



GHSA

"ITEMS OF INTEREST"

October 2023

Reclassification Begins, Fall Sports Playoffs Approaching

Although it is hard to believe, we are at the midpoint of football season and we are closing in on playoffs and championships in our Fall sports. The work our schools have put into implementing the new heat policies is very much appreciated and I believe our structure provides the safest environments for practice and competitions in the country.

On that note, it's great that temperatures are dropping which makes issues with heat illness much less problematic.

The Fall State Executive committee meeting is October 1 with subcommittee meetings and the full committee meets at 9:00 a.m., October 2 in Macon. The agenda is much lighter than usual, but we are in the process of reclassifying which more than makes up for the light agenda.

Reclassification is a difficult process, just as it always has been, and I appreciate the work the subcommittee members have done. While I wish there was a magic formula that could make everyone happy, I am confident that all ideas and proposals will be heard and analyzed.

As a reminder, reclassification will not be complete until the committee has completed the structure and operational aspects of the plan with all schools being classified. At that point, schools may appeal their classification placement. Once finalized, schools will be placed in regions and those placements may be appealed.

Once all appeals have taken place, the plan will be voted on and ratified by the full State Executive Committee. There is a long way to go, and my hope is that this work is completed prior to Christmas break so regions can elect their officers and begin scheduling.

Finally, continue to stress appropriate sportsmanship with your coaches and teams. Acts of unsporting events are "unforced errors" and incidents leading to fines, ejections and forfeitures are totally unnecessary. It's not good for schools, officials, coaches and athletes, and your association.

This is important and, if it's not a point of emphasis already, please make it so. We need to continue to recruit and retain officials and unsporting behaviors of fans, coaches and student athletes are the leading cause of officials leaving the game as evidenced by every survey regarding this topic.

Speaking of officials, please show them your appreciation for their work at every opportunity, but especially during the week of October 1-7, which is recognized as NFHS Fall Sports Officials Appreciation Week (see more on that elsewhere in this newsletter).

Thanks you for all you do for our student athletes and please call if I or any of your GHSA staff can do anything for you.



– Dr. James R. Hines, Jr., Executive Director

Join the conversation on social media @OfficialGHSA on TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube

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- GHSA STAFF -
Areas of Responsibility

ROBIN HINES - Executive Director - (extension 41)
 Administration, By-Law Interpretations, Hardship Rulings,
 Football Playoffs, Coaches Education Program

ERNIE YARBROUGH - Assistant Executive Director - (ext. 27)
 Championship Events, Officials Coordinator,
 Swimming, Lacrosse

TANYA ANDERSON - Associate Director - (ext. 29)
 Literary, One Act Play, Esports, DragonFly Liaison,
 Cross Country, Track & Field, and Event Sanctioning

DON CORR - Associate Director - (ext. 34)
 Softball, Wrestling, Baseball, Sports Medicine

KEVIN GIDDENS - Associate Director
 Bass Fishing, Football and Soccer Consultant

DARRELL LANE - Associate Director - (ext. 42)
 Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer

PENNY PITTS MITCHELL - Associate Director - (ext. 22)
 Cheerleading, Game Day Cheerleading, Gymnastics, Dance,
 Student Leadership, Title IX

JAY RUSSELL - Associate Director - (ext. 23)
 Football, Flag Football, Golf, Hardship Eligibility

CARROR WRIGHT - Associate Director - (ext. 39)
 Coach's Liaison, Compliance & Transfer Eligibility,
 Sportsmanship

STEVE FIGUEROA - Media Director - (ext. 26)
 Media, Newsletter, Constitution & Calendar, Tennis

ROBIN BULLINGTON - Office Manager - (ext. 33)
 Budgeting and Finances, Playoff Finances, Staff Procedures

JULIE JONES - Administrative Assistant - (ext. 24)
 Coaches Education, Dues, Entry Notification

STACEY JONES - Administrative Assistant - (ext. 32)
 Riflery Liaison, School Contacts & School Passes,
 Directory, Coaches' Clinics, Trophies & Medals

SHERI EUBANKS - Receptionist - (ext. 0)
 Hardship Hearings, Fines, School System/Retiree Passes,
 Publication Orders

PAM THOMPSON - Officials' Registrar - (ext. 30)
 Officials' Registration, Testing & Online Clinics, Service Awards

UTR Now Official Tennis Ratings

Universal Tennis Ratings (UTR) is now the official tennis rating of the GHSA. Created by Universal Tennis, the UTR Rating system rates all players – professional, collegiate, high school, junior, and recreational – on the same 16-point scale, regardless of age, gender, or location. A player's UTR Rating reflects their current skill level based on actual performance.

