But he is limited to the max of 100 in a day and must end on that batter.

**Q: How do you count an ambidextrous pitcher?**

A: If the pitcher is ambidextrous, the pitch count guidelines apply to the individual pitcher, not to the individual arm

**Q: Are intentional walks counted as pitching?**

A: Only if the pitch is thrown from the pitcher to the catcher. In high school baseball, the defense can tell the umpire to walk the batter without pitching.

**Q: When competing in another state, which pitch count should we use?**

A: For WIAA members, the WIAA rules apply and should be used.

**Q: If a pitcher is effectively wild, but unhittable (think Nolan Ryan) – let's say he averages 5 to 6 pitches per batter, striking out most of them – he could conceivably reach the sixth or seventh inning of a PERFECT GAME and have hit the 100 pitch limit and would, therefore, have to leave the PERFECT GAME without finishing it – correct? (Sub-question: Does the rule actually penalize strike out pitchers compared to pitchers who pitch to contact, since strikeout pitchers, by nature, throw more pitches? If so, do we really want this?)**

A: Yes, he has to leave once the 100-pitch count is reached no matter the game situation. In fact, in the Major Leagues a rookie pitcher was pulled after reaching 100 pitches. Dodger's manager Dave Roberts pulled Ross Stripling after 7 1/3 innings on April 8, 2016, despite the fact that the rookie was throwing a no-hitter in his Major League debut. On April 28, 2016, Don Mattingly decided to pull pitcher Adam Conley after throwing 116 pitches despite not allowing a hit for 7 2/3 innings.

In an article, David Lennon stated: "Back in 2012, Terry Collins was in tears after letting Johan Santana throw the first no-hitter in Mets history, perhaps knowing what those 134 pitches eventually might cost his ace." And "Santana? After the 134-pitch no-hitter, he went 3-7 with an 8.27 ERA the rest of 2012. And after that season, he never threw another major-league pitch." <https://www.newsday.com/sports/columnists/david-lennon/pulling-a-pitcher-from-possible-no-hitter-no-longer-a-no-no-c28374>

On Sept. 9, 2016, "The Dodgers' Rich Hill was six outs away from throwing a perfect game against the Marlins, but manager Dave Roberts made the difficult decision to pull him after only 89 pitches due to a blister." <http://www.mlbtraderumors.com/2016/09/dave-roberts-on-rich-hills-near-perfect-game.html>

The pitch count is a risk minimization rule

addressing the health of the pitcher. It is not a penalty. A study published in the American Journal of Sports Medicine found that 58.9 percent of Tommy John surgeries were in athletes aged 15 to 19. Fleisig (American Sports Medicine Institute) found that a pitcher is more likely to suffer an injury if: 1) he throws more than 80 pitches in a game (four times more likely); 2) he throws more than eight months a year (five times more likely); and 3) he throws when fatigued in a game (36 times more likely).

**Q: At the State Final Tournaments prior to the new pitching regulations, approximately half of the State championship games have had pitchers come in the game in relief that had pitched previously in the semifinal or quarterfinal. Almost all of these pitchers would now be unavailable in the State championship game because of the new rule. Correct?**

A: Pitchers have required days of rest according to

the number of pitches in a day. If they pitch more than 30 in a day, a minimum of one day of rest is required. We don't know how many would have been ineligible from prior years. It is our hope that coaches will adjust their strategies, will develop pitchers, and will create opportunities for other athletes to pitch.

**Q: When originally proposed to the WBCA at their clinic, the original proposal stated that when a pitcher hit 100 pitches, he could finish the inning. The current rule was changed to finishing the at bat. Why the change?**

A: With the proposal to complete the inning, it was determined that the pitcher might throw too many pitches and the recommendation was to finish the batter. The number 100 was used for the last batter to allow the pitcher to complete the batter. Otherwise, it was a 112 pitch count and pull the pitcher immediately. So it was a reasonable compromise. ●

## WIAA Baseball Pitching Restrictions

All baseball teams at all levels will maintain a pitch count log for all pitchers during the school baseball season (regular and WIAA tournament).

1. The pitch count is based on the number of pitches thrown to batters during an at-bat. Warm-up pitches allowed before the game, in between innings or allowed by the umpire in case of injury or game delay do not count.
2. Pitches are counted, and when the number of pitches reaches a certain level, the pitcher must take off the required days of rest. The maximum number of pitches is 100.

Age	Maximum Number of Pitches	Required Days of Rest (Pitches)				
		0 Days	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days
HS	100	1-30	31-49	50-75	76-100	--
MS 11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
MS 13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+

3. When the pitcher reaches 100 pitches, he may not pitch to another batter. He may only finish pitching to the current batter.
4. The pitching rule applies even though a game is called (ended) by the umpire because of darkness, rain or some other factor before it has become an official game.
5. At the pregame meeting, coaches should have a copy of their pitch count log for any questions about pitcher status. Each team will designate a pitch count person for their team. It is recommended (but not mandatory) that a responsible individual be a separate pitch recorder who will also record pitch counts from an area behind home plate.
6. At the end of each complete inning, coaches (and pitch count recorder if present) will meet at a location designated by the team host and/or umpire to review pitch counts. If there is a difference, the coaches must resolve the difference before beginning the next inning.
7. If the counts differ, the following will be used to determine the pitch count:
  - If a pitch count recorder is present and two of three agree, the majority will be considered official.
  - If a pitch count recorder is present and none of the three agree, the pitch count recorder will be considered official.
  - If a pitch count recorder is not present, the home counter will be considered official.
8. At the conclusion of the game, both head coaches and pitch counter if present will sign the pitch count chart.
9. It is not the responsibility of game officials to enforce the pitch count rule. Schools must report violation to the WIAA office following competition. Violations are considered in the same manner as a school using an ineligible student. The minimum penalty for such violations is forfeiture of the game. ●

