

**OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
SOUTHWEST DISTRICT
2026 SECTIONAL - DISTRICT GIRLS FAST PITCH SOFTBALL
RULES AND REGULATIONS**

1. SEEDING PROCESS. Per the decision of the State Board of Directors, all teams competing in a bracketed tournament will be seeded using MaxPreps RPI rankings. Tournament managers will send draw procedures and any additional materials to each coach following the tournament manager's meeting.

Tournament seed results shall be made available by the Tournament Manager to schools assigned to compete within that board's respective district no earlier than 24 hours and no later than two hours prior to the first team going onto the tournament bracket.

The mandatory **VIRTUAL** coaches meeting will be held on the following dates based on divisions:

Girls

Division 3-7 – Sunday, May 3rd at 2:00 pm

Division 1 & 2 – Sunday, May 10th at 3:00 pm

The virtual draw will now be a combined draw including both the North and South together. The North and South divisional draw will be conducted simultaneously, and the manager will rotate back and forth between North and South depending on year until all lines of both brackets are filled. In EVEN numbered years (North will draw first), in ODD numbered years (South will draw first). North schools can only draw onto available North lines and South schools can only still draw onto South lines.

Once the seeds have been determined for each team in the tournament, the seeds will go onto the brackets in order of seed. The first seeded team, in North or South based on draw year, will go on followed by the first seeded team, in the North or South based on draw year.

By board action, starting with the 2025-26 tournaments, Passing shall be permitted as follows:

The number of schools advancing to the regional tournament may pass but will be divided proportionately to those qualifiers between number of teams in North and South. Below are the number of teams that can pass:

For 2026 the number of seeded teams that may pass are:

Division 1 - 5

Division 2 - 4

Division 3 – North 2; South 1

Division 4 – North 2; South 1

Division 5 – North 1; South 2

Division 6 – North 2; South 0

Division 7 – North 1; South 1

All others must place themselves on the bracket when their seed is called.

At each point where a seeded team places itself on the bracket, the seeds above that team which previously passed shall be given the option to place themselves on the bracket starting with the highest seed going first. Those teams may choose to pass again.

Example: Seed No. 1 places itself on the bracket. Seeds No. 2 and 3 pass. Seed No. 4 places itself on the bracket. Instead of going to Seed No. 5, Seed No. 2 shall then be given the option to place itself on the bracket followed by Seed No. 3.

This process will continue until the brackets are filled.

By Board Action, beginning with the 2025-26 tournaments:

Policy for Penalizing a School that Does Not Send a School Representative to the Draw/Seed Meeting and a School Representative Cannot be Reached in Accordance with Policy or Does Not Participate in the Tournament Seeding Process

9.g.1.) Schools that fail to send a school representative to the draw/seed meeting, and a school representative cannot be reached in accordance with Policy 9.f., shall mean the respective District Athletic Board shall be given the discretion to place that school(s) on the bracket to ensure the integrity of the draw (*e.g. missing the draw/seed meeting does not create an advantageous situation for the missing school*).

9.g.2.) Schools that fail to send a school representative to the draw/seed meeting, and a school representative cannot be reached in accordance with Policy 9.f, shall lose the privilege of hosting tournament contests in that sport should that school qualify to host.

9.g.3.) Schools that fail to send a school representative to the draw/seed meeting shall be fined \$150.
Note: A school shall be considered not at the meeting at any time after the first team is placed onto the tournament bracket

Per action of the State Board of Directors, the following fine structure is in place:

Failure to submit seeding information when prescribed by OHSAA regulations. Fine of \$50.00.

Failure to vote in online voting process to determine seeding. Fine of \$50.00.

Failure for coach, administrator, or authorized team representative to attend the tournament draw meeting. The tournament manager shall attempt to call the head coach and/or athletic administrator from the school(s) not present in order for a representative from the missing school(s) to participate in the tournament draw/seed meeting electronically/virtually. If no one attends - Fine is \$150.00

Failure to show up for tournament contest/refusal to finish a contest which has been started and suspended for any reason. Fine of \$150.00 plus cost of officials, site expenses, and team expenses incurred by opposing team, except for presale ticket revenue

By Board Action – starting with the 2023 Spring Season

The first two rounds of the sectional tournament games and the District Semi-Final game will be played at the higher seeded team's home field, the home team will occupy their usual dugout. Home team ground rules will be enforced. In addition, the home team must charge for admission and scan tickets for all sectional 1st and 2nd round games and District-Semi Final game, unless the field is located at a community park. If Home team is unable to charge admission, the game will be played at the visiting team's field if the same expectation can be met. If neither can comply, then a neutral site field will be sought to play the game.

Per recommendation by the Coaches' Association and adoption by the District Board, the home team must have a regulation field. If the aforementioned expectations can not be met, then the team must forfeit its right to host the game and the opponent will host. If the hosting team cannot play on its field because of inclement weather, it retains the right to host on the makeup day. If it cannot play on its field on the makeup day but the visiting school can play, the contest will be held on the visitor's field.

In the District Finals or when a neutral site is being used, the team occupying the top line on the bracket will be the home team and occupy the first base dugout.

3. Time of games: School days all games will begin at 5:00 p.m. Non-school days, no starting restrictions.
4. District Board Motion - All softball teams adhere to the **twenty (20) minutes practice rule** for Sectional and District Tournament games. The motion states that no softball team can practice (warm-up) on any tournament softball field until forty (40) minutes prior to starting time of game. This also applies to double-headers. The home team will take their state approved twenty-minute field warm-up first at all levels of sectional and district play.
5. SOFTBALL PROPOSAL ADOPTED DECEMBER, 1992 BY STATE BOARD: The Board approved the proposal that all tournament games be played on regulation size softball fields, adhering to the proper dimensions, base path distances, and EXCLUDING any baseball fields. The field must be properly marked.
6. The Southwest District Athletic Board hired individuals who will assign all Sectional and District umpires. All umpires will be paid thru the SWDAB's Arbiter account.
7. A flat fee of \$500 will be paid to the hosting school for each of the first two rounds and District Semi-Final games. If a hosting school does not fulfill its obligation of charging admission (community park), they **will not** receive the \$500.00 flat fee. District Finals must charge admission and scan tickets and will be paid \$600.00.
8. If the hosting school cannot accommodate the game on the scheduled date due to inclement weather, the game will be held at its site the next night. If the field is not ready the next night and the visiting school's field is ready, the game must be played at the visiting school site.
9. The decisions of the umpires are final and protests arising from the decisions of the umpires will not be considered.
10. Changes in schedule after drawing will be done at the discretion of the Tournament Manager.
11. **District Tournaments will be managed by Phil Poggi. Sites will be announced once teams are determined.**
12. The District Board will furnish game balls District Final neutral site games and potentially District Semi-Final round games, if available. 1st/2nd and District Semi Final Round Games game balls should be provided by participating schools, both home and visitor. The optic yellow Rawlings C12RYL-OH softball, the adopted softball of the OHSAA.

ALL SITE REPORTS MUST BE SUBMITTED FIVE (5) DAYS AFTER THEIR GAME IS COMPLETED.

Tournament hosts should complete the google questionnaire report for each game they host. Link can be found at <https://www.ohsaa.org/financial/reports>. At the conclusion of the district tournament all host schools will be mailed a check for the number of games they hosted x the flat fee amount per round.

All other rules and regulations are covered by the OHSAA Tournament Regulations – link is below:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/Softball/SoftballTournamentRegs.pdf>