

2025 NIAA Football Reference

(NIAA Handbook information on pages 13-16)

League/Region Playoff Qualifying

Class 1A — Northern and Southern Leagues

The top four (4) teams from the Northern League and the top four (4) teams from the Southern League, based on final regular-season standings, qualify for the Class 1A state quarterfinals. The Class 1A bracket has an eight-team, statewide cross-bracketing format where ...

In 2025

- (Game 1, Quarterfinal), the South No. 1 hosts the South No. 4;
- (Game 2, Quarterfinal), the North No. 2 hosts the North No. 3;
- (Game 3, Quarterfinal), the North No. 1 hosts the North No. 4;
- (Game 4, Quarterfinal), the South No. 2 hosts the South No. 3; and
- (Games 5 and 6, Semifinals), the winners of the first four games, reseeded for the higher remaining seed in each league to face the lower remaining seed in the opposite league, will meet in the semifinals at a neutral site.
- (Game 7, Championship), the semifinal winners will play at a neutral site and at a time selected by the NIAA.

Quarterfinal games will be played Friday or Saturday and will start at a time (5:30-7 p.m. Friday or noon-6 p.m. Saturday) chosen by the hosting school. Notification must be given by the hosting school to the NIAA and the opponent no later than 3 p.m. Monday of that week's game. Semifinal games may be played Saturday as a doubleheader at a neutral site.

Class 2A — Northern and Southern Leagues

The top four (4) teams from the Northern League and the top four (4) teams from the Southern League, both based on final regular-season standings, qualify for the first round of their respective league's playoffs. The state bracket includes the league playoff round.

League playoff games will be hosted by the higher seed (No. 1 seed hosts No. 4 seed; No. 2 seed hosts No. 3 seed within the same league). Games will be played on Friday or Saturday and will start at a time (5:30-7 p.m. on Friday or noon-6 p.m. on Saturday) chosen by the host school/team. Notification must be given by the hosting school to the NIAA and the opponent no later than 3 p.m. Monday of that week's game.

State semifinals

After the league playoff round, teams will be re-seeded (if necessary) for the state semifinals. The top remaining seed from each league will be re-seeded No. 1 and the lower remaining seed from each league re-seeded No. 2. The state semifinal games will have the re-seeded No. 1 team from one league hosting the re-seeded No. 2 team from the other league in a cross-bracketed format.

State semifinals are scheduled to be played at 1 p.m. Saturday and will be hosted by the higher seeds. The state semifinal games will be played as indicated on the bracket unless both principals and the NIAA Executive Director agree to another time and/or date.

State championship

The state championship game will be played at a date, time and site selected by the NIAA Executive Director.

Class 3A — Northern and Southern Leagues

The top six (6) teams in the Northern League and the top six (6) teams in the Southern League, both based on final regular-season standings, qualify for their respective league playoffs. Any ties will be broken using the universal tiebreaker. Should any part of the schedule not be played, teams will be seeded per criteria approved by the NIAA.

In the quarterfinal round of the league tournaments, the matchups shall be No. 3 vs. No. 6 and No. 4 vs. No. 5 with all games hosted by the higher seed. The semifinal round shall be played in the second week of the playoffs with the No. 1 seed facing the winner of the No. 4 vs. No. 5 game, and the No. 2 seed facing the winner of the No. 3 vs. No. 6 game. Semifinal games shall be hosted by the higher seed.

Class 3A playoff game times for the first two rounds will be 6 p.m. Friday for fields with lights or 1 p.m. Saturday for fields without lights. Games may be moved to Thursday depending on holidays. Any change in game dates or times must be approved by both principals and the NIAA Executive Director.

State playoffs

The leagues will re-seed after their semifinal rounds and cross bracket with the opposite league for the state semifinals.

State semifinals are scheduled to be played at 1 p.m. Saturday and will be hosted by the higher seeds. The state semifinal games will be played as indicated on the bracket unless both principals and the NIAA Executive Director agree to another time and/or date.

State championship

The state championship game will be played at a date, time and site selected by the NIAA Executive Director.

