

## 2023-24 TSSAA Handbook

### GIRLS' SOCCER REGULATIONS

#### I. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- A. Girls' soccer shall be played in the fall. If a school does not have a girls' soccer team, girls may participate on the soccer team.
- B. Game Administrator Meeting: TSSAA Board of Control policy requires that a Game Administrator be appointed by the principal of each host school to supervise every varsity girls soccer contest. The Game Administrator must be someone other than the participating coaches. Ideally, it should be the principal, athletic director, or another school administrator, but it may be the principal's or athletic director's designee due to staff commitments.

The Game Administrator of the host school is required to conduct one meeting which must include the coaches, officials, and security personnel prior to the start of each varsity girls soccer contest. Included in the pregame discussion is to be a review of the expected behavior of everyone involved in the contest. This should be a very positive meeting that sets the tone for an enjoyable contest.

- C. In Division I, TSSAA schools shall be divided into eight regions in Class A, eight regions in Class AA and eight regions in Class AAA for girls soccer competition. In Division II Class A, TSSAA schools shall be divided into three regions (East, Middle, and West) for girls soccer competition. In Division II Class AA, TSSAA schools shall be divided into three regions (East, Middle, and West) for girls soccer competition.
- D. Schools hosting invitational tournaments involving out-of-state teams must have the tournament sanctioned by the TSSAA Office (Contact: Kim Alley – kalley@tssaa.org).
- E. Video taping or filming is permitted if the taping or filming is for private use or use by the two schools involved and not for public or commercial use. A school will not be allowed to tape or film a game unless its team is involved in the game. All taping or filming by a school may be approved by the local Game Director or Tournament Director, and the Tournament Director or Game Director shall assign space, when available, from which the school may tape or film.
- F. Each district shall decide whether or not to use one of the two tiebreaker options for regular season district contests prior to the start of the season. The options are as follows:
  - 1. Penalty kick procedure outlined in the NFHS Soccer Rules Book.
  - 2. Teams will play two 10 minute Golden Goal (Sudden Victory) overtime periods. At the end of the first 10 minute overtime, teams shall change ends. There shall be a two-minute interval between periods. If, at the conclusion of the two 10 minute Golden Goal (Sudden Victory) overtime periods, a tie still exists, the tie shall be broken with the penalty kick procedure outlined in the NFHS Soccer Rules Book.

There will be no option to break ties during the regular season for non-district contests.

Beginning with postseason play, the two 10 minute overtime periods will not be Sudden Victory. If at the conclusion of the two 10 minute overtime periods a tie still exists, then the tie shall be broken with the penalty kick procedure outlined in the NFHS Soccer Rules Book.

- G. Periods may be shortened with mutual agreement of both coaches, provided it is determined to shorten the length of the periods before the game or before the second half begins. With mutual agreement of both coaches, the game may be terminated at any time.
- H. During regular season play, in the event a game is suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue play, the head referee shall declare it an official game if one complete half or more of the game has been played. If less than one – half of the game has been played, the contest may be rescheduled from the start, or with mutual agreement of both coaches, the game may be restarted from the point of suspension.
- I. **Independent Game Participation Rule** - Article II, Section 21 states the following:

***A game or scrimmage situation involving students from more than one independent team shall be considered an independent game.***

This interpretation should be considered in the event that a student athlete wishes to participate in a club team practice, college tryout, etc. after the first contest date allowed in girls' soccer. Three exceptions to the Independent Game Participation Rule have been approved by the TSSAA Board of Control for girls soccer:

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1. Girls' soccer student athletes may participate in Olympic Development Program competitions which have been recognized with the National Federation of State High School Associations.
  2. Girls' soccer student athletes may participate in U.S. Youth Soccer Conference competitions.
  3. Girls' soccer student athletes may participate in the U.S. Youth Soccer Elite Clubs National League (ECNL) competitions.
- J. In the event that it becomes necessary to postpone a regular season game and the host school fails to notify the assigning officer or the referees prior to their arrival, the referees shall be entitled to one-half of the game fee.
- K. **Mercy Rule (Goal Differential)** – After a 5-goal differential has been reached, the game clock shall run continuously except for heat time outs and injuries. For the remainder of the game, the clock will continue to run continuously except for heat time outs and injuries regardless of the goal differential. If a 9-goal differential has been reached at halftime or at any time during the second half, the game shall be terminated.

## II. DISTRICT AND REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS

- A. Schools hosting contests at the regional and sectional level must secure a field with minimum dimensions of 110 yards by 65 yards. If a school scheduled to host the regional or sectional contest does not have a field with these minimum dimensions, the game can still be played at the facility provided there is mutual agreement of both schools involved in the contest. If there is no mutual agreement, and there is no available field within a 15 mile radius of the host school, the host school may request an exception from the state office.
- B. All tournament play shall be single elimination in Division I and Division II.
- C. In Division I, if there are three or more teams in the district, then the district shall determine the district winner and runner-up in any manner they choose provided every team plays a complete district schedule, weather permitting. Otherwise, all teams in the district must be given the option of participating in the district tournament. If there are not three or more teams in the district, tournament play shall begin at the regional level. Districts which choose to have a tournament in order to determine a district winner and runner-up are responsible for selecting a site, tournament director and determining dates for the respective tournament. This decision should be made with approval of a majority of Principals and/or Athletic Directors of the schools in the district. In addition, all teams in the district must be given the option of participating in the district tournament.
- D. In Division I district play, the district winner and runner-up teams shall advance to the regional tournament. Since each district sends two teams to the regional tournament, the Board of Control has approved a set bracket for tournament play as shown below:

Top Bracket	Bottom Bracket
Winner District 1	Winner District 2
Runner-Up District 2	Runner-Up District 1

- E. In Division II Class A, the East Region, the Middle Region and the West Region shall determine the top four teams in any manner they choose.
- F. During the postseason, games suspended due to conditions which make it impossible to continue play shall be continued from the point of suspension of play if less than one half of the game has been played. The same procedure shall be used if more than one half of the game has been played and the score is tied when play is suspended.

