

**2019-2020**  
**GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**  
**FOOTBALL**



**COACHES' HANDBOOK**

**Dr. Robin Hines, Executive Director**

**Kevin Giddens, Associate Director**

**[kevin@ghsa.net](mailto:kevin@ghsa.net)**

**151 South Bethel Street**

**P.O. Box 271**

**Thomaston, GA 30286**

**O) 706-647-7473, ext. 25**

**F) 706-647-2638**



## 2019-2020 GHSA Football



### **Table of Contents:**

<b>P 3.....</b>	<b>Dates and Deadlines</b>
<b>P 4.....</b>	<b>GHSA Constitution and By Laws for Football</b>
<b>P 8.....</b>	<b>Overtime Information</b>
<b>P 8.....</b>	<b>Region Procedures</b>
<b>P 10 .....</b>	<b>State Playoff Information</b>
<b>P 12.....</b>	<b>Summer Padded Camp Information</b>
<b>P 14.....</b>	<b>GHSA Practice/Heat/Humidity</b>
<b>P 15.....</b>	<b>Concussion/Cardiac Information</b>
<b>P 16.....</b>	<b>GHSA Constitution &amp; By Laws General Regulations</b>
<b>P 17 .....</b>	<b>NFHS Rule Changes</b>
<b>P 18.....</b>	<b>NFHS Points of Interest</b>
<b>P 20.....</b>	<b>GHSA Football Forms</b>
<b>P 21.....</b>	<b>Official GHSA Footballs</b>
<b>P 22.....</b>	<b>GHSA Electronic Ticket Information</b>



2019-2020 GHSA Football

**GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION  
BEGINNING AND ENDING DATES FOR 2019-2020**

**FOOTBALL**

**DATE FOR FIRST PRACTICE- July 25 (Conditioning)/August 1 (Pads)-Feb. 1 or later (Spring)**

**FIRST CONTEST- Aug. 23**

**MAXIMUM GAMES/DATES-10 (7 JV)**

**LAST PLAY DATE- Nov. 9**

**AREA/REGION QUALIFIERS DETERMINED- Nov. 9**

**GHSA STATE PLAYOFF DATES**

**First Round-Nov. 15-16**

**Second Round-Nov. 22-23**

**Quarterfinals-Nov. 29-30**

**Semifinals-Dec. 6-7**

**Finals-Dec. 13-14 @ Georgia State University Stadium in Atlanta**

**Friday, December 13, 2019**

**Saturday, December 14, 2019**

A Private 10 am

A Public 10 am

Class 2A 1 pm

Class 3A 1 pm

Class 5A 4:30 pm

Class 4A 4:30 pm

Class 6A 8 pm

Class 7A 8 pm



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football

4

### GHSAA Constitution and By Laws for FOOTBALL

#### REGULAR SEASON:

A. Football is a state championship sport in each classification, and schools are aligned on a regional basis. In Class A, there will be separate championships for public and private schools.

1. In the reclassification year (see Article III of the GHSAA Constitution), all regions will meet after reclassification has been finalized by the Executive Committee and after any sub-divisions have been finalized and cross-over games have been arranged.

(a) No schedule is valid until the plans of all regions have been approved.

(b) Plans for determining the ranking and breaking ties of the four region representatives for playoffs must be drawn.

(c) All contracts should be drawn to coincide with the two-year reclassification period and show the day, date, time, opponent and game site.

2. Each school must file its football schedule with the GHSAA Executive Director no later than **March 1**, each year.

(a) The schedule must show the day, date, time, opponent, and game site.

(b) The GHSAA Executive Director must be notified concerning any changes made to the schedule after the submission date.

(c) Any changes made for a region game must be made prior to the date for beginning football practice.

(1) Any change of opponent after that date will cause the game not to count as a sub-region or region game.

(2) Limitations regarding schedule changes shall also be construed to prevent a school from canceling a game when such a game could affect the region and/or sub-region standings.

(3) A change in date or time with the same opponent is not considered a change affecting region or sub-region status.

(d) Contracts with officials for varsity games must be signed by June 1 each year, and copies of the schedules must be submitted to the proper officials association(s).

(e) Each school must have a signed contract for its football scrimmage, and a school may be fined for failure to comply with that contract.

(f) There will be a \$250 penalty for schools that change their football schedules after June 1. (NOTE: Appeal procedures are available.)

B. All GHSAA football games must be played according to the rules as published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, and any other rules found in this section.

C. The number of football games allowed (excluding state playoffs) is ten (10).

1. No varsity football game may be played on a night preceding a school day without specific authorization from the GHSAA Executive Director.

2. Only one football game may be played per week (the schedule week is a traditional week - Sunday through Saturday) by the same level team (varsity/sub-varsity) except in the case of the GHSAA Tie-Breaker Playoff or make-up games due to special circumstances that have been approved by the Executive Director.

3. A single sub-varsity game played on a night before a school day may start no later than 6:30 p.m. The first game of two sub-varsity games played on a night before a school day may start no later than 5:30 p.m.

4. Football players playing on both the varsity and one sub-varsity team are limited to six quarters of competition in any seven (7) calendar day period beginning with the date of the varsity game. The penalty for violation of this rule will be forfeiture of the game in which the violation occurred and a \$1,000.00 fine.

5. The football season ends for a team or individual when that team, having completed its regular-season schedule, is eliminated from playoff competition or wins the State Championship.

6. All JV games will be played with 10-minute quarters. If there is an 8th grade student(s) on the JV team, then 8-minute quarters must be played.

7. Schools may play 10 Mini Games at the JV level, instead of seven (7) regular games, the combination of which can not exceed the current 28 quarters allowed for sub-varsity play. Each Mini Game will be one-half of a regular game. Four (4) schools would meet at one site, with two schools playing a half and then the other two schools playing a half. Officials would be paid the regular fee for a single game.



