

19.1 IMPORTANT DATES

<i>2018-2019 DATES</i>	<i>CALENDAR WEEK</i>	<i>ACTIVITY</i>
Monday, August 6, 2018 – Saturday, January 12, 2019	6th – 28th	Weight training/conditioning permitted. No practice/contests/tryouts allowed.
Monday, November 26, 2018 – Saturday, December 15, 2018	22nd-24th	Pre-season evaluation period
Monday, January 14, 2019	29th	1st Practice/ Earliest Scrimmage Allowed (Current medical history/exam, athletic participation/parental permission, and substance misuse forms must be on file.)
Monday, January 7, 2019 – Sunday, February 3, 2019	28th – 32nd	Online Rules Clinic (Mandatory for all Head Coaches)
Thursday, January 31, 2019	31st	Deadline for submitting Application for Jamboree and/or Invitational Tournament approval
Thursday, February 14, 2019 – Saturday, February 16, 2019	33rd	Jamborees (Eligibility must be submitted online.)
Saturday, February 16, 2019	33rd	Deadline for submitting schedules online
Monday, February 18, 2019	34th	1st Contest (If jamboree not played, eligibility must be submitted online.)
Monday, March 11, 2019	37th	Deadline for submitting GPAs online for seniors for All Academic
Saturday, March 30, 2019	39th	Last day to add game for power rating purposes
Tuesday, April 9, 2019	41st	End of Regular Season/District Representatives Named (All Classes & Divisions)
Wednesday, April 10, 2019	41st	Playoff Pairings Named (All Classes & Divisions)
Saturday, April 13, 2019	42nd	Bi-District Round Deadline (All Classes & Divisions)
Wednesday, April 17, 2019	42nd	Regional Round Deadline (All Classes & Divisions)
Saturday, April 20, 2019	42 nd	Quarterfinal Round Deadline (All Classes & Divisions)
Friday, April 26, 2019	43rd	State Tournament – Semi-Final Round (All Classes & Divisions) – Frasch Park, Sulphur
Saturday, April 27, 2019	43rd	State Tournament –Finals (All Classes & Divisions) – Frasch Park, Sulphur
End of Schools’ Season - End of School	TBD	Weight training/conditioning permitted. No practice/games/tryouts allowed.
Sunday, May 12, 2019	46th	Summer Rules Begin

19.2 CONTEST LIMITS

19.2.1 Pre-Season:

1. For the two-week period prior to practice officially starting, a school is permitted to also throw and condition as part of the strength and conditioning workouts after school. This throwing is limited to warming up and long toss. Bullpen workouts and infield/outfield drills are not allowed during these workouts.
2. Between the 22nd week and the 24th week of the NFHS calendar, a school shall be permitted a pre-season evaluation period. The evaluation period shall run from the Monday of the 22nd week to the Saturday of the 24th week and is limited to 20 hours of coach/student-athlete contact. There is no restriction on the type of softball equipment that can be used during the evaluation period. An interschool scrimmage is not allowed during the evaluation period. Under no circumstances, including inclement weather, shall there be an extension of the evaluation period.
3. A team shall be limited to two (2) pre-season scrimmages.
4. A team shall be limited to one (1) jamboree.

19.2.2 Season:

1. A team shall be limited to 34 games per regular season with no limit to the number of tournaments a team may participate in as long as they do not exceed the 34-game limit during the regular season as well as the four-game limit in any one tournament.
2. Each game in a tournament shall count as one game toward the 34 games allowed in the season.
3. A team shall be limited to two 7-inning games in one day.

19.2.3 Doubleheaders:

1. A school may play an unlimited number of doubleheaders (two games on the same day against the same team) in a season.
2. All doubleheaders shall count as two games.

19.2.4 Tournaments:

1. There shall be no limit to the number of tournaments a team can play in as long as the 34-game limit for the regular season is not exceeded.
2. A team shall be limited to four games in a tournament, including out of state events.
3. No tournament shall begin prior to Thursday of any week except during a holiday period when school is not in session. To compete in a tournament that begins prior to Thursday, the school shall be out of school because of a holiday period.
4. In all regular season invitational tournaments, for the game to be declared an official game and count in determining a school's power ranking, it shall meet the guidelines of an official game as outlined in Rule 19.4 of this section. The tournament director has the authority to elect to use the LHSAA-adopted tie-breaker procedure outlined in the NFHS softball playing rules. The decision to use this tie-breaker procedure shall apply to all games in the tournament and shall be announced to the team's head coach prior to its first game. Umpires shall also be made aware of this decision prior to the start of the tournament. Once this procedure is used, it shall be used for the remainder of the game and for all other tied games throughout the tournament. If the score is tied after the teams have played six innings, the tie-breaker procedure may be applied. While using the tie-breaker, each half-inning begins by placing a runner on second base. That runner is the player in the batting order who preceded the leadoff batter in the inning. The game then proceeds a fulling inning or until a winner is determined in that inning. This tie-breaker procedure shall not be used in any other regular season games, district and non-district, or any state playoff games including the state tournament.