# Members Encouraged to Review Criteria and Submit Award of Excellence Application

The WIAA is encouraging member schools to recognize and celebrate excellence in their athletics programs. Each member is eligible and invited to participate in the WIAA Award of Excellence program during the 2024-25 school year.

The program promotes and acknowledges the efforts and achievements of member schools in the areas of sportsmanship, ethics, integrity, leadership, character and accomplishment. Please take this opportunity to embrace and promote the qualities of athletic administration excellence that the award represents.

The criteria applied toward the Award of Excellence in 2024-25 includes:

- Athletic Director maintains and updates all information in the WIAA School Directory annually.
- Athletic Director does due diligence in striving to achieve staff compliance with all WIAA coaching requirements (i.e. rules video, exam, officials' rankings)
- Athletic director conducted regular occurring meetings with a Captain's Club/Team Leadership Council/Etc. – sportsmanship, ethics and/or integrity is on the agenda and is discussed
- Athletic director conducted regular occurring meetings with coaches - sportsmanship, ethics and/or integrity is a topic that is on the agenda and is discussed
- Athletic director conducted at least one informational meeting with student-athletes and their parents – sportsmanship, ethics and/or integrity is a topic that is on the agenda and is discussed
- Athletic director attended conference meetings – sportsmanship, ethics and/or integrity is a topic that is on the agenda and is discussed

- Coaches and student-athletes attended a sportsmanship summit/leadership conference/etc.
- There was school representation at one of the seven WIAA Fall Area Meetings
- There was school representation at WIAA Annual Meeting in April
- Athletic Director made the student body aware of sportsmanship initiatives through school assemblies, announcements, posters, etc.
- Three or more athletic teams gave back to their school or community through volunteerism
- Athletic director has taken the Free NFHS Sportsmanship course
- Three or more head coaches have taken the Free NFHS Sportsmanship course
- Athletic program had no coach ejections at any level
- Athletic program had no coach or player assault of an official at any level
- Athletic director nominated/submitted a boy and/or a girl for WIAA Scholar Athlete recognition (either for local or state level recognition)
- Athletic director or designee submits the online season Schedule/Results Verification Form by the established deadlines for all bracketed team



sports (baseball, basketball, football, hockey, soccer, softball, volleyball)

- Athletic director or designee completes and submits the accurate enrollment count on the Enrollment Form by established deadline of Oct. 11, 2024
  - Athletic director or designee completes and submits the accurate data on the online Sports Participation Form by June 30, 2025
  - Athletic director or designee submits the completed online Fan Ejection Form within three days following the event the ejection occurred, requiring a fan to miss the next competition
- The application form, once completed, requires the signatures of the school's athletic director, principal, superintendent and the school board president to verify their school has achieved the required criteria.

The online school entry application for the Award of Excellence is available in the School Directory database on the WIAA website. Athletic Directors may access the form by navigating to the School Directory database and selecting the "Award of Excellence" option in the "Forms" dropdown menu at the top of the page. Please submit your application between the completion of your spring sports season and the deadline of June 30, 2025. Any questions about the Award of Excellence, please contact Todd Clark at the WIAA office at (715) 344-8580.

Recipients will be presented with the Award of Excellence at the fall Area Meetings and will be recognized for the achievement on the WIAA website, Bulletin, in the State Tournament programs and at the Annual Meeting. ●

## Whitford to Join WIAA as Interim Assistant Director

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association has named Tim Whitford as interim assistant director on the executive staff beginning Monday, Feb. 10 following the retirement of Tom Shafranski. Whitford will serve in the position until Shafranski's successor joins the staff this summer.

Whitford will inherit the administrative responsibilities most recently managed by Shafranski, including the sports of 11-player football, boys and girls golf, boys and girls hockey, boys and girls lacrosse. Other administrative duties will include the oversight of the WIAA Scholar-Athlete program and staff liaison with the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association.



Tim Whitford

He spent his entire 34-year educational career in the Winneconne Community School District before retiring in June 2024. He served the first 22 years of his career as a physical education and health educator before becoming the school's athletic director in 2012. Whitford was named the District 4 Athletics Director of the Year by the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association last fall.

In addition, Whitford has a combined 77 years of coaching in the district, including 25 years as varsity softball coach. His teams compiled a 365-209 record, won seven conference championships and guided the development of 50 all-conference selections. In 2021, he was enshrined into the Wisconsin Fastpitch Softball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Whitford was active in the WFSCA throughout his coaching career. He served on the association's executive board and district representative for 20 years (2003-23) and was co-coordinator of the annual Senior All-Star Game from 2018-2023.