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



5

D. Football **practice** may begin five consecutive weekdays prior to August 1st.

1. In the first five days of practice for any student, the practice may not last longer than two (2) hours, and the student may wear no other protective football equipment except helmet and mouthpieces. NOTE:

(a) The time for a session shall be measured from the time the players report to the practice or workout area until they leave that area.

(b) During acclimatization practices, teams may hold a walk-through as long as there is at least a two-hour break between the two activities.

2. Beginning August 1st, any student may practice in full pads and may practice a maximum of two (2) times in a single calendar day under the following stipulations:

(a) A student must have participated in five conditioning practices wearing no other protective football equipment except helmet and mouthpieces before being allowed to practice in full pads.

(b) In a single calendar day:

(1) No single session may last longer than three (3) hours.

(2) If two (2) practices are held, the TOTAL time shall not exceed five (5) hours.

(3) There must be at least a three-hour time of rest between sessions if two (2) sessions are held.

(4) There may not be consecutive days of two-a-day practice sessions. All double-session days must be followed by a single-session day or a day off.

(5) A walk-through may not be held on days when two practices are conducted.

(c) These procedures are derived from recommendations created by the Inter-Association Task Force for Preseason Secondary School Athletics Participants in the paper "Preseason Heat-Acclimatization Guidelines for Secondary School Athletes."

3. **Full contact** should be limited during practices as well as during activity outside of the traditional fall practice.

(Note: No limitation is placed on activities defined below as "AIR, BAGS or CONTROL" contact.

(a) For purposes of this by-law, the following definitions shall apply: **AIR** - Players run a drill unopposed without contact; **BAGS** - Players run a drill against a bag or another soft-contact surface; **CONTROL** -

Players run a drill at assigned speed until the moment of contact and one player is pre-determined the "winner" by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet; **THUD** - Players

run a drill at competitive speed through the moment of contact with no pre-determined "winner." Contact remains above the waist, players stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill; **LIVE ACTION** -

Players run a drill in game-like conditions and is the only time that players are taken to the ground; **FULL CONTACT** - Contact which meets the definition of Live Action or Thud.

(b) **Pre-Season & Spring Practice & Summer Contact Camps:**

1) Full contact shall be allowed in no more than 2 consecutive practice days per week;

2) Full contact during practice shall be limited to not more than 45 minutes per day;

3) Full contact during practice shall be limited to not more than 135 minutes per week; and

4) During any twice-daily practice, only one session per day shall include full contact.

5) In Summer Contact Camps, the only form of Full Contact allowed is **Thud**.

6) Schools will be limited to attending no more than three (3) Team Contact Camps per summer (no more than six (6) days total). There must be at least four (4) participating schools or the camp cannot be held.

(c) **Regular & Post Season Practice:**

1) Full contact during practice shall be allowed in no more than three (3) practice days per week;

2) Full contact during practice shall not be allowed on more than two (2) consecutive days;

3) Full contact during practice shall be limited to not more than 30 minutes per day;

4) Full contact during practice shall be limited to not more than 90 minutes per week.

(d) **Written Practice Plans:** A written practice plan in compliance with this by-law shall be prepared in advance by the head coach prior to every practice and maintained by the school for a period of at least twelve (12) months. Such practice plans shall be made available to the GHSAA upon request.

(e) **Violations:** The penalty to be imposed upon any member school found to have violated this by-law in any substantial manner shall be as follows:

1) First Offense: A fine of not less than \$500 nor more than \$2500 per violation at the discretion of the Executive Director.

2) Second Offense: The school shall be placed on probation and shall not be eligible to participate in post season play.

4. From the end of school in the spring until the first day of preseason practice, players may wear no other



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football

6

protective football equipment except helmets and mouthpieces for all voluntary workouts and passing league games. Institutional heat policies are also in effect for voluntary workouts supervised by school personnel.

5. All applications for team summer camps at GHSAA schools or other facilities must be submitted to the GHSAA office by May 1, and all subsequent correspondence to complete the application must be completed by May 15. Coaches for these players **must** verify that the participants have had acclimatization practices for five days immediately preceding the camp.

6. Equipment allowed in summer (contact) camps is limited to helmets, shoulder pads and mouthpieces. Compression-style shorts that have thigh pads and/or girdle pads are NOT allowed.

E. All varsity football games shall be played with a minimum of five (5) officially-dressed field officials who are registered under the GHSAA plan for registering officials. The officiating crew also shall have an electric clock operator whose only duty is to operate the game clock.

1. In all games, the host school must provide some type of dressing facilities for officials at or near the game site that can also be used to hold the pre-game conference.

2. During the regular season, the host school is responsible for providing a crew to work the sideline chains. These individuals must be responsible adults.

3. In accordance with By-Law 2.71-c, the host school is responsible for providing security escorts for the officials at all regular season and playoff games.

F. The following regulations are in place for GHSAA football games.

1. All GHSAA football games will have a twenty (20) minute halftime **unless** both school administrators agree in writing by Thursday of game week to shorten the halftime period to fifteen (15) minutes.

2. Artificial noisemakers, except air horns and whistles, are legal at football games. Illegal noisemakers are to be confiscated when visible and/or used.

3. Bands are not to play during live-ball situations.

NOTE: This includes the situation in which there is no timeout and the teams are in a huddle.

(a) If, during a football game, a team claims interference with communications due to band noise, the Referee shall give a warning to one or both head coaches and the bands must cease playing.

(b) If there is a second offense by the same school's band, an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be imposed against that school's team.

4. During the state playoff series, a crew of seven (7) field officials will be used.

5. Fans shall not be allowed to enter the playing field either before the game or at halftime to form a tunnel for players to run through.

6. In the regular season, a school may utilize a visible 25-second clock as long as the time is visible on both ends of the field and the clock is operated by a paid game official.

