

October 15, 2018

TO: WPIAL Athletic Directors and Media
 FROM: Tim O'Malley, Executive Director
 SUBJECT: 2018 WPIAL Championship Football

The pairing meeting for the 2018 WPIAL football championships will be held in Salons C through E of the Grand Ballroom at the **DoubleTree Hotel – Green Tree** (located off Mansfield Road – Green Tree below the WPIAL offices) on Monday, October 29, 2018 at 7:00 PM.

Championship play will begin in week ten, **Nov. 2 – Nov 3, 2018**, with an eight-team bracket in classifications 4A, 3A, and 1A, a six-team bracket in 6A, and a sixteen-team bracket in classifications 5A and 2A as detailed below and determined by **the WPIAL Tie-Breaker System. The tournament will** culminate with the four classification championships in 6A, 4A, 3A, and 1A at Heinz Field on Saturday November 17, 2018. The 5A will be held on Friday, November 23rd at 7:00 PM at Norwin High School and the 2A on Saturday, November 24, 2018 at 1:00 PM at Robert Morris University. **The WPIAL Tie-Breaker System** will be used to determine section championship, play-off entry, and home-field assignment where applicable. If teams tie in section record for the section championship, they all will be declared champions, and each will receive a section plaque. The possibility exists that teams from the same section may play each other as early as the first round.

WPIAL CLASS 6A PLAYOFF SYSTEM

- There are 6 playoff spots.
- The Section Champion and 2nd Place Team will receive a “bye” in the first round and will host a home playoff game in week two.
- In week One:
 - The 3rd place 6A team will host the 6th place team with the winner playing the 2nd Place Team in week two.
 - The 4th place 6A team will host the 5th place team with the winner playing the Section Champion week two.

All ties for first thru sixth place are determined by the WPIAL Tie-Breaker System:

- Head-to-Head Competition
- Garner Points System
- WPIAL point-differential system (10 points + or -)
- Coin Flip

(PLEASE REMEMBER, THE TIE-BREAKING SYSTEM REVERTS BACK TO HEAD-TO-HEAD COMPETITION WHENEVER POSSIBLE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. EXAMPLES ARE LISTED LATER)

WPIAL CLASS 5A PLAYOFF SYSTEM

- There are 16 playoff spots.
- Based on team records using all sections games, the top five teams in each section qualify for a playoff spot.
- A 16th team (a sixth-place finisher) will qualify as a “wild-card team” and will be determined using the 5A Wild Card System defined below.

- The top two teams in each section will play home games in the first round of the playoffs. Two third-place teams will also play home games in the first round. Those two teams will be determined by the "5A WPIAL wild-card system."
- Quarterfinals and semifinals will be played at neutral sites.
- The WPIAL will determine the playoff brackets.

In ties for playoff spots other than wild-card or home field, the following method is used.

1. Head-to-head competition
2. Gardner Points system
3. WPIAL point-differential system (10 points + or -)
4. Coin flip

(PLEASE REMEMBER, THE TIEBREAKING SYSTEM REVERTS BACK TO HEAD-TO-HEAD COMPETITION WHENEVER POSSIBLE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. EXAMPLES ARE LISTED LATER)

CLASS 5A WILD-CARD SYSTEM

In Class 5A, the top five teams in each section make the playoffs, AND one sixth-place "wild-card" team. The top two teams in each section, and the top two third-place teams will play home games in the first round of Playoffs.

To determine the "wild-card" teams, and the two third-place teams that will earn home-field in first-round games, the following system will be used:

All potential qualifiers and tiebreakers will be based on the results of the section games ONLY.

1. Overall Record of the 7 section games.
2. Gardner Point System based on 7 section games.
3. WPIAL point-differential system (10 points + or -) for the 7 games defined above
4. Non-section head-to-head competition is an applicable tie-breaker only in this situation: team from any 5A section is tied with and played a team from another 5A section then head-to-head competition in a non-section game would break the tie.
5. Coin Flip

WPIAL CLASS 4A & 3A FOOTBALL PLAYOFF SYSTEM

- There are 8 playoff spots.
- Based on team records using all sections games, the top four teams in each section qualify for a playoff spot.
- The top two teams in each section will play home games in the first round of the playoffs.
- Semifinals will be played at neutral sites.
- The WPIAL will determine the playoff brackets.

In ties for playoff spots or home field, the following method is used.

1. Head-to-head competition
2. Gardner Points system
3. WPIAL point-differential system (10 points + or -)
4. Coin flip

(PLEASE REMEMBER, THE TIEBREAKING SYSTEM REVERTS BACK TO HEAD-TO-HEAD COMPETITION WHENEVER POSSIBLE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. EXAMPLES ARE LISTED LATER)

WPIAL 2 A PLAYOFF SYSTEM

- There are 16 playoff spots.
- Based on team records using all section games, the top four teams in each section will qualify for a playoff spot.
- The top two teams in each section will play home games in the first round of the playoffs.
- Quarterfinals and semifinals will be played at neutral sites.
- The WPIAL will determine the playoff brackets.

In ties for playoff spots, the following method is used to break the tie:

1. Head to Head Competition
2. Gardener Points System
3. WPIAL point-differential system (10 points + or -)
4. Coin Flip

(PLEASE REMEMBER, THE TIEBREAKING SYSTEM REVERTS BACK TO HEAD-TO-HEAD COMPETITION WHENEVER POSSIBLE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS)

WPIAL CLASS A PLAYOFF SYSTEM

- There are 8 playoff spots.
- Based on team records using all sections games, the top two teams in each section qualify for a playoff spot and two third place "wild-card" teams that will be determined using the 1A Wild Card System defined below
- The top team in each section will play home games in the first round of the playoffs.
- One second-place team will receive a first round home playoff game and will be determined using the 1A Wild Card System defined below.
- Semifinals will be played at neutral sites.
- The WPIAL will determine the playoff brackets.