Since his retirement from coaching in 2017, Whitford became a WIAA-licensed softball official in 2018, working varsity and WIAA postseason games, as well as the WFSCA Senior All-Star Game in 2017. In addition, he has served as a team host for the WIAA State Softball Tournament the past six years.

Other coaching experience at Winneconne includes seven years as varsity girls volleyball coach and eight years as the middle school volleyball coach, junior varsity girls basketball coach for two years, freshman boys basketball coach for three years and middle school boys and girls basketball coach for 16 years. He also has a one-year stint as middle school football coach.

Whitford graduated from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point in May 1990 with Bachelor of Science Degree in Health and Physical Education and Minor in Coaching. ●

## Board of Control Conducts December Meeting

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Board of Control approved a fast-track conference realignment recommendation and other action items at its December meeting Dec. 6.

The Board voted in support of a conference realignment fast-track recommendation to move The Prairie School from an independent status into the Southeast Conference in girls golf only, effective next fall. Other action items approved by the Board include the acceptance of 2023-24 independent audit report provided by Hawkins Ash CPAs, as well as the monthly general financial fund statements and reports.

The executive staff provided information to the Board reviewing the Wisconsin Athletic Director Association Conference in November, the fall Tournament Series, continued efforts to recruit and retain licensed sport officials, as well as updates on the Student-Athlete Leadership Team and the Calendar and Contact Committee. The staff also created awareness of the upcoming

See Board of Control Conducts, page 20 >

# Task Force Conducts Appeals and Amends Football & Lacrosse Realignment Plans

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Conference Realignment Task Force convened on Feb. 7 to hear appeals of the previously modified solutions and finalize plans for 11-player football and lacrosse conference realignment.

Based on the information shared during the appeals of the modified solutions, the Task Force amended the 11-player football and the lacrosse conference realignment plans to be effective in 2026. There were no changes to the 8-player football plan, which will be advanced for Board of Control approval. The details of the amended plans and the complete configuration of conference affiliation recommendations for football and lacrosse are available for review by accessing the "Requests and Proposals" option on the WIAA's Conference Realignment web page.

Comprehensive Modified Conference Affiliations Plan - 11-Player Football

Comprehensive Modified Conference Affiliations Plan - 8-Player Football

Comprehensive Modified Conference Affiliations Plan - Boys Lacrosse

Comprehensive Modified Conference Affiliations Plan - Girls Lacrosse

Representatives from schools affected by the Task Force's modifications to the plans on Feb. 6 may appeal in-person to the Board of Control prior to the final vote at its March 11 meeting. At that time, the Board has the options to approve the plans as presented, reject the plans or remand all or parts of the plan back to the Task Force for further consideration.

Requests to appeal must be submitted in writing to Melissa Gehring at [mgehring@wiaawi.org](mailto:mgehring@wiaawi.org) no later than Tuesday, March 4 at 4 p.m.

The football and lacrosse plans advanced by the Task Force, if approved by the Board of Control, will be implemented for the 2026 seasons, respectively. The conference realignment process addressing sports other than football occurs on an alternate-year rotation. The lacrosse realignment process is occurring this year because of requests following the first year the sport was sponsored in 2024. Future lacrosse realignment requests will follow the schedule of nonfootball realignment. ●

## 2025 NFHS Softball Comments on the Rules

**1-8-6 EXCEPTION & PENALTY:** A high school softball coach will be able to use electronic devices in the dugout for one-way communication to the catcher while the team is on defense beginning in 2025. This change is the result of analysis of current data, state association experimentation and a positive response from the membership. The committee has made these changes to support the use of emerging technology within the sport of softball. Being a permissive rule, the use of this one-way electronic communication will allow those who choose to embrace the technology an additional option to communicate with the catcher while on defense. It will also maintain the ability for those who prefer a more traditional approach to communicate using signals or a playbook/playcard to continue that approach. Accommodating one-way communication to the catcher brought new language to two different sections of the NFHS Softball Rules Book, starting with Rule 1-8-6. Devices such as earpieces, electronic bands and smartwatches are now permitted as an EXCEPTION within the rule provided the player does not utilize said device to return correspondence to the coaching staff. Since both rules were updated for this change, the penalty from Rule 3-6-11 was added to Rule 1-8-6 as well, with violators subject to ejection unless the offense is ruled to be of a minor nature. This penalty has been in place for Rule 3-6-11 allowing the umpire to issue a warning if the offense is minor and then eject if the offense is repeated.

**3-6-11:** This penalty has been in place for Rule 3-6-11 allowing the umpire to issue a warning if the offense is minor and then eject if the offense is repeated. In addition to permitting the one-way communication devices, the updated version of Rule 3-6-11 regarding Bench and Field Conduct specifies that coaches are prohibited from using the device to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member while on offense and the coach cannot use the device outside the dugout/bench area.

**9-3-2b:** For the purpose of official scorekeeping, if a baserunner is declared out for being hit by a fair batted ball the batter-runner is credited with a fielder's choice in the scorebook. A runner being hit with a batted ball is a form of interference and is covered in Rule 8-6-11 which specifies that the runner is out and it also lists that the batter-runner is credited with a fielder's choice. Previously, this play was scored as a base hit for the batter. ●

### Deadline to Announce from page 2

**District 4** - for position now held by Bryan Davis of Oshkosh (eligible for re-election) 1 year term only.

**District 6** - for position now held by Dennis Birr of Fall River (eligible for re-election).

**District 7** - for position now held by Ryan McMillen (eligible for re-election).

**Private School At-Large** - for position now held by Paul Pedersen (not eligible for re-election).

#### ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Large schools** - for position now held by Joe Brandl of Plymouth (eligible for re-election).