Class 4A — Northern League and Southern Region

The top four (4) teams in the Northern League, based on final regular-season standings, qualify for the Northern League playoffs. Any ties will be broken using the universal tiebreaker. Should any part of the schedule not be played, teams will be seeded per criteria approved by the NIAA. The No. 1 seed will play the No. 4 seed, and the No. 2 seed will play the No. 3 seed in the first round. The winners will meet in the Northern final. All games will be hosted by the higher-seeded team, though the league championship game may be held at a neutral site.

The top eight (8) teams in the 4A South, based on the final HRM system rankings, qualify for the Southern Region playoffs. Teams will be seeded 1 through 8. In the region quarterfinals, The No. 1 seed will meet the No. 8 seed; the No. 2 seed will face the No. 7 seed; the No. 3 seed will play the No. 6 seed; and the Nos. 4 and 5 seeds will meet. The semifinals will have the 1-8 winner playing the 4-5 winner; and the 2-7 winner playing the 3-6 winner. The two semifinal winners will meet in the region final. All games will be hosted by the higher-seeded team.

[An explanation of the HRM system is available here.](#)

Class 4A playoff game times will be 6 p.m. Friday, subject to a date change depending on holidays. Any change in game dates and/or times must be approved by both principals and the NIAA Executive Director.

State championship

The state championship game will be played at a date, time and site selected by the NIAA Executive Director.

Class 5A — Northern League and Southern Region

The top four (4) teams in the Northern League, based on final regular-season standings, qualify for the Northern League playoffs. Any ties will be broken using the universal tiebreaker. Should any part of the schedule not be played, teams will be seeded per criteria approved by the NIAA. The No. 1 seed will play the No. 4 seed, and the No. 2 seed will play the No. 3 seed in the first round. The winners will meet in the Northern final. All games will be hosted by the higher-seeded team, though the league championship game may be held at a neutral site.

Teams ranked five through 12 in the South, based on the final HRM system rankings, qualify for the Southern Region playoffs. Teams will be seeded 1 through 8. In the region quarterfinals, The No. 1 seed will meet the No. 8 seed; the No. 2 seed will face the No. 7 seed; the No. 3 seed will play the No. 6 seed; and the Nos. 4 and 5 seeds will meet. The semifinals will have the 1-8 winner playing the 4-5 winner; and the 2-7 winner playing the 3-6 winner. The two semifinal winners will meet in the region final. All games will be hosted by the higher-seeded team.

Class 4A playoff game times will be 6 p.m. Friday, subject to a date change depending on holidays. Any change in game dates and/or times must be approved by both principals and the NIAA Executive Director.

[An explanation of the HRM system is available here.](#)

State championship

The state championship game will be played at a date, time and site selected by the NIAA Executive Director.

Class 5A, Open Division (South only)

The top four (4) Class 5A Southern Region teams, based on the final HRM system rankings, qualify for the Open Division playoffs.

Teams will be seeded 1 through 4 with the Nos. 1 and 4 seeds meeting in one semifinal, and the Nos. 2 and 3 seeds meeting in the other semifinal

Class 5A playoff game times at the region level will be 6 p.m. Friday, subject to a Thursday date change depending on holidays.

Any change in game dates and/or times must be approved by both principals and the NIAA Executive Director.

[An explanation of the HRM system is available here.](#)

State championship

The state championship game will be played at a date, time and site selected by the NIAA Executive Director.

State Championships

Class 1A —

The NIAA plans to play the state final in the North (possibly as a multi-game event with other classes), but may play the state final in the South (should both state final teams be Southern Nevada teams).

It is anticipated the state semifinals would be played at a neutral site in the opposite half of the state as the championship game each year.

If both participating teams in the final are from the same area of the state, but not the same designated location of the state final, the NIAA may designate a new host location.

Class 2A —

The NIAA plans to play the state final in the South (as a multi-game event with other classes), but may play the state final in the North (should both state final teams be Northern Nevada teams).

If both participating teams in the final are from the same area of the state, but not the same designated location of the state final, the NIAA may designate a new host location.

Class 3A —

The NIAA plans to play the state final in the North (possibly as a multi-game event with other classes), but may play the state final in the South (should both state final teams be Southern Nevada teams).