G. **Spring Football Practice** for each school year may be held on ten (10) school days from February 1 until the end of the school year, spaced over 13 consecutive school days. (**Note:** Spring and fall scrimmage games and jamborees are considered to be extensions of practice as far as eligibility rules are concerned.)

1. Schools must choose by February 1 each year as to whether they will have spring football practice.

(a) If a school conducts spring practice, all preseason practice schedules remain the same (See item D. 3(b) for a listing of contact limitations).

(b) If a school chooses not to conduct spring practice, the team will be allowed to hold an additional (second) scrimmage game or controlled scrimmage against another school, or a jamboree with three teams playing a half against the other two teams, in the fall.

(c) Schools hiring a new coach may appeal to the Executive Director to change an earlier decision.

2. Schools that have scrimmage game/games canceled or suspended by inclement weather will have the



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football

7

following options:

(a) Play on another night during the same calendar week (defined as Sunday to Saturday.) Sunday play is not allowed.

(b) Play during another week when the school does not have another scrimmage or regular season game scheduled. (**Note:** No scrimmage game may be played after a school's first varsity contest.)

3. Schools which participate in Spring Practice are allowed to play a spring game/scrimmage with another school, or a jamboree with three teams playing a half against the other two teams, in place of their last (10th) practice of the spring (**Note:** Restrictions under by-law 2.62 (f-2) & (f-3) will apply).

4. A football coach on the payroll of one school district, but under contract to another school district for the following year, may help with spring football at the new school, if the arrangement is satisfactory with both systems.

5. Students enrolled in grade 8 in a middle school or junior high school that is a feeder school to the high school may participate in Spring Practice at that high school.

6. No student (eighth grade or above) may participate in more than ten (10) days of Spring Practice, and may participate for no more than one (1) school.

H. In case of a game being terminated in the first half (suspended game), By-Law 2.93-c must be followed.

**NOTE:** All varsity football games must be played to completion. Any interrupted game must be replayed from the point of interruption. The school that is behind in the score may choose not to continue the game and the score will be recorded as it was at the point of interruption. **NOTE:** Teams will not be allowed to play two football games in the same week, except when making up a suspended game with the permission of the Executive Director.

I. During warmups before the game and at halftime there shall be a division of the field, and neither team shall enter the other team's portion of the field. That division shall be as follows:

1. Before the game: each team shall occupy the space from their own 45-yard line to the endline of their goal line. Neither team shall occupy the area between the 45-yard lines.

**EXCEPTION:** When kicking, each team shall have the area between the opponent's 45-yard line and kicking team's end zone in the side zone area on the same side of the field as their bench. Kickers shall kick toward their end zone.

2. Re-entering the field before the game and at halftime: each team shall have the portion of the field between their bench and the near edge of each goal post - i.e., field divided lengthwise.

J. The GHSAA Overtime Procedure will be used whenever **two schools are tied** at the end of regulation play.

1. This procedure involves giving both teams opportunities to score from the 15-yard line until the tie is broken.

2. Overtime games are exempt from the 11:30 p.m. GHSAA curfew.

K. When there is a **competitive imbalance between teams**, the coach of a team trailing by 30 points or more at halftime may choose to play the second half with a running clock. Quarters will remain at 12 minutes.

1. If the coach does not exercise the option of the running clock, the third quarter will be played with regulation timing.

2. If the point differential reaches, or remains, 30 or more points during the third quarter, the clock will still run according to rule for the remainder of the third quarter, but the fourth quarter will have a running clock mandated.

3. A running clock means the clock will be stopped only:

(a) after a touchdown and until the ball is kicked off.

(b) during deliberations for penalty administration.

(c) during charged timeouts or official's timeouts

4. A game that is reduced in time by use of a running clock shall constitute a "completed" game to meet other by-law considerations.



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



### GHSAA OVERTIME PROCEDURE

1. There will be a 3-minute intermission between the end of regulation play and the coin toss to start the overtime procedure.
2. The captains will meet for the coin toss, and the winner may choose one of the following:
  - (a) Be on offense first
  - (b) Be on defense first
  - (c) Choose the end of the field on which to play
3. The ball is placed on the 15-yard line and the offense keeps the ball until:
  - (a) The ball is turned over on downs (NOTE: The team on offense can gain a first down.)
  - (b) The defense gains possession of the ball (ball is dead immediately)
  - (c) The offense scores a touchdown or field goal
  - (d) The offense misses a field goal
4. After the first offensive team completes its possession, the opposing team gets its opportunity from the 15-yard line.
5. If the game remains tied after each team has had an offensive possession, there will be a 2-minute intermission and the team that lost the first coin toss has the first option for the second possession.
6. For each additional overtime period (i.e., an offensive possession by each team) the original coin toss options are alternated.
7. Beginning with the third overtime period, a team must attempt a 2-point try after a touchdown.
8. Each team is allowed one timeout per overtime period. No timeouts may be carried over from regulation play.
9. Penalty enforcement is handled the same way in overtime as in regulation play.

### REGION PROCEDURES:

- A. To qualify for championship consideration in a region or sub-region, a school must play a minimum number of games with schools in its region as determined by the region and the GHSAA Reclassification Committee.
1. In any region or sub-region in which there are six (6) or less schools, if each school plays two (2) games, both games will count as region games. In any other case where two (2) schools have played more than once during the regular season, only the first game scheduled shall count in the region standings.
  2. Any school playing a non-region or non sub-region schedule (i.e., not in consideration for a region championship) will not have its games count for or against any opponent.
- B. The GHSAA Executive Director, upon presentation of evidence to show that a school can not secure the required number of games in a region or sub-region, may authorize each school to substitute any number of games in any classification or region to qualify for championship consideration. NOTE: A request for substitution of game(s) must be submitted prior to September 1.
- C. Four (4) representatives from each region will enter the post-season playoffs.
1. Each region will determine the way to designate the four representatives and their placement in the region (i.e., first place, second place, third place and fourth place). Class A teams will qualify for the state playoffs through a power rating system.
  2. In case there is a **tie between two teams** and the region does not have a different written tie-breaker plan, the following tie-breaking procedures will be used:
    - (a) If the teams played during the regular season, the winner of the game will have the higher placement.
    - (b) If the tie remains and both teams have qualified for a playoff spot, the region will determine the placement of the teams that are tied.





## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football

9

(c) If the tie remains and there is a playoff spot for only one team, the two teams that are tied will meet in a GHSAA Tie-Breaker Game.

(1) The schools shall meet at a site selected by the GHSAA Executive Director for a playoff on the Monday night after the end of the regular season.

(2) The two teams will play a GHSAA Tie-breaker Mini-game, and the winning team will have the higher placement.

3. In case there is a tie between three or more teams and there are spots for all the teams in the playoffs, the region shall decide the seeding of the tied teams.

4. In case there is a tie between three or more teams and there are not spots in the playoff for all the teams, the following tie-breaking procedures will be used. NOTE: At any point in this process where a tie can be broken so that only two teams remain tied, consideration of head-to-head competition will be invoked. If the tie is completely broken for all teams involved at any step in the process, the tie-breaker process is completed.

(a) If the teams that are tied have played during the regular season game and one team has defeated the others, the undefeated team has the highest placement.

(b) If one team has not beaten all other tied teams, the school with the highest percentage of wins against the tied teams will have the highest placement. If the percentages leave two or more teams still tied, then revert to head-to-head records.

(c) If the tie remains, the teams that are tied will meet in a GHSAA Tie-breaker Mini-game.

D. When a region uses a regular-season playing date for games that determine the seeding of its four playoff teams, all games affecting seeding or the top three teams in each sub-region in Class A in the region that night will have officials assigned separately from the regular season assignments. The Region Secretary will work with the GHSAA office to coordinate this process.

**GHSAA TIE-BREAKER MINI-GAME PROCEDURE** (NOTE: The option to play a Mini-Game to break a tie is available only to regions that have adopted the GHSAA plan for breaking ties without any modifications)

1. The schools shall meet at a site selected by the GHSAA Executive Director for a playoff on the Monday night after the end of the regular season.

2. The games will consist of two five-minute halves. The play begins for the first half with a free kick, and standard game rules and scoring are used.

3. There will be a two-minute intermission between the halves. Play begins for the second half with a free kick.

4. Each team will be given two (2) timeouts in the first five (5) minutes and one timeout in the second five (5) minutes. Unused timeouts in the first five minutes may be carried over to the second five minutes.

5. If the score is tied at the end of two overtime periods, the teams will go to the GHSAA 15-yard overtime procedure.

6. A coin toss will determine the order of play.

a. When three teams are tied for one open spot, the team winning the toss gets a bye - and then plays the winning team of the first Tie-Breaker game.

Example: Team "C" gets a bye

Team "A" plays Team "B"

Team "C" plays the winner of game 1

Winner of game 2 qualifies for the playoffs

b. When three teams are tied for two open spots, the following format will be used.

Example: Team "C" get a bye

Team "A" plays Team "B" and the winner qualifies

Team "C" plays the loser of game 1 and the winner qualifies

If Team "C" wins game 2, the regular season winner between Team "C" and the winner of game 1 will have the higher placement

c. When four teams are tied for one open spot, the pairings will be determined by draw and the following format will be used.



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



10

Example: Team "A" plays Team "B" in game 1  
Team "C" plays Team "D" in game 2  
Winner of game 1 plays winner of game 2  
Winner of game 3 qualifies

d. When four teams are tied for two open spots, the pairings will be determined by draws and the following format will be used.

Example: Team "A" plays Team "B" in game 1 and the winner qualifies  
Team "C" plays Team "D" in game 2 and the winner qualifies  
The winner of the regular season game between the two winning teams will have the higher placement

7. When teams play a mini-game tiebreaker on a Monday, their first round playoff game will be scheduled for the following Saturday unless both schools agree to play on Friday.

### STATE PLAYOFFS:

A. All rounds of games after the end of the regular season are considered part of the state playoff structure.

1. In **ALL Rounds** except the Finals, the higher-seeded team will host. In the **Quarterfinal Round**, if both teams have the same seeding, a "universal" GHSAA coin flip (see By-Law 4.39), will determine the host site.

2. In **ALL Rounds** except the Finals, game date and time will be set by mutual agreement. If that agreement is not possible, the GHSAA Executive Director will finalize the arrangements. If an administrator does not attend the meeting at which the playoff contract is negotiated, the coach shall be authorized by the Principal to negotiate and sign a binding contract.

3. In **ALL Rounds** except the Finals, one half of all permanent and temporary seats shall be offered to the visiting team, and it is the responsibility of the home team to regulate the seating so as to guarantee designated seating to the visiting team's supporters.

4. In **ALL Rounds** except the Finals, there should be adequate parking space with a recommendation of one (1) space for every four (4) spectators.

5. In **ALL Rounds** except the Finals, security shall be provided at the site in the ratio of at least one officer per 500 spectators.

6. In **ALL Rounds** except the Finals, facilities for officials to dress, shower, and/or hold meetings shall be made available at the site or nearby.

7. It is **mandatory** to have emergency medical personnel at the site of **all football playoff games**.

8. **Playoff ticket prices** are as follows (NOTE: Only babies in arms do not need a ticket.):

First Round: \$8.00 (All classes)

Second Round: \$10.00 (All classes)

Quarterfinals: \$12.00 (All classes)

Semifinals: \$15.00 (All classes)

Championships: TBA

(a) Through the semifinal round, high school level students of the participating schools may purchase presale tickets at a discount of \$2 off regular price. Students may purchase one (1) ticket each from their schools at this discounted price.