**Large schools** - for position now held by Todd Willems of Greenfield (eligible for re-election).

**Medium schools** - for position now held by Scott Fritz of Kewaunee (not eligible for re-election).

**Medium schools** - for position now held by Nic Been of Unity (eligible for re-election).

**Small schools** - for position now held by Chris Nelson of Iola-Scandinavia (not eligible for re-election).

**Small schools** - for position now held by Andrea Sheridan of Athens (eligible for re-election).

Please email questions to Kristin Britz ([kbritz@wiaawi.org](mailto:kbritz@wiaawi.org)). ●

### WIAA Fall Team Tournament Sportsmanship Awards Selected from page 8

North has been presented with the award. Kenosha Indian Trail received honorable mention for the award.

Kohler is the recipient of the Sportsmanship Award at the State Girls Team Tennis Tournament held Oct. 25-26 at Nielsen Tennis Stadium in Madison. It's the second time the Blue Bombers have been awarded the honor. The previous selection in boys basketball came in 1999. Kohler fell 5-2 in their semifinal match against Aquinas. Honorable Mention for the award was issued to Neenah.

Award winners receive a trophy and banner in recognition of the honor. Schools receiving honorable mention are acknowledged with a certificate of recognition. The selection process includes contributions and evaluations from contest officials, tournament management, police and security personnel, crowd control and ushers, WIAA staff members, and area hotels and restaurants on occasion. ●



# WIAA Performance Factor Results In Fall Divisional Movement

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association performance factor initiative has advanced through the process for the second year with a review of the fall sports to be effective in 2025.

School programs reaching the six-point threshold during the past three seasons are placed in the division containing the next largest set of enrollments from where the schools' enrollments would place them for each respective sport other than track & field, swimming & diving—which do not have a team component to advancement in the Tournament Series—and sports with only one division. Schools are restricted to moving up a maximum of one division from the previous year's placement.

This initiative affords schools the opportunity to request to move to a division with lower enrollments for all sports except football, swimming & diving, and track & field in 2025–26. The Classification Committee reviewed four such requests for girls volleyball (Omro, Oshkosh North, Salam and Sheboygan South), one for boys soccer (Sheboygan South), one for both boys and girls cross country (Sheboygan South boys and girls), and two for girls tennis (Roncalli/Two Rivers and Sheboygan South). The committee approved four requests in girls volleyball (Omro, Oshkosh North, Salam and Sheboygan South), one in boys soccer (Sheboygan South), one in boys cross country (Sheboygan South) and one in girls tennis (Sheboygan South).

The school sports programs that have accumulated at least six points to engage a promotion to a division with higher enrollments—if their 2025–26 tournament placement enrollment doesn't initially move them up a division—are listed below.

Please note that programs that meet the performance points threshold to be promoted and are initially assigned to a lower enrollment division—based on their 2025–26 tournament assignment enrollments—will be promoted back into the division they competed in during the most recent season's Tournament Series.

## Boys Cross Country (9)

Cedar Grove–Belgium  
Hudson  
Kohler  
Lakeside Lutheran  
Marquette  
Oconomowoc  
Solon Springs/Northwood  
Stevens Point Area Senior High School  
West Salem

## Girls Cross Country (8)

Assumption  
Bloomer  
Lancaster  
Muskego  
Neenah  
Slinger  
University School of Milwaukee  
Xavier

## Football (12)

Aquinas  
Badger  
Bay Port  
Catholic Memorial  
Columbus  
Edgar  
Grantsburg  
Kimberly  
Notre Dame  
Rice Lake  
Stratford  
Wrightstown

## Girls Golf (6)

Bay Port  
Divine Savior Holy Angels  
Edgewood  
Middleton  
Prescott  
Westosha Central

## Boys Soccer (6)

Brookfield East  
Lake Country Lutheran  
Marquette  
Middleton  
Shoreland Lutheran  
Waukesha West

## Girls Tennis (5)

Aquinas  
Arrowhead  
Middleton  
University School of Milwaukee  
Xavier

## Girls Volleyball (6)

Divine Savior Holy Angels  
Howards Grove  
Oconomowoc  
St. Croix Falls  
Wonewoc–Center  
Xavier

The performance factor process affords schools the opportunity to appeal their promotion to the division with the next largest enrollments based on performance points. Of the 52 programs listed above that compiled points to engage in a promotion, 11 appeals were submitted. The Classification Committee evaluated one appeal in girls volleyball (Wonewoc–Center), two in boys soccer (Lake Country Lutheran and Waukesha West), three in boys cross country (Cedar Grove–Belgium, Solon Springs and West Salem), two in girls cross country (Lancaster and Xavier), one in girls tennis (Aquinas) and two in football (Badger and Wrightstown). The two approved appeals were Wonewoc–Center in girls volleyball and Xavier in girls cross country.