If both participating teams are from the same area of the state, but not the same designated location of the state final, the NIAA may designate a new host location.

Class 4A —

The Northern League and Southern Region championship games serve as the state semifinals. The Northern and Southern champions meet in the state final.

The state final will be played at a neutral site in the South (possibly as a multi-game event with other classes).

Class 5A —

The Northern League and Southern Region championship games serve as the state semifinals. The Northern and Southern champions meet in the state final.

The state final will be played at a neutral site in the South (as a multi-game event with other classes).

Class 5A Open —

The two 5A Open semifinal winners will meet in the state final

The state final will be played at a neutral site in the South (as a multi-game event with other classes).

Football tiebreaker (league postseason qualifying)

Note: Other criteria may be used for leagues which do not play a full schedule

1. Teams' win-loss records in league play shall determine seeding into the league/region playoffs. The league's administrators will determine win-loss records based on previously-approved schedules. In the event of a tie, the tie shall be broken using the following procedures.
2. Tie between two (2) teams
 - A. Head-to-head competition in league play among tied teams.
 - B. If the tie remains, each tied team shall receive one point for each game won in league play by its defeated opponents. The team with more points will receive the higher seed.
 - C. If the tie remains, the team that won the second scheduled league game (if applicable) between the tied teams will receive the higher seed.

EXCEPTION: Step C is only to be used for seeding. A team shall not be eliminated from the league/region playoffs by the application of step C. If the tie is not broken in steps A or B and a team will be eliminated, the tie-breaking process shall continue with step D.

- D. If the tie remains, each tied team will total its points allowed per game up to (but not more than) 13 points in any one league game. The team with fewer points allowed is awarded the higher seed.

NOTE: All forfeits will result in 13 defensive points charged to the forfeiting team and zero (0) defensive points charged to the non-forfeiting/winning team.

- E. If the tie remains, each tied team will add its total points allowed for each league game, with NO 13-point rule. The team with fewer points allowed is awarded the higher seed.
- F. If the above procedures do not break the tie, the following procedures will apply:
 1. If the tied teams will not be eliminated from the playoff and are only tied for seeding/site location, a coin flip will be conducted by the NIAA Executive Director. The winner of the coin flip will be awarded the higher seed.
 2. If a team would be eliminated from the playoffs, the tied teams will use the Kansas tie-breaker at a neutral site determined by the NIAA Executive Director to break the tie.

3. Tie between three (3) or more teams

- A. In all cases of ties involving more than two teams, as each team is advanced from or is eliminated from the tie, all other tied teams revert back to head-to-head competition based on the number of teams remaining in the tie.
- B. Head-to-head competition in league play among tied teams.

Example of multiple team ties:

Team A defeats Team B and Team C.

Team B defeats Team C. Team B loses to team A.

Team C loses to Team A and Team B

Mini-standings:

Team A is 2-0

Team B is 1-1

Team C is 0-2

Team A is awarded the highest seed among the teams. Team B and Team C return to a two-team tiebreaker. Team B defeated Team C and is awarded the next-highest seed based on head-to-head record against Team C.

- C. If the tie remains, the tied teams will compare their margin of victory in league play with each other. Each team will total its margin of points against the other tied teams. Marginal points are the difference in the scores of a game. Winning teams will add the margin of points, and losing teams will subtract the margin of points. No more than 13 points will be added or subtracted in any league game. The team with the greatest number of marginal points will be awarded the highest seed among the tied teams. If there is a tie for greatest marginal points, those tied teams shall revert back to head-to-head to break the tie. Once a team is advanced, the remaining teams revert back to head-to-head.

NOTE: All forfeits will result in a 13-point margin of victory for the winning team and a -13 point differential for the forfeiting/losing team.

Example of 13-point margin of victory system:

Team A defeats Team B, 23-7

Team B defeats Team C, 21-16

Team C defeats Team A, 10-9

Mini-standings:

Team A marginal points: +13, -1 = +12

Team B marginal points: -13, +5 = -8

Team C marginal points: -5, +1 = -4

Team A is awarded the highest possible seed among the teams.