(b) Certified staff members who work at the participating schools **ONLY** will be allowed free admission through the semifinal round with proper identification.

B. In order to host a **Semifinal Round** playoff game, a school must meet the following site requirements:

1. Permanent seating requirements:

(a) One seat equals 24 inches in width. Exception: each theatre style seat (with back and arm rests) will



## 2019-2020 GHSA Football

count as one seat regardless of the width of the seat.

(b) All seats must be at least 15 feet from playing field.

(c) Total seating capacity for each class is as follows:

- Class A.....2,000 seats
- Class 2A.....2,500 seats
- Class 3A.....3,000 seats
- Class 4A & 5A.....4,000 seats
- Class 6A & 7A.....6,000 seats

(d) Each principal of a school in the playoffs shall certify that the school stadium meets or does not meet football playoff requirements. If a principal certifies such information falsely, then \$2,000.00 of such school's share of the gate receipts of the contest held in the non-complying stadium shall be paid to the opposing team.

(e) The GHSA will mediate with both teams involved when there are concerns about the safety of a venue in regard to seating limitations.

(f) The **higher-seeded** team in the **Semifinal Round** will be the **host team**. If they do not have a stadium that meets GHSA minimum standards, they may secure a suitable site.

(g) The **higher-seeded** team may use portable seating to bring its home stadium seating capacity up to the GHSA minimum in order to host the game as long as (NOTE: Any portable seating brought in for games in earlier rounds also must meet these specifications):

- (1) The seating meets the standards of the industry and is installed by professional installers.
- (2) All seats provide clear sight lines to the field of play.
- (3) No costs for the temporary seating are taken out of game receipts.
- (4) Seating requirements for a semifinal game may be waived upon written agreement of the Principals of the competing schools that the host's stadium will be adequate and with the approval of the GHSA Executive Director.

(h) *If both teams in the **Semifinal Round** have the **same seeding**, the "universal" GHSA coin flip (see By-Law 4.39), will determine the host team under the following procedure:*

- (1) *The winner of the coin flip will have the opportunity to bring its stadium up to specifications as outlined in item "g" above, or to secure a suitable stadium (if their stadium does not meet GHSA specifications.)*
- (2) *The winner of the coin flip will have until 4:00 p.m., on the Monday before the game to commit to bringing their stadium up to specifications or to secure a suitable site.*
- (3) *If the winner of the coin flip can't secure a suitable site, or bring theirs up to specifications, the opponent will then be awarded the home game, assuming their stadium meets requirements.*
- (4) *If neither school meets or exceeds GHSA standards, and the winner of the coin flip can't find a suitable stadium or bring its stadium up to the specifications, the Executive Director will designate a neutral site.*

(i) The GHSA will provide a supervisor at all semifinal games.

2. The stadium shall have adequate working space in the **press box** as follows (NOTE: the first priority for access to the press box after the clock operator and the PA announcer is the working media):

- Classes A, 2A & 3A.....30 linear feet
- Class 4A.....40 linear feet
- Classes 5A, 6A & 7A.....50 linear feet

C. All **Championship Round** games will be played December 13 and 14, at Georgia State University. These games will be known as the "GHSA/Tommy Guillebeau Football Championships."

1. The expense and revenue shares by classification will be as follows:

7A - 17.5%, 6A - 15%, 5A - 15%, 4A - 13%, 3A - 12%, 2A - 11.5%, A (public & private) - 16% (8% each)

2. The schedule for the championship games will be four games on Friday and four games on Saturday.

D. Financial Procedures:

1. Total game receipts will include all revenue from ticket sales plus any payments for radio or television broadcasting, and will not include money from the sale of programs and concessions.

2. All band chaperones and other support personnel must have tickets.



## 2019-2020 GHSFA Football



12

3. The division of game receipts will be handled as follows:

(a) From the gross receipts:

(1) Twelve percent (12%) will be sent to the GHSFA Office along with a financial report. Each Football Financial Report Form shall include the number of spectators admitted with a GHSFA pass, along with a copy of the sign-in sheets listing the names and numbers of the passes used.

(2) The visiting team shall receive reimbursement for travel expenses in the amount of \$5.00 per mile (one way) taken from the game receipts and guaranteed by the host school. NOTE: If the game is played at a neutral site, both teams will be reimbursed for mileage.

(3) The game officials shall be paid.

(4) The HOST school shall receive a fee of 7% of the gross gate receipts.

(b) After the items in Section "a" above have been paid, the remainder shall be divided equally between the two teams.

(c) Local service charges, stadium charges, lights, cost of operating personnel, etc., are not to be deducted prior to the division of funds, and are considered a part of the expenses of the host school.

4. Broadcasting procedures are handled as follows:

(a) The GHSFA office will process radio contracts in all rounds of the playoffs. The fee schedule and regulations for radio broadcasts may be found in the Broadcast section 2.80.

(b) Outlets wishing to televise or webcast football games must contact the GHSFA office for contract terms, fees and conditions.

5. Financial arrangements for the championship games are designated by the GHSFA Executive Committee.

E. Game officials will be assigned by the GHSFA Office in all playoff rounds. Officiating crews shall include seven (7) field officials, clock operators, and chain crew.

## 2019 GHSFA Football Camp Waiver Instructions

---

### Football

Summer Camps must be in compliance with all requirements and director must submit documents demonstrating compliance.