The original ad hoc committee consisting of 11 superintendents/district administrators, six athletic directors, one principal and one principal/athletic director proposed the performance factor process, which was approved by a 265–115 membership vote at the 2023 Annual Meeting that is being implemented in 2024–25. The current committee consists of nine athletic directors, two principals and seven superintendents.

The performance factor initiative promotes school programs that reach a threshold of tournament success based on a performance point system allocated over a three-year period.

For more on the performance factor process, visit the Classification Committee homepage on the WIAA website. ●

## WIAA & Influential Athlete, LLC Partner to Promote NIL Education

Influential Athlete, LLC and the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) are announced an exclusive partnership to provide NIL (Name, Image, and Likeness) education and support to the WIAA's 513 member high schools.

This collaboration will equip Wisconsin's school leaders and athletic directors with clear guidance on the NIL landscape and ensure that each school is prepared to support their student-athletes as NIL becomes part of the high school experience.

The WIAA is dedicated to its member schools, consistently working to provide the highest-grade resources available to prepare them for success in every area. As NIL continues to gain traction nationally, the WIAA recognizes the importance of a well-supported, straightforward approach that allows school administrators to understand the NIL landscape while empowering student-athletes to take advantage of this new era.

"We are excited to partner with Influential Athlete to provide our member schools with the essential tools and knowledge needed to navigate the NIL landscape" said Stephanie Hauser, Executive Director of the WIAA. "This collaboration underscores our commitment to equipping school leaders and athletic directors with the resources they need to support student-athletes during this transformative time."

Influential Athlete, LLC, co-founded by Stephanie and Joe Grady, is a pioneering NIL coaching and consulting company dedicated to helping student-athletes develop personal and professional skills to maximize their NIL potential and thrive beyond the field. Influential Athlete also partners with schools, institutions, and club programs to support their administrators, coaches, athletes, and families as they navigate this new NIL landscape.

"NIL is on Wisconsin high schools' doorstep, and student-athletes are eager to embrace an opportunity already available in 38 other states," said Stephanie Grady, CEO of Influential Athlete. "We're excited to partner with the WIAA to help school leaders and athletic directors navigate this new landscape responsibly and successfully. Our goal is to support schools in offering this value to their athletes without the heavy lifting or administrative burden." ●

# Sports Report "PLUS" Exemplary sportsmanship as submitted by licensed officials.

The following reports of good sportsmanship have been submitted to the WIAA. Appreciation goes out to those officials taking the time to give recognition to those schools and individuals deserving of acknowledgement.

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

### Kimberly @ De Pere – Dec. 10, 2024

Coach Dave Lipisto and his staff do an excellent job with their team. I've had them in two contests in close succession. Both games were tight games and both Coach Lipisto and his coaching staff were very professional and easy to talk with throughout the games. Additionally for the game in which I had their team at home on 12/3/24 the game management staff and fans were very friendly and the atmosphere was fantastic! It was a pleasure.

*Reporting Official: Jeryn Daggs*

### Slola-Scandinavia @ Manawa – Dec. 10, 2024

Wanted to send out a shout out to Mr. Jeff Bortle at Manawa for the treatment we received as officials. Our dressing room, albeit a bit small, was stocked with refrigerated water as well as granola bars, lifesavers, chapstick and even complimentary pink whistles. Our crew really appreciated the way we were greeted at the school and how we were escorted to the dressing area at halftime and at the end of the game. Both coaching staffs from Manawa and Iola-Scandinavia were very professional in their demeanor and behaviors. It was a very hard-fought game going down to the last possession. This was a classic match up of two arch rivals competing against each other. Everyone in attendance got "their monies worth," and I am sure they can't wait until they play each other again.

*Reporting Official: Patrick Tschimperle*

## BOYS BASKETBALL

### Algoma @ Clintonville – Jan. 7, 2025

I have to give credit to both head coaches in this game. They had very respectful conversation with us. When they had a

question, we were able to have respectful conversations with them. They also held their players to high standards. The Clintonville coach had a question over a warning from one of their players. He responded by taken the players out and told me he didn't tolerate that. The Algoma coach, when he had questions, dealt with us in a very respectful manner. We appreciated this from the coaches and because of this, his players were respectful as well. That is what high school athletics should be all about.

*Reporting Official: Barry Harris*

### Freedom @ Clintonville – Dec. 20, 2024

I have to commend Clintonville's #0 (Sam Wegener) for showing great sportsmanship during the game vs. Freedom. After a foul committed against Wegener, he ran up to the player and helped him up. That is just great sportsmanship that needs to be acknowledged. Also the Clintonville team as a whole displayed great sportsmanship during the game. This was not a close game and they all displayed great sportsmanship during the game.

*Reporting Official: Barry Harris*

### Pittsville @ Tri-County – Dec. 17, 2024

The game was not close in the second half, Pittsville was in control the entire way. The Tri-County players were frustrated by their play, but Pittsville was well coached and kept their cool and did not respond to anything being said or did not react negatively to their frustration. There was about 8 minutes to go and there was a lot of contact on an errant pass and two players hit the floor. While the Tri-County players went the other way #15 (Dylan Luther) for Pittsville ran over picked up his teammate and also helped the Tri-County player, gave him

some words of encouragement and went on with his business. It was a selfless act, that took little extra effort, but it stood out to me as a Sportsmanship Plus kind of act.