Team B, which defeated Team C head-to-head, is awarded the next-highest seed.

- D. If the tie remains, each tied team shall receive one point for each game won in league play by its defeated opponents. The team with the most points will receive the highest seed among the tied teams.
- E. If the tie remains, each tied team will total its points allowed per game in each league game between the tied teams up to (but not more than) 13 points in any one league game. The team with the fewest points allowed in this step will be awarded the highest seed among the tied teams. If there is a tie for fewest points allowed, the tied teams shall revert back to head-to-head to break the tie. Once a team is advanced, the remaining teams revert back to head-to-head in either a two-team or more than two-team tiebreaker.

Example of head-to-head points allowed with the 13-point rule.

Team A defeats Team B, 23-7

Team B defeats Team C, 21-16

Team C defeats Team A, 10-9

Mini-standings:

Team A defensive points allowed: $7 + 10 = 17$

Team B defensive points allowed: $13 + 13 = 26$

Team C defensive points allowed: $13 + 9 = 22$

Team A is awarded the highest possible seed among the teams.

Team B, which defeated Team C head-to-head, is awarded the next-highest seed.

- F. If the tie remains, each tied team will total its points allowed per game up to (but not more than) 13 points in any one league game. The team with the fewest points allowed is awarded the higher seed. If there is a tie for fewest points allowed, the tied teams shall revert back to head-to-head to break the tie. Once a team is advanced, the remaining teams revert back to head-to-head in either a two-team or more than two-team tiebreaker.
- G. If the tie remains, each tied team will total its points allowed per game in each league game between the tied teams up with no 13-point rule. The team with the fewest points allowed in this step will be awarded the highest seed among the tied teams. If there is a tie for fewest points allowed, the tied teams shall revert back to head-to-head to break the tie. Once a team is advanced, the remaining teams revert back to head-to-head in either a two-team or more than two-team tiebreaker.

Example of head-to-head points allowed with the 13-point rule.

Team A defeats Team B, 23-7

Team B defeats Team C, 21-16

Team C defeats Team A, 10-9

Mini-standings:

Team A defensive points allowed: $7 + 10 = 17$

Team B defensive points allowed: $23 + 16 = 39$

Team C defensive points allowed: $21 + 9 = 30$

Team A is awarded the highest possible seed among the teams. Team B, which defeated Team C head-to-head, is awarded the next-highest seed.

- H. If the tie remains, each tied team will total its points allowed per game with NO 13 point-rule. The team with the fewest points allowed is awarded the higher seed. If there is a tie for fewest points allowed, the tied teams shall revert back to head-to-head to break the tie. Once a team is advanced, the remaining teams revert back to head-to-head in either a two-team or more than two-team tiebreaker.
- I. If the above procedures do not break the tie, the following procedures will apply:
 - 1. If the tied teams will not be eliminated from the playoff and are only tied for seeding/site location, a coin flip will be conducted by the NIAA Executive Director. The winner of the coin flip will be awarded the higher seed.
 - 2. If a team would be eliminated from the playoffs, the tied teams will use the Kansas tie-breaker at a neutral site determined by the NIAA Executive Director to break the tie.

NIAA HANDBOOK - FOOTBALL REGULATIONS

NAC 385B.434 Football: Date for beginning practice; end of season; games. (NRS 385B.060)

1. The Board shall establish the date upon which a school may begin practicing for a football season at least 2 years before the beginning of the season. Each season ends upon completion of the state tournament for football.
2. A school shall not participate in a football game that is scheduled during the regular season after the playoffs begin for the league in which the school is aligned pursuant to NAC 385B.250.
3. Except as otherwise provided in NAC 385B.371, each postseason football game must be approved by the Board.
4. The Executive Director shall determine the date, time and place for conducting each football playoff game.
5. A school shall not, without the approval of the Board, allow a football team to participate in more than nine games, other than a playoff game that is approved by the Executive Director, during the regular season in which the team participates in football
(Added to NAC by Nev. Interscholastic Activities Ass'n by R20603, eff. 11/2/2004)

NAC 385B.436 Football: Required practice; interschool scrimmages. (NRS 385B.060)