- A minimum of four (4) teams must be present at all times. If a team withdraws or doesn't attend, shoulder pads are not allowed. Shoulder Pad usage with only one team is an illegal practice.
- List all school teams attending the camp. Submit name of each Head Coach and his cell phone number.
  - Changes to camp roster (List of teams) MUST be reported to Kevin Giddens @ the GHSFA. kevin@ghsa.net 706-647-7473, x 25 or cell # 229-529-4410.
  - Submit number of days each school team will be attending this camp.
- No school team may attend more than three (3) Summer Contact Camps (maximum total of 6 days). All Football players must have five (5) days acclimatization prior to their first camp of the summer.
- If a camp is held before the Dead Week, all football players must have additional two (2) days acclimatization before attending any camp after the Dead Week.
- Teams not attending a camp prior to the Dead Week must meet the five (5) day acclimatization requirement before attending their initial camp.



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



13

- Team camps during the Dead Week are strictly prohibited.
- No camps are allowed after July 24.
- Girdle pads, knee pads, thigh pads may not be worn by football players.
- If compression shorts are worn, no pads may be made into the garments, or stuck beneath the garment.
- “Thud” contact is allowed. No “Full Live Action” is allowed.
  - No player may be intentionally taken to the ground. A quick whistle is demanded.
  - “Thud” contact is not allowed for more than two (2) consecutive days; no more than 45 minutes per day and no more than 135 minutes per week for an individual player.
  - “Control, Bag and Air” are not limited. See GHSAA definitions for these activities (Page 70, Section 5, Football, D-3 a).
  - School teams attending out of state camps MUST comply with all GHSAA contact regulations.
  
- All GHSAA Heat and Humidity Policies (p38-39) and severe weather policies must be followed. (By- Law 2.67).
  - Trainers must take Wet Bulb Globe Temperature readings at required intervals.
  
- The school/organization seeking a waiver must provide the following:
  - A schedule of camp activities with a specific description of the nature of the drills and the time of day/duration of the drills; show times of “Thud” activity.
  - A specific accounting of medical staff supervising these activities.
  - A list of coaches supervising the activities at the camp.
  - Documentation regarding insurance coverage on the participants.
  - The Application Form (link below) must be sent to Kevin Giddens at kevin@ghsa.net in the GHSAA Office, and if approved by GHSAA Executive Director Robin Hines, a written response will be sent to applicant.

**Summer Padded Football Camp Form and Waiver can be found at:**

**[Football Summer Padded Camp Form](#)**



## 2019-2020 GHSA Football



14

### Practice Policy for Heat and Humidity:

(a) Schools must follow the statewide policy for conducting practices and voluntary conditioning workouts (this policy is year-round, including during the summer) in all sports during times of extremely high heat and/or humidity that will be signed by each head coach at the beginning of each season and distributed to all players and their parents or guardians. The policy shall follow modified guidelines of the American College of Sports Medicine in regard to:

- (1) The scheduling of practices at various heat/humidity levels.
- (2) The ratio of workout time to time allotted for rest and hydration at various heat/humidity levels.
- (3) The heat/humidity levels that will result in practice being terminated.

(b) A scientifically-approved instrument that measures the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature must be utilized at each practice to ensure that the written policy is being followed properly. WBGT readings should be taken every hour, beginning 30 minutes before the beginning of practice.

### WBGT ACTIVITY GUIDELINES AND REST BREAK GUIDELINES

Under 82.0 Normal Activities - Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 3 minutes each during the workout.

82.0 - 86.9 Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; watch at-risk players carefully. Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 minutes each.

87.0 - 89.9 Maximum practice time is 2 hours. For Football: players are restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice, and all protective equipment must be removed during conditioning activities. If the WBGT rises to this level **during** practice, players may continue to work out wearing football pants without changing to shorts. For All Sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 minutes each.

90.0 - 92.0 Maximum practice time is 1 hour. For Football: no protective equipment may be worn during practice, and there may be no conditioning activities. For All Sports: There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice.

Over 92.0 No outdoor workouts. Delay practice until a cooler WBGT level is reached.

(c) Practices are defined as: the period of time that a participant engages in a coach-supervised, school-approved sport or conditioning-related activity. Practices are timed from the time the players report to the practice or workout area until players leave that area. If a practice is interrupted for a weather-related reason, the "clock" on that practice will stop and will begin again when the practice resumes.

(d) Conditioning activities include such things as weight training, wind-sprints, timed runs for distance, etc., and may be a part of the practice time or included in "voluntary workouts."

(e) A walk-through is not a part of the practice time regulation, and may last no longer than one hour. This activity may not include conditioning activities or contact drills. No protective equipment may be worn during a walk-through, and no full-speed drills may be held.

(f) Rest breaks may not be combined with any other type of activity and players must be given unlimited access to hydration. These breaks must be held in a "cool zone" where players are out of direct sunlight.

(g) When the WBGT reading is over 86, ice towels and spray bottles filled with ice water should be available at the "cool zone" to aid the cooling process AND cold immersion tubs must be available for the benefit of any player showing early signs of heat illness. *In the event of a serious EHI, the principal of "Cool First, Transport Second" should be utilized and implemented by the first medical provider onsite until cooling is completed (core temperature of 103 or less).*



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



15

### **GHSAA Concussion Policy and SB 60, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act**

(a) **GHSAA Concussion Policy:** In accordance with Georgia law and national playing rules published by the NFHS, any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest and shall not return to play until an appropriate health care professional has determined that no concussion has occurred. (NOTE: An appropriate health care professional may include: licensed physician (MD/DO) or another licensed individual under the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management).

(1) No athlete is allowed to return to a game or practice on the same day that a concussion (1) has been diagnosed OR (2) cannot be ruled out.

(2) Any athlete diagnosed with a concussion shall be cleared medically by an appropriate health care professional prior to resuming participation in any future practice or contest. The formulation of a gradual return to play protocol shall be a part of the medical clearance.

(3) It is mandatory that every coach in each GHSAA sport (including Community Coaches, Student Teachers, and Interns) participate in a free, online course on concussion management prepared by the NFHS and available at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com) at least every two years.