*Reporting Official: Tim Lewaren*

## BOYS HOCKEY

### Middleton @ Wausau West Invitational – Jan. 11, 2025

I had the privilege of officiating the Wausau West invitational. One of the contests involved the boys hockey team from Middleton. The coaching staff, players and parents demonstrated excellent sportsmanship before during and after the game. It was very refreshing as an official to work a game with such a disciplined team and great fans. I look forward to seeing this team again down the road!

*Reporting Official: Brock Kuklinski*

### River Falls @ Menomonie – Dec. 3, 2024

We officiated a JV and varsity doubleheader, and over the course of those two games, we called several penalties, a penalty shot and probably missed a few calls. They were two solid teams that competed hard for the win so, needless to say, there was plenty of physicality. During the entire evening, not a single player or coach questioned a single call. Quite literally, everyone on the ice and benches was respectful and sportsmanlike. This was truly one of the most enjoyable games that we've ever worked. I'd like to give a shout out to the coaches on both squads. It's very apparent that the teams followed the lead of their coaching staff. While the kids were great, they followed the tremendous example of their coaches and leaders. It's games like this that are the reason I officiate. Thank you to everyone involved!

*Reporting Official: Jason Lassen*

## 2025 NFHS Track and Field Rules Changes

**5-7-6:** Adjusts the recall distance to within the first 50 meters.

**Rationale:** Starters oversee recalling races in track and field events. 50 meters is sufficient in calling a fair start. Athletes are accelerating and are up to racing speed well before the 100-meter mark. In addition, the current recall distance is problematic depending on the number of officials on the track and location of field events that may obstruct the view of the 100-meter distance around the entire curve.

**5-10 and 11:** Reorganizes Sections 10 and 11 for ease of use.

**Rationale:** Reorganization of Sections 10 and 11 concerning relay races and infractions. The change moves all infractions into Section 11 (Relay Infractions) for ease of use by officials.

**5-13-3:** Clarifies how to determine if an infraction

occurred when an athlete leaves the track on a straightaway.

**Rationale:** Provides guidance to the meet referee as to when an athlete leaves the track on a straightaway and whether or not a competitor should be disqualified.

**6-2-2f (NEW):** Offers officials guidance when warning competitors their time limit is about to expire.

**Rationale:** This change gives athletes notification that their time limit is about to expire. Additionally, the change brings officiating practices in line with other rules codes while still giving the games committee options for using flags, signal clock or verbal signals.

**6-2-2 CHART:** Defines field event time limits for all competitors.

**Rationale:** The change to the table and additions of the notes helps clarify the time limits of all competitors throughout the entire competition in field events.

**6-3-2 NOTES 1:** Clarifies the starting height in a jump-off with athletes at varying heights.

**Rationale:** Aligns language in rules book with current situations and interpretations. Gives directions to officials and event judges for the starting height in a jump-off when athletes exit the event at varying heights due to passes. The jump-off will begin at the next height in the progression after the tying height.

**6-8-2:** Further defines an active flight and continuing flight.

**Rationale:** The change clarifies the definition of an active flight (five-alive) and continuing flight (straight through) for vertical jump competitions.

**6-9-22:** Establishes a standard placement of the high jump crossbar and standards.

**Rationale:** The change creates a standard distance for the placement of the high jump crossbar and standards. ●

## Board Authorizes from page 1

responsive to its membership and make key decisions about programs, rules, and eligibility with transparency among all stakeholders," she continued "The WIAA Board of Control and WIAA staff support this new qualification and seeding process and will continue working collaboratively to enhance its procedures, ensuring greater efficiency and the best service possible for its member schools."

Another football coaches' recommendation receiving Board approval expands the 8-player football tournament bracket to 32 teams in 2025. The 8-player season will begin the same week as 11-player football to accommodate for the added round of the playoffs.

Two recommendations by the volleyball coaches were approved impacting the Tournament Procedures, effective in 2025. The highest seeded team will be considered the home team during the Tournament Series. At pre-determined sites when equally seeded teams are playing, the first school alphabetically will be considered the home team, unless a team is playing on their own court, which will constitute the host being declared the home team.

In addition, each participating team will be permitted a maximum of 18 players in uniform for each game of the Tournament Series, an increase from 15. The change does not impact the total of 22 team personnel permitted on the bench.

The sport of tennis had seven coaches' recommendations approved. Four of those

address seeding protocol at the subsectional level. The actions add another criterion, establishes clarity and defines a prescribed criteria order for the seeding process. Following head-to-head criteria, results and scores against common opponents will be applied, followed by results versus indirect opponents. In situations when two or more players are tied after applying the criteria, a random draw will now determine the respective seeds.

Another tennis Tournament Procedure ratified by the Board revises language to state a singles player or doubles team in Division 1 must play a minimum of six matches at any flight during the regular season to be entered in the subsectional tournament at Flights 1, 2 and 3 only. Singles and doubles teams in Division 2 must play a minimum of five matches at any flight during the regular season to be entered in the subsectional tournament at Flights 1, 2 and 3 only.

Other Board decisions impacting tennis included prohibiting smart watches or other communication devices on the court, unless approval is provided for medical purposes, and adjusting the tournament schedule in years Memorial Day lands on the Monday of subsectionals, which now may be scheduled that week on either Tuesday or Wednesday.