In ties for playoff spots other than wild-card or home field, the following method is used.

1. Head-to-head competition
2. Gardner Points system
3. WPIAL point-differential system (10 points + or -)
4. Coin flip

(PLEASE REMEMBER, THE TIE-BREAKING SYSTEM REVERTS BACK TO HEAD-TO-HEAD COMPETITION WHENEVER POSSIBLE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW)

CLASS A WILD-CARD SYSTEM

The playoffs consist of the top two teams in each section and two third-place "wild-card" teams. The top team in each section, and the top second-place team will play home games in the first round of the playoffs.

To determine the wild-card teams, and the second-place team that will earn home-field in first-round games, the following system will be used:

All potential qualifiers and tiebreakers will be based on the results of the following games:

- a. Section A-1 – 6 Section games PLUS one game played against Section A-2
- b. Section A-2 – 7 Section games
- c. Section A-3 – 7 Section games

1. Overall Record of the 7 games defined above.
2. Gardner Point System based on 7 games defined above.
3. WPIAL point-differential system (10 points + or -) for the 7 games defined above
4. Non-section head-to-head competition using 7 games as defined above is an applicable tie-breaker only in this situation: Team from any 1A section is tied with and played a team from another 1A section then head-to-head competition in a non-section game would break the tie.
5. Coin Flip

Tie Breakers Defined

PLEASE REMEMBER THE TIEBREAKING SYSTEM REVERTS BACK TO HEAD-TO-HEAD COMPETITION WHENEVER POSSIBLE THROUGH THE PROCESS. EXAMPLES ARE LISTED BELOW.

- If teams A, B and C are tied for second place, and team A has a 2-0 record in head-to-head competition, then team A gets second. The system then reverts back to head-to-head competition to determine third and fourth place. If team B beat team C, team B would be third and team C fourth.
- If teams D, E and F are tied for third place and all three are 1-1 in head-to-head competition, the system goes to Gardner Points. If they tie in Gardner Points, the system goes to the WPIAL Point-Differential System. In this case, let's say that team D has more points in the "Point-Differential System," and thus finishes third. The system then reverts back to head-to-head for teams E and F. Team E beats team F; Team E gets the fourth-place spot.
- If four teams are tied for second place in a section: In head-to-head competition among these teams, team A and team B are both 2-1, while team C and team D are 1-2. In this case, team A and team B then revert back to head-to-head. Team A beats team B, so team A is second and team B is third. Then, to break the tie between C and D for fourth place, again revert back to head-to-head. Team C beat team C, team C is fourth.

HOW THE GARDNER POINTS SYSTEM WORKS

If head-to-head competition does not break ties among three or more teams, the Gardner Points System is used. Here is how the Gardner Points System works:

- Only section games are used with the exception of the 1A wild-card process.
- Teams are awarded 100 points for each win.
- The winning team gets 10 points for each of the defeated team's victories. For example, team A beats team B. Team B has a 3-3 section record, so team A gets 30 points.
- Add up the Gardner Points for all teams that are tied for a playoff spot in a section. The team with more Gardner Points gets the spot. If there is a tie in Gardner Points, the WPIAL Point-Differential System is then applied.

HOW THE WPIAL POINT-DIFFERENTIAL SYSTEM WORKS

If neither head-to-head competition, nor Gardner Points breaks the tie among three or more teams, then the WPIAL "Point Differential System" is used. Here is how the system works:

- Only section games are used with the exception of the 1A wild-card process.
- A maximum of 10 points is earned in a victory and a maximum of 10 points is lost in a defeat.
- Points are based on comparative scores
- For example, a 14-7 victory is worth 7 points for the winner, and a minus 7 points for the loser. A 20-10 victory is worth 10 points for the winner and a minus 10 points for the loser. A 35-7 victory results in only 10 points for the winner, and a maximum minus 10 points for the loser.
- Add up the points in the "Point Differential System" and the team with more points breaks the deadlock among tied teams.
- If there is still a tie among three or more teams after head-to-head, Gardner Points and the Point-Differential System, a coin flip will be used.

HOW A REQUIRED COIN FLIP WILL BE CONDUCTED

In the event that neither head-to-head competition, Gardner Points, nor the WPIAL Point-Differential System breaks a tie among three or more teams, a coin toss will be conducted. Here is how a coin toss will work:

- A representative from the tied teams will meet in the WPIAL office, or an agreed-upon site, to conduct the coin toss.
- All tied teams will simultaneously toss coins until one team's coin is "different."
- The team with the "different" coin is eliminated.
- The two teams left use head-to-head game competition to determine the winner.
- If the two teams left did not play head-to-head in a game, a third party will toss the coin. One of the teams will call the coin before it is tossed. If correct, they win. If incorrect, the other team wins.

All playoff teams **MUST BE REPRESENTED** at this meeting. It is required that all participating teams exchange game dvds of weeks eight and nine either physically or via HUDL. All 6A -3A schools may continue with the mandated online film exchange through HUDL. Since it cannot be established that ALL 2A and 1A schools are using HUDL, each of these schools must physically bring game dvds from weeks eight and nine. Once your opponent is announced, the involved schools may then decide to exchange game dvds online. All teams advancing through the tournament must continue to exchange game dvds either physically or online.

All schools must comply with this exchange.

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