19.3 **GENERAL** - Schools shall compete in Classes 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A, 1A, B and C and shall compete in districts as adopted by the LHSAA Executive Committee. The schools in each district shall consist of both select and non-select admission schools.

19.3.1 Effective for the 2018-2019 season and thereafter, for the sport of softball, schools shall be sub-divided into select admission and non-select admission schools for playoff competition.

19.3.2 A non-select admission school shall be a public school that has a designated attendance zone and a charter school whose charter mandates that the school have an open admission policy and does not include admission requirements for the selection and retention of its students. For playoff competition, schools that are classified as select and non-select school shall compete in Classes 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A, 1A, B and C.

19.3.3 A select admission school shall be a public or non-public school that has an admission policy to select the students who attend the school. Select admission schools shall include:

1. All non-public schools
2. All university laboratory schools
3. All magnet schools
4. Dual-curriculum schools that include at least 25% of their enrollment as select admission students who do not live in the designated attendance zone
5. Charter schools whose charters include admission requirements for the selection and retention of its students

For playoff competition, schools that are classified as select schools shall compete in five divisions. Schools in Class 5A shall compete in Division I; schools in Classes 4A and 3A shall be combined and compete in Division II; schools in Class 2A shall compete in Division III; schools in Class 1A shall be compete in Division IV; and classes B and C shall be combined and compete in Division V. A select school may choose to compete for championship honors in playoff competition in any division higher than stated above. The declaration to compete for championship honors in any higher division is only for the sports of softball and shall only apply to the 2018-17 sport season. The school shall make a written request to play in a higher division in each sport no later than the date of classification meetings set up by the Executive Director.

19.3.4 The number of innings a pitcher may pitch during a calendar week (Sunday-Saturday) shall be determined by the school's principal.

19.3.5 The optic yellow softball shall be used as the official game ball in all regular season games including all invitational tournaments, state playoff games, and the state tournament.

19.4 **OFFICIAL GAME**

19.4.1 A regulation game shall be seven innings unless shortened by inclement weather or darkness after it has become official or been extended to extra innings because of a tied score after seven innings.

19.4.2 If a game (including a state playoff game) is terminated before it has been completed, the following stipulations shall apply:

1. It shall be an "official game" in accordance with Rule 4, Section 2 of the [NFHS Softball Playing Rules](#).
2. A game that is terminated for any reason prior to becoming an "official game" shall be suspended, and if continued at a later date, it shall be resumed from the point of suspension (interruption) as if the game had not been terminated. If possible, each team's lineup and batting order shall be exactly the same (subject to the rules of the game) as at the time of suspension.
3. A tied game that is terminated at any point before it has been played to completion shall be suspended. If continued at a later date, the game shall resume as outlined in Section B.

4. If a tie exists when reverting to the last completed inning in an official game that was terminated at the end of one-half inning before it had been played to completion, the game shall be suspended. If continued at a later date, the game shall resume as outlined in Section B.
5. A game terminated at any time for mechanical reasons (light failure, etc.) shall be treated as a suspended game and resumed as outlined in Section B.

19.4.3 The 15-run rule shall apply after three innings of play or the 10-run rule shall apply after five innings. This rule shall be mandatory in regular season, district, tournament and all state playoff contests including the state tournament.

19.5 DISTRICT PLAY

19.5.1 Each district committee and all districts' schools shall comply with the constitutional provisions pertaining to competition within the district. This requirement is explained in the constitution in Section 6, "District Affairs."

19.5.2 As long as the LHSAA's constitution is not violated, a district shall determine its own method for determining first place and teams tied for first place team representatives in state playoffs by the deadline cited in Rule 19.1, Important Dates, in this section. Failure to name a representative(s) by the deadline may result in a school(s) being omitted from the state playoffs. Additional days to certify a district's playoff representatives shall not be allowed.

19.5.3 Before a district game forfeit can become official, it shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the district's principals. All principals in the district shall be afforded an opportunity to participate in this decision. Refer to rule 6.20 in Section 6, "Forfeiture of Contests."