"Universal Tennis is thrilled to have the GHSA on board. Georgia represents a large number of high school tennis programs and players and we are excited to be the official rating of the GHSA. We look forward to working with coaches across the state to help innovate and elevate high school tennis," said Chase Hodges, Universal Tennis Vice President.

The adoption of the UTR Rating as the official rating system in Georgia ensures all high school tennis has one universal system for tracking player development, analytics, and discouraging roster stacking.

The Universal Tennis analytics will be shared as content on @OfficialGHSA social media and GHSA.net tennis page, but will NOT be used to determine post-season playoff lineups or brackets.

Regions can decide on how to use the UTR ratings during the regular season and will continue to determine how they will choose their top four (4) teams, as stated in the GHSA Constitution and By-Laws.

Volleyball State Playoffs Begin Oct. 17-18

The 2023 GHSA State Volleyball playoffs begin Oct. 17-18, culminating with the State Championships, presented by Mizuno, on Friday and Saturday, November 3-4 at the Champions Center in Lakepoint Sports Complex in Cartersville.

All championship matches will be video streamed live on the NFHS Network. Tickets are \$15 per day (\$20 for a two-day pass) and will be available **ONLY** at [GoFan](#). Molten is the official volleyball of the GHSA.



GHSA Licensed Products

This month's featured licensees are: **RiverOak Photography**, **Athletic Image** (theathleticimage.com), **Unforgettable Moments** (unforgettablemoment.com), official action photographers; **Pickle Juice**, official team management solution for player registration, booster club/concession payments & online fundraising. (www.picklejuiceapp.com); **GameChanger** (<https://gc.com>), official scorekeeping and team management partner of softball and baseball; **Thrive Spirit**, provides high-intensity, holistic cheer and dance training and experiences with a focus on the whole athlete (cheerdancethrive.com); and **The Premo Source** (thepremosource.com), provides premium athletic flooring, fitness & strength equipment that revolutionizes athletic facilities.

Fast Pitch Softball Playoff Information

The Super Regional Softball playoffs will be held Oct. 16-17 for teams in classes A-Div. 2, 3A, 5A and 7A, and Oct. 18-19 for teams in classes A-Div. 1, 2A, 4A and 6A.

The No. 1 seeded team in each quadrant of the bracket will host that Super Regional and will play the first game.

Teams advancing to the GHSA **State Softball Championships**, presented by Mizuno, on October 25-28, 2023 need to follow the procedures listed below (additional **Team Instructions** may be found on the GHSA web site):

TEAM ROSTER AND PHOTO – Must be sent via e-mail to "Attention Rhonda Rawls" at adam@scoreatl.com by 9:00 a.m., on Friday, October 13. Failure to do so will result in a \$250 fine to the school.

HOTELS – Go to www.visitcolumbusga.com/stay/ for team registration and hotel selection. The site will be active beginning on Monday, October 9. For more information regarding team lodging, call 1-800-999-1613 and use the reference "GHSA Softball Housing" when making reservations. You may also e-mail **Merri Sherman** at msherman@visitcolumbusga.com.

OPENING CEREMONY – Each team is required to participate in uniform (teams playing late games may wear matching shorts with game jerseys) at the Opening Ceremony in the stadium Oct. 26 at 10:30 a.m. Classes A-D1, 3A, 5A & 7A will meet outside the 3rd base side of the stadium. Classes A-D2, 2A, 4A, & 6A will meet outside the 1st base side of the stadium. Failure to do so will result in a \$250 fine to the school.

ON-LINE INFORMATION PACKETS – The team information packets for **Super Regional** contests as well as for the **Elite Eight** tournament are available on the GHSA website. Go to the Softball page on the web site (www.ghsa.net) and click on the appropriate banners.

TICKETS – Tickets for the Super Regionals are \$12.00 per day, or \$20.00 for a two-day pass, while tickets for the Elite Eight in Columbus are \$15.00 per day or \$45.00 for a four-day tournament pass. All tickets are available **ONLY** through **GoFan** at <https://gofan.co/app/school/GHSA>.

The purchase of paper tickets at the gate will NOT be available for either event!



GHSA Teams With Alfa Insurance

The Georgia High School Association (GHSA) is pleased to announce a new three-year partnership with Alfa Insurance®. The company will serve as the exclusive Home, Auto, Life and Property Insurance partner of the GHSA Football State Championships.

The partnership provides Alfa® an opportunity to reach football fans across the state of Georgia. Throughout the GHSA football season, Alfa will sponsor the "Offensive Line of the Week." Alfa agents will have the opportunity to present the award to the winners at their school each week.

As the presenting sponsor of the GHSA Football State Championships, Alfa Insurance will be integrated into the TV and radio broadcast, have a social media presence and on-site activation during the championships. Agents will also be featured in a spotlight series honoring those who are making a difference throughout their respective communities.