(4) Each school will be responsible for monitoring the participation of its coaches in the concussion management course, and shall keep a record of those who participate.

(5) Each school must distribute to every athlete and his/her parent/guardian an information sheet that includes: the dangers of concussion injuries, the signs/symptoms of concussion, and the concussion management protocol outlined in this by-law. This sheet must be signed by the parent/guardian of each athlete and a copy kept on file at the school.

(b) **SB 60, Jeremy Nelson and Nick Blakely Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act:** *In accordance with Georgia law:*

(1) *Each school must distribute to every athlete and his/her parent/guardian an information sheet that includes: the Early Warning Signs, How to Recognize Sudden Cardiac Arrest, and Learn Hands-Only CPR outlined in this by-law. This sheet must be signed by the parent/guardian of each athlete, each athlete and a copy kept on file at the school.*

(2) *Each school must hold an informational meeting twice per year regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest. At such informational meeting, an information sheet on sudden cardiac arrest symptoms and warning signs shall be provided to each student's parent or guardian. In addition to students, parents or guardians, coaches, and other school officials, such informational meetings may include physicians, pediatric cardiologists, and athletic trainers.*



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



16

### General GHSAA Constitution and By Laws

It is your responsibility to read and have a working knowledge of the information presented in the GHSAA Constitution and By-Laws tabled below and can be found at:

<https://www.ghsa.net/sites/default/files/documents/Constitution/Constitution19-20Completecx2.pdf>

#### **BY-LAW SECTION 1.00**

##### **STUDENT**

- By-Law 1.10 - Certification of Eligibility
- By-Law 1.20 - Enrollment and Team Membership
- By-Law 1.30 - Age
- By-Law 1.40 - Limits of Participation
- By-Law 1.50 - Scholastic Standing / Scholarship
- By-Law 1.60 - School Service Areas / Transfer / Migrant Student
- By-Law 1.70 - Recruiting / Undue Influence
- By-Law 1.80 - Financial Aid
- By-Law 1.90 - Amateur Status / Awards

#### **BY-LAW SECTION 2.00**

##### **SCHOOL**

- By-Law 2.10 - School Membership to GHSAA
- By-Law 2.20 - Administrative Responsibilities
- By-Law 2.30 - Eligibility Reports Filed By The School
- By-Law 2.40 - Student Retention for Athletic Activities
- By-Law 2.50 - Qualifications to Coach
- By-Law 2.60 - Interscholastic Contests and Practices (Heat and Concussion policies)
- By-Law 2.70 - Sportsmanship
- By-Law 2.80 - Media and Filming Regulations
- By-Law 2.90 - Regulations of Competitions

#### **BY-LAW SECTION 3.00**

##### **REGION**

- By-Law 3.10 - Region Authority
- By-Law 3.20 - Region Responsibilities to State Association
- By-Law 3.30 - Region Financial Obligations to State Association

#### **BY-LAW SECTION 4.00**

##### **STATE**

- By-Law 4.10 - GHSAA Administrative Responsibilities to Member Schools
- By-Law 4.20 - Reclassification
- By-Law 4.30 - State Association Contest / Event Responsibilities
- By-Law 4.40 - State Passes to GHSAA Events
- By-Law 4.50 - Certification of Athletic Officials
- By-Law 4.60 - Special GHSAA Policies





## **2019 NFHS FOOTBALL RULES CHANGES**

BY STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTION, USE OF VIDEO REVIEW ALLOWED FOR STATE POSTSEASON CONTESTS [1-3-7 NOTE (NEW), TABLE 1-7 – 1-3-7 NOTE (NEW)] Rationale: By state association adoption, instant replay may only be used during state postseason contests to review decisions by the on-field game officials. This adoption would allow state associations to develop protocols for use of video replay. **There will be no video review in any GHSAA games. Regular Season or Playoffs.**

IMPROVED VISIBILITY OF NUMBERS [1-5-1c, 1-5-1c(6) (NEW)] Rationale: The purpose of numbers on jerseys is to provide clear identification of players. In order to enhance the ability to easily identify players, the committee has clarified the size requirements for jersey numbers through the 2023 season. The committee also added a new requirement that, effective in the 2024 season, jersey numbers must be a single solid color that clearly contrasts with the body color of the jersey.

REDEFINED REQUIREMENTS FOR A LEGAL SCRIMMAGE FORMATION (2-14-1, 7-2-5a) Rationale: A legal scrimmage formation now requires at least five offensive players on their line of scrimmage with no more than four backs. This change will make it easier to identify legal and illegal offensive formations.

40-SECOND PLAY CLOCK (2-35-1, 3-6-1, 3-6-2a, 7-2-1) Rationale: To have a more consistent time period between downs, the rules committee approved situations where 40 seconds will be placed on the play clock. The new rule defines when 40 seconds will be placed on the play clock and when 25 seconds will be placed on the play clock.

PROHIBITION ON TRIPPING THE RUNNER [2-45, 9-4-3o (NEW), 9-4-3o PENALTY (NEW)] Rationale: In an effort to decrease risk, tripping the runner is now prohibited. It is now a foul to intentionally use the lower leg or foot to obstruct a runner below the knees.

ILLEGAL KICKING AND BATTING PENALTY REDUCED (6-2-1 PENALTY, 9-7 PENALTY) Rationale: The penalty for illegally kicking or batting the ball was reduced from 15 yards to 10 yards.

HORSE-COLLAR TACKLE ADDITION (9-4-3k) Rationale: Grabbing the name plate area of the jersey of the runner, directly below the back collar, and pulling the runner to the ground is now an illegal personal contact foul.