Two fall sports had one coaches' recommendation approved by the Board. Per-

*See Board Authorizes, page 20 >*

## Tournaments Shine Spotlight on Importance of School Sports

As winter tournament time approaches, many sports enthusiasts turn their attention to what was coined years ago by our television partners as the “Magic of March.”

The tournaments shine the spotlight on the best high school student-athletes and teams from all regions of the state, and they promise the same thrills and memories that they have produced for more than a century.

We embrace the large venues, throngs of fervent fans supporting their teams and the incredible television coverage that make the tournaments remarkable. However, the excitement and attention during these spectacles are only the tip of the iceberg. Beneath the surface lies the life-enriching benefits and meaningful purpose of education-based athletics.

The Case for High School Athletics published by the NFHS identifies an abundance of benefits inherent with school sports. What makes these assertions more than just conjecture or hearsay is the research and data that support them.

Developing healthy behaviors? Check. When done right by following best coaching practices and guidance of the WIAA Sports Medical Advisory Committee, proper perspectives; positive relationships; training and safety, participation in athletics often leads to better physical and mental health. Data shared by the Centers for Disease Control and other surveys reveal that athletic participation leads to more vigorous exercise, better dietary habits and weight loss while also leading to lower rates of interpersonal violence, suicide, substance abuse and promiscuous activity. Yes. Not only are school activities life-enriching and life-changing, they can be life-saving as well.

The future is bright! Check. Research indicates participation in high school athletics and other school activities often leads to success in college, based on data collected by the National Education Longitudinal Survey (NELS), and in a career, based on survey data by the Alberta Schools’ Athletic Association. Studies also show participation has a positive correlation with greater volunteerism, voting and giving to charity.

Consider how school activities support the academic purpose of schools. Check. According to at least 10 studies nationwide, including one in Wisconsin, students participating in athletics and other activities have higher grade-point averages, greater school engagement and high attendance while having fewer discipline issues and dropout rates than the overall student population. The research also shows participation in athletics teaches valuable skills and lessons for life experiences. Students learn self-discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship and the value of working hard while building self-confidence and the skills to appropriately navigate competitive and challenging circumstances.

Those of us that have participated in high school sports can attribute where we are today to the many lessons we learned during our participation in activities during the formidable high school years. The competitive drive we developed working to defeat the next opponent, especially the rivals. The self-discipline acquired to improve our skills and endurance with the early wake-up call for 6 a.m. swimming practices. The self-concept to identify strengths and weaknesses by embracing what significant roles can contribute to a successful team or project. The mental approach to confidently attempt a field goal that turns a late deficit into victory, as well as the appropriate perspective and fortitude if the kick sails wide right. The wisdom to credit teammates and co-workers for our successes and to own and overcome defeats and failures, as well as moving past these disappointments to improve and be prepared to confront the next challenge. One thing is for sure, life is full of celebrations and adversities.

It’s imperative that we never take high school sports and activities for granted. As member schools manage tightening budgets, it’s important to understand these programs are typically one-to-three percent of a school’s total budget. It’s a bargain we can’t afford to lose. ●

### Keep These Dates in Mind

February 13	Conference Realignment Task Force Meeting (if needed)	March 25	Primary Ballot Complete Deadline
February 14-15	Boys Swimming & Diving Sectionals	March 31	Earliest Day for Boys Golf Practice
February 15	Wrestling Regionals	March 31	Earliest Day for Boys Tennis Practice
February 18	Wrestling Team Sectionals	April 1	Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting – Hockey
February 18, 20 & 21	Hockey Regionals	April 1	Earliest Day for First Baseball Game
February 21-22	State Boys Swimming & Diving (Waukesha)	April 1	Earliest Day for First Girls Soccer Game
February 22	Wrestling Individual Sectionals	April 1	Board/Council General Election Ballot Emailed
February 25	Deadline to Announce Board/Council Candidacy	April 3	Earliest Day for First Boys Golf Meet
February 25, 28 & March 1	Girls Basketball Regionals	April 4	Earliest Day for First Boys Tennis Meet
February 25, 28 & March 1	Hockey Sectionals	April 9	Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting – Wrestling
February 27-28-March 1	Gymnastics Sectionals	April 9	Classification Committee Meeting
February 27-28-March 1	State Wrestling Individual (Madison)	April 11	Sportsmanship Committee Meeting
March 4	Board/Council Primary Ballot Emailed	April 15	Conference Realignment Task Force Meeting (if needed)
March 4, 7 & 8	Boys Basketball Regionals	April 15	Board/Council Election Ballot Complete Deadline
March 5	Ash Wednesday	April 16	Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting – Basketball
March 6 & 8	Girls Basketball Sectionals	April 18	Good Friday
March 6 & 8	State Girls Hockey (Middleton)	April 20	Easter
March 6-7-8	State Boys Hockey (Middleton)	April 23	7% Committee Meeting
March 7	Scholar Athlete Nomination Due Date	April 23	Board of Control Meeting
March 7-8	State Gymnastics (Wisconsin Rapids)	April 25	Annual Meeting
March 7-8	State Team Wrestling (Madison)	April 30	Basketball Coaches Advisory
March 10	Earliest Day for Track & Field Practice	April 30	Board/Council Election Results Announced
March 11	Board of Control Meeting	May 4	Scholar Athlete Banquet (Stevens Point)
March 12	Classification Committee Meeting	May 9	Medical Advisory Meeting
March 13 & 15	Boys Basketball Sectionals	May 16	Board of Control Meeting
March 13-14-15	Girls State Basketball (Green Bay)	May 19	Sports Advisory Committee Meeting
March 17	Earliest Day for Lacrosse Practice	May 22, 27 & 29	Softball Regionals
March 17	Earliest Day for Softball Practice	May 26	Memorial Day
March 18	Earliest Day for First Track & Field Meet	May 27	Boys Tennis Subsectionals
March 18	Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting – Gymnastics	May 27	Lacrosse Regional Quarterfinal (if needed)
March 20-21-22	State Boys Basketball (Madison)	May 27	Track & Field Regionals
March 24	Earliest Day for Baseball Practice	May 27-28	Boys Golf Regionals
March 24	Earliest Day for Girls Soccer Practice	May 28-29	Boys Tennis Sectionals
March 25	Earliest Day for First Softball Game	May 29 & June 3	Girls Lacrosse Regionals
March 25	Earliest Day for First Lacrosse Game	May 29, June 3-4-5	Baseball Regionals