"The GHSA is excited to partner with Alfa Insurance as the presenting sponsor for the GHSA Football State Championships," said Executive Director of the GHSA Dr. Robin Hines. "Throughout the process that led to this announcement, it became clear that our organizations mutually understand the value of high school athletics. Our shared beliefs are that high school sports and activities provide opportunities for students to learn life lessons that teach goal setting, leadership, teamwork and sportsmanship. These attributes provide the foundation to becoming contributing members of society. The GHSA looks forward to the partnership with Alfa Insurance in providing opportunities for Georgia's student-athletes."

"We are proud to partner with Georgia High School Association in supporting the development of student athletes," said President and CEO of Alfa Jimmy Parnell. "Alfa has enjoyed a longstanding relationship with the Alabama High School Athletic Association and understands the value of connecting with the communities we serve through high school sports. GHSA is helping grow the next generation of leaders by encouraging hard work, sportsmanship, resilience and teamwork. Alfa team members share these values and are proud to join GHSA in supporting high school sports."

Alfa has served Georgia residents for more than 50 years with a full line of auto, home, life, and business policies. Alfa agents and adjusters live in the communities they serve, providing personalized service and claims satisfaction. For more information, visit AlfaInsurance.com.

Enter the GHSA 'Student Section of the Year Spirit Challenge'

Does your school have a great student section?

Does your band help make your student section come alive?

Does your student section love your school? Are they there rain or shine?

Does your school have some great traditions? Dress in a theme on Game day? Have a seating order for classes?

If the answer is yes to the above questions, your school definitely should enter the **Student Section of the Year Spirit Challenge**, sponsored by the Georgia High School Association's Student-Athlete Advisory Council.

To enter the contest, the following is required:

Video your band/cheer/student section working together to build the craziest and most fun atmosphere at venues for any combination of fall sports.

You must send your videos to ghsaspirit@gmail.com **before November 3rd, 2023** to enter. Videos can be on YouTube, Tik Tok, or



they can be sent on a google drive, MP4, etc.

Sportsmanship is a must! Inappropriate cheers to the refs or opposing team or cheerleaders may result in disqualification.

During your video, please explain how you make your student section the best in the state!

Register your team for this fun contest by going to the following link: <https://forms.gle/GoWtwujLfHpw3JMCA>

There will be two divisions of the competition again: for schools in classes A through 5A, and for schools in classes 6A and 7A.

Enter before the deadline!

2023 GHSA Cross Country Dates, Deadlines and Schedule

Deadline Dates and Instructions

Region	Changes to rosters may be made until the deadline established by each Region or prior to the beginning of Region competition. Rosters must be submitted electronically on MileSplit GA.
Oct. 28	Deadline to complete Region Meets
Oct. 29	9:00 a.m., deadline for all finalized Region Results on MileSplit GA and notification to the GHSA office. Region Results and notification should be completed immediately following the Region Meet.
Nov. 3-4	State Meet at Carrollton High School (www.ghsa.net/ghsa-state-cross-country-championships). Tickets are \$10.00 and are available ONLY on GoFan .

Schedule at Carrollton High School

Friday, Nov. 3, 2023

9:00 am	Boys 5A
9:45 am	Girls 5A
10:30 am	Boys 1A Div. 1
11:15 am	Girls 1A Div. 1
12 noon	Boys 1A Div. 2
12:45 pm	Girls 1A Div. 2

Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023

8:00 am	Boys 7A
8:45 am	Girls 7A
9:30 am	Boys 2A
10:15 am	Girls 2A
11:00 am	Boys 3A
11:45 am	Girls 3A
12:30 pm	Boys 4A
1:15 pm	Girls 4A
2:00 pm	Boys 6A
2:45 pm	Girls 6A





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Help Celebrate 'National High School Activities Month'



October is
**NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL
ACTIVITIES
MONTH**

Join us in celebrating all the groups that make high school sports and performing arts programs possible! You can show your appreciation each week by using the hashtag #HSActivitiesMonth on social media.



#HSActivitiesMonth

NFHS Fall Sports Officials Appreciation Week is October 1-7

As a reminder, NFHS Fall Sports Officials Appreciation Week will take place next week - October 1-7, 2023 - as part of NFHS High School Activities Month!

Participation in fall sports officials' appreciation week can be as simple or as extravagant as state associations and/or schools want it to be. Many schools will not only get their teams involved in the fun but will ask student groups on campus to get involved.