1. A school shall not participate in:
 - a) An inter-school football scrimmage unless the football team for the school completes at least 8 days of team practice, including at least 3 days of non-contact practice pursuant to NAC 385B.438; or
 - b) An inter-school football game unless the football team completes at least 10 days of team practice, including at least 3 days of non-contact practice pursuant to NAC 385B.438
2. A pupil at a school shall not participate in:
 - a) An inter-school football scrimmage unless the pupil completes at least 6 days of team practice, including 3 days of non-contact practice pursuant to NAC 385B.438; or
 - b) An inter-school football game unless the pupil completes at least 10 days of team practice, including at least 3 days of non-contact practice pursuant to NAC 385B.438.

3. A football team may participate in not more than two inter-school scrimmages before the first regularly scheduled game for the football season for the team. The team shall not participate in an inter-school scrimmage after completing that game.
4. Each school and each pupil who participates in football as a sanctioned sport shall, before participating in a scheduled inter-school football game, complete at least 10 days of team practice, including 3 days of non-contact practice.
5. A school or pupil may count not more than one practice each day toward the total number of practices required pursuant to this section. If the school or pupil completes more than one practice during a day, that day counts as one day of practice for the purposes of this section.
6. As used in this section, "scrimmage" means a practice football game in which:
 - a) Each team alternates in carrying the football;
 - b) The score is not kept;
 - c) The coach of each team is present on the field of play to direct the team for which he is a coach;
 - d) Unpaid sports officials are used;
 - e) Admission is not charged
 - f) Donations are not accepted or solicited; and
 - g) Spectators are not encouraged to attend.

(Added to NAC by Nev. Interscholastic Activities Ass'n by R20603, eff. 11/2/2004; eff. 12/29/05)

NAC 385B.438 Football: Noncontact practice. (NRS 385B.060)

1. Each school that participates in football as a sanctioned sport shall designate the first 3 days of practice for each season in which the school participates in football as a period of noncontact practice. A pupil may use the following equipment during any period of noncontact practice.
 - a. Footballs;
 - b. Helmets;
 - c. Mouth guards;
 - d. Football shoes; and
 - e. Shorts and sweat suits.
2. A pupil who participates in a period of noncontact practice pursuant to subsection 1 shall not:
 - a. Use any equipment that is not specified in subsection 1, including without limitation, pads, blocking dummies, sleds or similar equipment, unless the coach for the pupil authorizes the pupil to use the equipment after determining that the pupil may safely use the equipment; or

- b. Engage in any drill or other activity that is intended to cause physical contact with another pupil during the period of noncontact practice.
3. A school that conducts a noncontact practice pursuant to subsection 1 may count that practice toward the number of practices required before participating in an inter-school football game or scrimmage pursuant to NAC 385B.436

(Added to NAC by Nev. Interscholastic Activities Ass'n by R20603, eff. 11/2/2004)

NAC 385B.440 Football: Manual of alignment of schools; determination of championship team; playoffs; 35-point mercy rule. (NRS 385B.060)

1. As soon as practicable after aligning a school that participates in football as a sanctioned sport within a league pursuant to NAC 385B.250, the Board shall include that alignment in a manual prepared by the Association for that purpose.
2. The championship team for each league into which a school is aligned pursuant to NAC 385B.250 must be determined in the manner specified by the Board.
3. The Executive Director shall ensure that the first game of the playoffs for a football season is conducted 1 week after each school that participates in the playoffs completes its final football game for that season. If a football game results in a tie score for the game during a regular football season or during a playoff game for that season, each school that participates in the game shall break the tie using the procedure for breaking ties set forth in the rules of football adopted by the National Federation of State High School Associations or its successor organization.
4. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 5, the 35-point mercy rule set forth in the rules of football specified in subsection 3 applies during any football game in which a school uses a team consisting of eight members.
5. The provisions of subsection 4 do not apply to a football game that is conducted during the state tournament for a football season.

(Added to NAC by Nev. Interscholastic Activities Ass'n by R20603, eff. 11/2/2004)

NAC 385B.442 Football: Jerseys. (NRS 385B.060)

Each pupil who participates in a football game shall, if the game:

1. Is conducted at the school where the pupil is enrolled, wear a dark-colored jersey during the game; or
2. Is not conducted at the school where the pupil is enrolled, wear a WHITE-colored jersey during the game.