19.6 REPORTING TEAMS FOR PLAYOFF COMPETITION

19.6.1 The district chairperson shall submit a verified and signed official LHSAA District Final Standings Form with the name of the first-place team and all teams tied for first place by 10:00 p.m. on the deadline cited in Rule 19.1, Important Dates, in this section. If a team fails to submit the required information by the established deadline dates, the school shall be fined \$100 per occurrence. Additionally, the school shall be placed in the lowest position of the rankings and is subject to being excluded from playoff consideration.

19.7 QUALIFYING PROGRAM

19.7.1 Qualifying teams shall be allotted to each class and division as follows:

CLASS	QUALIFIERS	DIVISION	QUALIFIERS
5A	32	I	16
4A	32	II	16
3A	32	III	16
2A	32	IV	16
1A	32	V	16
B	32		
C	32		

If a bye(s) on the bracket exists due to any qualifiers not being represented from a district, the bye(s) shall be filled using the remaining teams from those being considered for wildcard.

19.7.2 Criteria for Wildcard Selection

1. Only the teams certified as first place district representatives and teams tied for first place shall automatically qualify for the state playoffs.
2. The remainder of the byes on the bracket shall be filled with wildcard teams, teams that did not automatically qualify, by placing them on the bracket starting with the highest power ranking and continuing in descending order.

19.7.3 Determining Power Rating:

- The power rating for each school shall be determined as follows:

RESULT OF CONTEST	ADD	ADD
Win (20 points)	Same Class	N/A
	Higher Class	Add 2 points for each class up
	Lower Class	N/A
Loss (0 points)	Same Class	N/A
	Higher Class	Add 2 points for each class up
	Lower Class	N/A
Double Forfeit	Add 1 point to team that defeated both teams forfeiting	Opponent's Wins
Tie (5 points)	Add ½ point if opponents have a tie	Opponent's Wins

- A school's power rating shall be the total power points of games played divided by the number of total games played during the regular season. Refer to the LHSAA website for an example of how the power rating is determined.
- Contests played against sub-varsity opponents and district playoff (tie-breaker) games shall not count in determining a school's power rating.

19.7.4 When a team's opponent is an out-of-state team, the classification of the out-of-state team shall all be weighted equally. There will be no play up points factored into an out-of-state opponent. When a school plays an out-of-state school that has any games on its schedule after the LHSAA's final playing date, those games shall not be used in determining the school's power ranking.

- When a school plays an out-of-state school all contests played that count on their regular Season record shall be used to calculate a school's power ranking.
- If an out-of-state opponent plays more than 34 regular season games by the time of the LHSAA's final playing date, only the results of the first 34 games played shall be applied in the LHSAA's Wild-Card Program.

19.8 SEEDING THE BRACKET

19.8.1 Classes 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A, 1A and B shall be seeded 1-32 (1-16 in Class C) according to their power ranking. Divisions I, II, III, IV and V shall be seeded 1-16 according to their power rankings.

19.8.2 All teams that automatically qualify for the playoffs and those teams selected as wildcard teams shall be seeded in each division.

19.8.3 *Schools that play at least 15 games during the regular season including district play and invitational tournament play will be ranked and seeded in the playoff bracket. Schools that fail to play at least 15 games will only be ranked and seeded if there are available positions on the bracket to complete it.*

19.8.4 Tie breaking procedures to be used when two or more schools have the same power rating:

1. If two schools are tied and played each other during the season, the school that won the most games against the other school shall be the higher seeded team.
2. If after applying the first criterion and the tie is not broken or if the two schools did not play each other during the season, or if there are more than two schools involved in a tie, the tie shall be broken by applying class play percentage (schools that were played in the individual school's classification). The school with the higher percentage shall be the higher seeded team.
3. If after applying the second criterion and the tie is not broken, the school with the highest won-loss percent in district play shall be the higher seeded team.
4. If after applying the third criterion and the tie is not broken, the school with the highest won-loss percentage in overall regular season play shall be the higher seeded team.
5. If a tie still remains, the higher seeded team shall be determined by having a "draw" conducted in the LHSAA office by the basketball seeding committee.

19.9 PLAYOFFS

19.9.1 Playoff games through the *bi-district, regional and quarterfinal* rounds (if applicable) shall be played on a "home and away" basis.