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### III. STATE TOURNAMENT (Division I: Class A, AA, AAA)

- A. The regional tournament winner and runner-up shall advance to the sectional round.
- B. In sectional play, the games shall be as follows:

Game 1: Winner Region 1 vs. Second Region 2  
Game 2: Winner Region 2 vs. Second Region 1  
Game 3: Winner Region 3 vs. Second Region 4  
Game 4: Winner Region 4 vs. Second Region 3  
Game 5: Winner Region 5 vs. Second Region 6  
Game 6: Winner Region 6 vs. Second Region 5  
Game 7: Winner Region 7 vs. Second Region 8  
Game 8: Winner Region 8 vs. Second Region 7

The Executive Director has the authority to select another site if the host's facilities are not adequate to host the match.

- C. The eight winners of the sectional games shall advance to the central tournament site. The Board of Control shall make the draw for play at the central tournament site. The draw will be made such that if two teams from the same region qualify for the state, they will be drawn to opposite brackets.

### IV. STATE TOURNAMENT (Division II: Class A and Class AA)

- A. In Class A, the top four teams from the East Region, the top four teams from the Middle Region, and the top four teams from the West Region shall qualify for the first round. The First Round sites shall be as follows:

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
<b>Site 1:</b>	#4 Middle @ #2 East	#4 Middle @ #3 West	#3 East @ #2 Middle
<b>Site 2:</b>	#4 East vs. #3 West (H)	#3 East vs. #2 West (H)	#4 Middle @ #2 West
<b>Site 3:</b>	#4 West @ #2 Middle	#4 West vs. #2 East (H)	#4 East vs. #3 West (H)
<b>Site 4:</b>	#3 Middle @ #3 East	#3 Middle @ #4 East	#3 Middle @ #4 West

In 2023-24, #1 Middle will host the #4 East vs. #3 West First Round game.

In 2024-25, #1 Middle will host the #4 West vs. #2 East First Round game and #2 Middle will host the #3 East vs. #2 West game.

In 2025-26, #1 Middle will host the #4 East vs. #3 West First Round game.

The Quarterfinal Round sites shall be as follows:

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
<b>Site 1:</b>	FR Site 1 Winner @ #2 West	FR Site 1 Winner @ #1 East	FR Site 1 Winner @ #1 West
<b>Site 2:</b>	FR Site 2 Winner @ #1 Middle	FR Site 2 Winner @ #2 Middle	FR Site 2 Winner @ #2 East
<b>Site 3:</b>	FR Site 3 Winner @ #1 East	FR Site 3 Winner @ #1 Middle	FR Site 3 Winner @ #1 Middle
<b>Site 4:</b>	FR Site 4 Winner @ #1 West	FR Site 4 Winner @ #1 West	FR Site 4 Winner @ #1 East

The Executive Director has the authority to select another site if the host's facilities are not adequate to host the match.

The winners of the quarterfinal round matches shall advance to the central tournament site.

The State Tournament shall be a four team single elimination tournament. If all three #1 Seeds advance to the central tournament site, the first matches of the state tournament shall be as follows:

Match 1: Quarterfinal Site 1 Winner vs. Quarterfinal Site 2 Winner  
Match 2: Quarterfinal Site 3 Winner vs. Quarterfinal Site 4 Winner

If all three #1 Seeds do not advance to the central tournament site, the bracket shall be set by the Executive Director upon completion of the quarterfinal round matches.

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- B.** In Class AA, there will be an East Region, Middle Region, and West Region. The ten teams that qualify for the post-season tournament shall be as follows: the top three teams from the East Region, the top four teams from the Middle Region, and the top three teams from the West Region. Seeding will be based on regular season records. The First Round sites shall be as follows:

Site 1: #4 Middle @ #3 West

Site 2: #3 Middle @ #3 East

The Quarterfinal Round sites shall be as follows:

Site 1: First Round Site 1 Winner @ #1 West

Site 2: #2 East @ #1 Middle

Site 3: First Round Site 2 Winner @ #1 East

Site 4: #2 Middle @ #2 West

The Executive Director has the authority to select another site if the host's facilities are not adequate to host the match.

The winners of the quarterfinal round matches shall advance to the central tournament site.

The State Tournament shall be a four team single elimination tournament. The first matches of the state tournament shall be as follows:

Match 1: Quarterfinal Site 1 Winner vs. Quarterfinal Site 2 Winner

Match 2: Quarterfinal Site 3 Winner vs. Quarterfinal Site 4 Winner

### V. OFFICIALS

- A.** Only TSSAA registered officials may be used in regular-season or tournament competition.
- B.** A minimum of two officials shall be used in each regular season contest, but three or four may be used.
- C.** During postseason play, with the exception of the state tournament, the officials shall be assigned by the assigning officer of the recognized local association. The state office shall select the officials for the state tournaments.