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



18

### **2019 POINTS OF EMPHASIS**

#### **Proper Procedures for Weather Delays**

At some point during the high school football season, many parts of the country have to address weather issues. Some of these, according to NFHS guidelines, dictate a suspension/ delay during a game. Most of the time, the delay is due to lightning and thunder (either lightning seen or thunder heard); and when a suspension or delay occurs, the teams are sent to a safe, sheltered area until the weather situation has ended. NFHS guidelines on handling lightning and thunder delays require use of the 30-minute rule, meaning when the game has been suspended, play cannot resume until at least 30 minutes have elapsed following the last sighting of lightning or the sound of thunder. Once the game is suspended, each further instance of lightning or thunder requires a reset of the clock and the commencement of a new 30-minute interval. Seldom is there a problem with game officials or site administrators following the basic 30-minute rule when there is lightning or thunder. However, some game officials and administrators are not abiding by the mandatory halftime intermission and warm-up rule when there is a lightning delay near the end of the first half. If there is such a delay late in the second period, once the second period is completed, NFHS playing rules require a halftime intermission of at least 10 minutes followed by the required 3-minute warm-up period before the third period may begin. Coaches or game officials cannot shorten the halftime intermission or the warm-up period. However, both coaches could agree to shorten (end) the second period during the delay, and then the third period could start after the delay as soon as the mandatory warm-up period is completed. It is important for game officials, coaches and administrators to be aware of the halftime intermission and warm-up rules on nights when the weather could present delays and to administer those NFHS football rules correctly.

#### **Free-Blocking Zone and Legal Blocking**

The free-blocking zone is a rectangular area established when the ball is snapped. It extends 4 yards laterally on either side of the ball, and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage. Blocking below the waist and blocking in the back may be permitted in the free-blocking zone provided that certain conditions are met. Offensive and defensive linemen may block each other below the waist in the free-blocking zone provided that all players involved in the blocking are on their line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone at the snap, and the ball is in the zone. Each team's line of scrimmage is a vertical plane through the point of the ball closest to that team's goal line. Offensive linemen may block defensive players in the back in the free-blocking zone as long as the blocker is on his line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone at the snap, the opponent is in the free-blocking zone at the snap, and the contact is in the zone. To determine whether blocking below the waist and blocking in the back are legal, game officials must first determine whether players are in the free-blocking zone at the snap. Since offensive linemen are in the zone if any part of their body is in the zone at the snap, game officials must check the spacing between offensive linemen. As long as the line is using "normal" splits and the formation is "balanced" (i.e., the distance between the outside foot of each lineman and the inside foot of the adjacent linemen is no greater than 2 feet and an equal number of linemen are on each side of the snapper), all players, including the tight end, are deemed to be in the zone at the snap. If the splits are wider than 2 feet, the tight end is considered out of the zone and therefore cannot legally block below the waist or in the back. Once game officials determine which players are in the zone at the snap, the next determination is whether a block below the waist or a block in the back



## 2019-2020 GHSA Football



19

occurs in the freeblocking zone. Because the free-blocking zone disintegrates once the ball leaves the zone, it may be difficult to determine whether the ball is in the zone at the time the block occurs when the offense is using a “shotgun” formation (a formation where there is no direct hand-to-hand snap and the player who receives the snap is more than 3 yards behind his line of scrimmage), due to the very short time interval between the snap and the ball leaving the zone. In addition to observing blocking by offensive linemen, game officials must also be alert to defenders “cutting” running backs and wide receivers who are not on their line of scrimmage or in the free-blocking zone at the snap. Restrictions on blocking below the waist apply equally to offensive and defensive players. Finally, offensive players in the backfield can never legally block below the waist or in the back



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



20

All of the below forms can be found at <https://www.ghsa.net/forms>

### **FOOTBALL FORMS**

Contract - Football Games  
Contract - Football Playoff Games  
Football Playoff Financial Report  
Football Quarterfinal Financial Report  
Football Semifinals Financial Report  
Football Schedule Form  
Football Schedule Information  
Instruction Sheet for Football Playoffs  
Football Stadium Review Form  
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Form  
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Meeting Sign-In Form  
Preparticipation Physical History and Evaluation Form  
Preparticipation Physical History and Evaluation Form (Spanish)  
Preparticipation Physical History Supplement - Athletes with Disabilities  
Unsatisfactory Officiating Report

### **ELIGIBILITY FORMS**

(Note: Paper Form A and Form B submissions are no longer accepted - please submit online on the GHSAA MIS website)

Form A (PDF) (Word)  
Form B (PDF) (Word)  
Form C (PDF) (Word)  
Form D (PDF) (Word)  
Form MT (PDF) (Word)  
Hardship Application  
Hardship Application - Response From Sending School  
Foreign Exchange Programs – Approved List  
Withdrawal Notice  
Welcome Notice



2019-2020 GHSA Football



21

## OFFICIAL GHSA FOOTBALLS

**Football** WILSON  
Model F1003, F1005, or GST  
Prime



[Wilson Website](#)



## 2019-2020 GHSAA Football



22

### RE: GoFan Digital Ticket Sales

In preparing your financial reports for **GHSAA State Playoffs in all sports**, this is a reminder to you that **GoFan Digital Ticket sales are part of your total gate**. The playoff forms for all sports have a separate line item for you to show the # of digital tickets sold and the resulting gate income. GoFan furnishes a report to GHSAA for all playoff games at all member schools showing the # of digital tickets sold – please make sure your financial report reflects that information.

If for any reason, the # of GoFan tickets are not shown on your playoff financial reports and included in the total gate revenue, GHSAA will invoice you for the GHSAA portion of the gate proceeds relating to digital tickets and a notice to pay your visiting team their portion of the omitted gate proceeds as well. **It will be easier for all if you include your digital tickets on the original financial report sent to GHSAA.**

Please do not hesitate to contact the GHSAA office if you have questions concerning the digital ticket program.