(Added to NAC by Nev. Interscholastic Activities Ass'n by R20603, eff. 11/2/2004)

NAC 385B.444 Football: Limitations on participation by pupil. (NRS 385B.060)

1. A pupil who participates in football as a sanctioned sport shall not participate in more than:
 - a. One game of interscholastic football during 5 consecutive days; or
 - b. Nine regular games during a football season.
2. For the purposes of this section, a pupil participates in a football game if he competes in at least one scrimmage down during that game.

(Added to NAC by Nev. Interscholastic Activities Ass'n by R20603, eff. 11/2/2004)

NAC 385B.446 Football: Provision of adequate facilities for participants in playoff. (NRS 385B.060)

1. Each school that hosts a football playoff shall provide adequate facilities to each team that participates in the playoff. The facilities must be at least equal to the facilities the school provides to its football team and must include, without limitation:
 - a. An equal amount of space for spotters and for persons communicating from the sideline of the field of play;
 - b. Adequate space to record the playoff on film or videotape;
 - c. Portable heaters and any other warming devices; and
 - d. Adequate seating for the fans of each visiting team.
2. Each school that fails to provide facilities pursuant to subsection 1 may not host a playoff for 2 years after it fails to provide those facilities.

(Added to NAC by Nev. Interscholastic Activities Ass'n by R20603, eff. 11/2/2004)

MAXIMUM CONTACT LIMIT IS 9 + 1 (Hall of Fame game, fee)

NIAA FOOTBALL alignment **(2025 through 2027 seasons)**

Class 5A (Northern and Southern, 24 teams)

5A Northern (one league, six teams)

Bishop Manogue
Damonte Ranch
Douglas
Galena
Reed
Spanish Springs

5A Southern (three leagues, 18 teams)

5A Desert League

Bishop Gorman
Centennial
Somerset Academy Losee
Mojave
Palo Verde
Shadow Ridge

5A Mountain League

Arbor View
Canyon Springs
Desert Pines
Green Valley
Las Vegas
Legacy

5A Lake League

Basic
Coronado
Desert Oasis
Faith Lutheran
Foothill
Liberty

Class 4A (Northern and Southern, 25 teams)

4A Northern (one league, six teams)

Carson
Hug
McQueen
North Valleys
Reno
Wooster

4A Southern (three leagues, 19 teams)

4A Desert League

Bonanza
Cimarron-Memorial
Clark
Durango
SLAM Nevada
Western

4A Mountain League

Cheyenne
Eldorado
Mater Academy East
Rancho
Silverado
Sunrise Mountain

4A Lake League

Pinecrest Academy Cadence
Chaparral
Del Sol
Sierra Vista
Pinecrest Academy Sloan Canyon
Spring Valley
Valley

Class 3A (Northern and Southern, 15 teams)

3A Northern (one league, nine teams)

Churchill County
Dayton
Elko
Fernley
Lowry
South Tahoe
Sparks
Spring Creek
Truckee

3A Southern (one league, six teams)

Boulder City
Democracy Prep
The Meadows
Moapa Valley
Pahrump Valley
Virgin Valley

Class 2A (Northern and Southern, 14 teams)

2A Northern (one league, eight teams)

Battle Mountain
Coral Academy Reno
Incline
North Tahoe
Pershing County
Sierra Lutheran
West Wendover
Yerington

2A Southern (one league, five teams)

GV Christian
Lake Mead
Lincoln County
Needles
White Pine

- Silver Stage will compete as an independent

Class 1A (Northern and Southern, 20 teams)

1A Northern (one league, 10 teams)

Carlin
Coleville
Eureka
McDermitt
Mineral County
Owyhee
Pyramid Lake
Smith Valley
Virginia City
Wells

1A Southern (one league, 10 teams)

Beatty
Beaver Dam
Indian Springs
Laughlin
Pahrangat Valley
Round Mountain
Sandy Valley
Spring Mountain
Tonopah
Word of Life