19.9.2 In all rounds of playoff games, the officials' association shall be assigned by the LHSAA Director of Officials.

19.9.3 In "home and away" games, both schools shall mutually agree on the date and playing time of the contest. If the date of the game cannot be reached by mutual agreement, the game shall be played on the deadline cited in Rule 19.1, Important Dates, in this section. If the game time cannot be reached by mutual agreement, the starting time shall be 3:30 p.m. Playoff games shall not be played on dates that conflict with district, regional, or state track and field meets without mutual agreement of both schools.

19.9.4 If a playoff game is postponed because of inclement weather, darkness, or some other approved unforeseen reason, the Executive Director may grant an extension for the game. The following shall apply in granting the extension:

1. The playoff schools shall request a day-by-day extension to play the game.
2. The game shall be played on the next day if possible.
3. In all rounds of play, both schools shall mutually agree before a game may be played on a Sunday.
4. The game site may be moved to another location in the state so that play can be completed by the deadline.
5. If a postponed game is played on the day before or after the next scheduled round, the Executive Director shall not grant an extension to the school that won the postponed game. The game shall be played the next day unless that day is a Sunday or unless a game on that day conflicts with a district, regional, or state track and field meet.

19.9.5 Any division or class that has a bye in their bracket has the opportunity to play an "Exhibition" game with another team that has a 'bye' on their bracket. Exhibition games must be played before their first game in the playoffs.

19.10 PLAYOFF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS (all classes and divisions)

19.10.1 Admission prices prior to the game shall be set by the home team.

- 19.10.2 In all classes and divisions, through the *quarterfinal* round, the home team retains rights to concession sales.
- 19.10.3 Disbursement of revenue from ticket receipts (after officials are paid) in both home and away games shall be divided equally among schools.
- 19.10.4 In all classes and divisions, through the *quarterfinal* round, the cost of umpires (at least two) shall be split between the schools from total gross receipts.
- 19.10.5 In all classes and divisions, through the *quarterfinal* round, the visiting team is responsible for their own travel expenses.
- 19.10.6 In all classes and divisions, through the *quarterfinal* round, the home team is responsible for:
1. Official Scorer
 2. Ticket Sellers and Takers
 3. Ground Crew
 4. Security (maximum two)
 5. Game Softballs and other items necessary to conduct game
- 19.11 **STATE TOURNAMENT**
- 19.11.1 The Executive Committee shall accept bids and select a host and site for the state tournament. The state tournament shall be conducted at the selected location on the dates cited in Rule 19.1, Important Dates, in this section. *The state tournament shall be conducted on as many days as necessary so that no team has to play two games on any one day.*
- 19.11.2 The tournament shall be organized and administrated by the Executive Director and his/her staff.
- 19.11.3 Each tournament game shall be officiated by umpires selected by the LHSAA Director of Officials from a neutral association. If possible, officials shall be from the same association.
- 19.11.4 *Quarterfinal* round winners in all classes and divisions shall play for the state championship in a single-elimination tournament.
- 19.11.5 Games shall be seven innings. A team shall be limited to two 7-inning games in one day.
- 19.11.6 The 15-run rule after 3 innings and 10-run rule after 5 innings shall be in effect.
- 19.11.7 Games that are not completed the day they are scheduled shall be terminated according to NFHS Fast-Pitch Softball Rules as outlined in this section, 19.4, "Official Game."
- 19.11.8 *Teams will be allowed 24 individuals to enter the tournament for free. The 24 includes coaches, players in legal uniforms, managers, trainers and/or statisticians. Additional tickets may be purchased at the ticket window for full price. Any additional tickets purchased must enter through the spectator entrance and will not be allowed in the dugout. Only 1 team bus driver, per bus, will be allowed to enter through the Team Entrance and must have school I.D.*
- 19.11.9 The LHSAA shall not honor a protest regarding a contest official's judgment call and/or playing rule interpretation.
- 19.11.10 Postponed or suspended games shall be rescheduled for Sunday and/or Monday if necessary.

- 19.11.11** Only individuals directly connected with a participating team shall be allowed in dugouts during tournament sessions.
- 19.12** From the gross ticket receipts, less the LHSAA Building Surcharge, the LHSAA shall receive 80% of the ticket receipts. The host organization shall receive 20% of the ticket receipts. From the 80% of the LHSAA share of the ticket receipts, each participating team shall receive 60% of the ticket receipts pro-rated on a per game played basis.
- 19.13** If the LHSAA realizes a financial loss after the following expenses have been paid, the loss shall be deducted on a pro-rated basis from the participating team guarantee:
1. Facility rental
 2. Staffing and game administration charges
 3. Contest officiating fees and mileage
 4. Rooming charges for officials