It is a great community project for school student councils, spirit groups or other groups that serve as ambassadors to your school and community. Here are some ideas that have worked throughout the country:

- Officials' appreciation week banners and signage on the fence, wall, etc., surrounding the contest playing area.
- Gift cards/cookies/donuts/other items presented to the crew by both the home and visiting team.
- Photos of the officiating crew with both teams and coaches prior to the start of the game (or at the end, depending on timing).
- Read a PSA at the start of the game, thanking the crew for working the contest.
- Student escorts of the crew onto the field/court/pitch.
- "Thank you" cards, signed by the team and coaches.
- Special appreciation signage in the officials' locker room.

- Recorded "thank you" messages from student-athletes and coaches to officials, posted on social media.

These are just some examples of what schools can do – the possibilities are endless!

Recognizing and appreciating officials may seem like a "little thing" but it goes a long way and, encourage schools to thank their officials all season long - not just during a special week.

Mark this week on your calendars, as well as Winter Sports Officials Appreciation Week (January 7-13, 2024) and Spring Sports Officials Appreciation Week (April 14-20, 2024).



GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA
MARRIOTT / Macon City Center - MACON, GEORGIA
October 2, 2023 - 9:00 a.m.

Call To OrderJim Finch, President
 Pledge of AllegianceCurt Miller, Vice President
 InvocationCarror Wright, Associate Director
 Roll CallSteve Figueroa, Media Director

COMMITTEE PROPOSALS:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. **Proposal** to adopt a new officiating fee chart for the 2024-26 school years. (GHSA Office)
2. **Proposal** to modify by-law 1.92-c on page 23 of the 2023-24 GHSA Constitution as follows (old text is struck out, new text in italic): Capitalizing on athletic fame *performance* by receiving money or gifts with monetary value except college scholarships. (GHSA Office)
3. **Proposal** to add new by-law 1.97 on page 23 of the 2023-24 GHSA Constitution to read as follows: Students may receive consideration for the use of their own name, image and likeness (NIL). Guidance for NIL can be found in Appendix "N" of the GHSA Constitution. (GHSA Office)

GYMNASTICS COMMITTEE

1. **Proposal** that gymnasts may have a spotter/coach stand between the board and table for round off entry vaults without a deduction. (GHSA Office)
2. **Proposal** that schools hosting meets will be responsible for paying the judges for that meet. (GHSA Office)
3. **Proposal** that the Capital Cup warm-up format be allowed. However, schools will be expected to pay an extra \$10.00 per judge. (GHSA Office)

LACROSSE COMMITTEE

1. **Proposal** to allow 10 consecutive days in the fall for Fall Ball, with the purpose of teaching skill, improving performance and reducing the risk of injury. (Pace Academy)
2. **Proposal** to modify by-law 2.69-b, which currently allows one (1) coach to work with up to four (4) athletes in skill building drills, to allow a coach to work with as many as seven (7) athletes in Girls Lacrosse during the off season. (Pace Academy)
3. **Proposal** to allow coaches to coach outside (club) teams throughout the year as long as there are no more than three (3) players on the outside team's roster that are from the coach's GHSA member school. (Pace Academy)

RECLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE

Continue discussions regarding reclassification for 2024-26 school years.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Robin Hines will address the full committee on several issues.

SCHEDULE OF SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS - Fall 2023

(Meetings Will Be Held at the Marriott Macon City Center Hotel)

SUNDAY, October 1

12:30 pm Board of Trustees (Grand Salon)
 2:00 pm Gymnastics Committee (Maple Room 306)
 2:30 pm Lacrosse Committee (Maple Room 306)

SUNDAY, October 1 (continued)

3:00 pm Reclassification Committee (Maple Room 306)
 4:30 pm Hospitality (Mulberry Room 303)

GHSA - October Calendar - 2023

October

- 1 Deadline for notification of entry in One Act Play
- 1, 2 State Executive Committee Meeting
- 2 Earliest date for Flag Football game
- 3 Hardship/Appeal Committee Meeting
- 9 First Practice date for Swimming & Diving
- 12 Complete Region Fastpitch Softball
- 13 Report Region Fastpitch Softball winners by 9 a.m.
- 14 Determine Region/Area Volleyball winners
- 16 Report Region/Area Volleyball winners by 9 a.m.
- 16-19 State Fastpitch Softball Tournament Super Regionals
- 17 Hardship/Appeal Committee Meeting
- 17, 18 First Round State Volleyball Tournament
- 21 Second Round State Volleyball Tournament
- 23 Earliest date for Basketball, Dance & Wrestling practice
- 23 Earliest date for Riflery & Swimming contests
- 24-25 Quarterfinals State Volleyball Tournament
- 25-28 State Softball Tournament - all classes
- 28 Semifinals State Volleyball Tournament
- 28 Complete Region Cross Country and One Act Play
- 30 Report Cross Country and One Act Play winners by 9 a.m.

GHSA Sponsors