## Board Authorizes from page 18

mitted headgear language will be added in the cross country regulations consistent with the track & field regulations. In golf, schools will now be permitted to conduct a practice round at the regional tournament site during the regular season on non-school days.

Two officials advisory committee recommendations were approved. Beginning in 2025-26, yellow cards in girls lacrosse will no longer be reported to the WIAA office, and swimming & diving officials will allow black pants to be worn as a uniform option.

Five fast-tracked conference realignment plans were ratified by the Board for implementation in 2025-26. Lourdes Academy, will be moved from independent status into the Eastern Wisconsin for girls tennis, and Grantsburg will move into the Heart O' North Conference in girls golf after participating as an independent. Martin Luther and St. Augustine Prep will both transition from independent status to the Woodland Conference in boys volleyball, and a proposal by Tomah was approved to merge the Mississippi Valley and Coulee Conferences to form a new boys Western Wisconsin Hockey Conference.

Other action by the Board included approvals of the procedural monthly general fund financial statements, fall sports financial statements, the deferred liability fund statement and general fund payments.

Additional topics of discussion included staff reports on prospective Constitutional amendments, the status of the 2024-25 football-only and lacrosse conference

## 2024-25 NFHS Soccer

### Points of Emphasis from page 4

the officiating crew must be respected before their actions rise to misconduct. When behavior crosses the line, recognize it and deal with it firmly and fairly according to the rules.

- Monitoring player celebrations to prevent excessive or inappropriate behavior. While celebrating after a goal is allowable, which might include leaving the field, players cannot prohibit a timely restart with excessive or prolonged acts. This includes unsporting gestures, removal of shirts, taunting, or any actions that could incite the opposing team or spectators.
- Record keeping and beckoning in substitutes. The crew should include in their pre-game discussion how to maintain the game record while also managing players after a goal is scored. The crew should establish before the game who is responsible for keeping an eye on the field while another official is recording in their book. Either team may substitute an unlimited number of players from the bench provided they check-in. Officials need to be mindful of those substitutes which may trickle in and work together as a crew to recognize substitutes wanting to enter the game.

After a goal, there is much more to do than just adding a tally mark in the book. Officials should focus on the players, recognize situations that could lead to conflicts, be present and proactive in their responses, and deal with misconduct appropriately. ●

realignment process, upcoming Advisory Council and Board of Control elections, progress on development of a foundation, and continued efforts to recruit and retain licensed officials. Other topics of discussion included a review of competitive balance performance factor classification, plans for the 2025 Annual Meeting in April, status of the 2025 Scholar Athlete program in May, updates on the Student-Athlete Leadership Team and recognition of the effort and contributions of Tom Shafranski, who is retiring from the executive staff on Feb. 7.

The Board observed a presentation by the Calendar and Contact Committee, and it received liaison reports from Dan Rossmiller of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, Paul Manriquez of the Department of Public Instruction, and Brittany Spencer Grant of the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association. ●

## Board of Control

### Conducts from page 15

ing membership elections and the Feb. 25, 2025, deadline to declare candidacy.

The Board was apprised of a number of potential Constitutional amendments to be voted on by the membership at the Annual Meeting. Included in the discussion was the possible elimination of the Middle Level membership; a maximum contest limit for ninth-grade programs; Name, Image and Likeness regulation language and the efforts to educate the membership on the topic; election dates; a requirement for fans ejected from an interscholastic event to complete an online sportsmanship course prior to attending future home events; and a proposal addressing summer coaching contact advanced by the Calendar and Contact Committee.

In addition, the Board received liaison reports from Paul Manriquez of the Department of Public Instruction, Dan Rossmiller of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and Brittany Spencer Grant of the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association. ●

## Test Dates

Students participating in interscholastic sports often find conflicts between these events and college test dates.

Listed below are the 2024-25 dates for ACT.

Test Date	Regular Deadline	Late Deadline
April 5, 2025	February 28	March 16
June 14, 2025	May 9	May 26
July 12, 2025	June 6	June 20

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