

BY-LAW ARTICLE XXI

Football

Boys

Sect. 1: Football shall be administered by the NHIAA Football Committee and the rules of the National Federation will govern the sport when applicable.

Sect. 2: Medical Coverage

- A. A **licensed** physician, trainer, or emergency medical technician must be provided by the host school and in attendance and on duty for all interscholastic football jamborees, scrimmages, and games for all levels, varsity and sub-varsity, during the regular season and all tournament round games.
- B. Medical coverage, as stated under By-Law Article III, Sect. I, must be provided for all levels of practice (varsity and sub-varsity) involving player contact.
- C. The medical person shall be responsible for both teams unless the visiting school has its own physician, trainer, or emergency medical technician.
- D. The judgment of the medical person will be final with regard to the medical condition of a player. No player may continue to play against the medical person's advice.
- E. The penalty for violation of this provision is forfeiture of the game and possible disciplinary action by the Football Committee.

Note: Student trainers, high school or college, cannot be used to meet the provisions of this By-Law.

Sect. 3: General Regulations

- A. Football will not be permitted in the NHIAA member schools from the Sunday following Thanksgiving until the opening date of practice in the fall. A player must participate in six (6) practice days before participating in a football game, scrimmage, or jamboree. (Waiver Division I 2026-27) (CM 1.24; 11.24)
- B. All fall schedules shall be submitted to the Executive Director by July 27th.
- C. The NHIAA and the Football Committee shall be notified at the first opportunity concerning postponement of a regularly scheduled football game, together with the intention to reschedule.
- D. The home team in all football games will accept responsibility for the organization and administration of the half-time program. This program shall be conducted within the time limits established by the rules of the game.
- E. Playing Rules:
 - 1. All high school football games played in New Hampshire will be played in accordance with the National Federation playing rules.
 - 2. Uniforms: The higher seeded team will wear dark colored uniforms and the lower seeded team will wear light colored uniforms.
 - 3. Scrimmages: It is recommended that all interschool football scrimmages (sub-varsity included) be officiated by at least one (1) certified football official.
- F. Practice Requirements
(Per BLA III: Sports Medicine; Sect. 12 Pre-season Acclimatization and WBGT Guidelines)

Day	Practice Type	Rest Requirements	Contact Restrictions	Equipment Allowed
Day 1	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1-hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	No contact	Helmet only
Day 2	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1-hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	No contact	Helmet Only
Day 3	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. 1 hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Contact with sleds and dummies, & shields	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Day 4	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1-hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Contact with sleds and dummies. Limited player to player contact, & shields	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Day 5	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1-hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Contact with sleds and dummies. Limited player to player contact, & shields	Helmet and Shoulder Pads
Day 6	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact No Scrimmages	Full Pads

Day 7	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1-hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 8	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 9	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1-hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 10	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 11	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1-hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 12	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 13	One practice up to 3 hours in length permitted. One 1-hour walk-through permitted.	Minimum of 3 hours between practice/walkthrough or walkthrough and practice	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads
Day 14	Double sessions allowed. 5 hours of practice limit. No single practice can exceed 3 hours.	Minimum of 3 hours rest between practices	Full Contact Scrimmages allowed	Full Pads

- **Scrimmages are limited to no more than two (CM 1.19)**

Definitions

“Practice” is defined as the time a participant engages in physical activity. Warm-up, stretching, cool down activities and weightlifting are to be included as part of practice time. Meetings and film study do not count towards practice activities.

“Walkthrough” is defined as a teaching opportunity with no intense physical activity and no contact. Helmets are permitted to be worn and the use of footballs is permitted. A walkthrough cannot be longer than 1 hour in duration.

“Rest Period” is defined as the time between the end of a walkthrough/practice and the beginning of the next walkthrough/practice. During this time, no physical activity is permitted.

“Scrimmage” is defined as any action which simulates any game play conditions (1v1 through 11v11) where members of one school would be organized against members of one or more schools.

“Limited player to player contact” is defined as contact within drills and individual periods at half speed i.e., fit and shed drill, form tackle drill

“Day Off” The 14-day acclimatization period is 14 practice/scrimmage days, not calendar days.

14-day Acclimatization Period begins first day of practice. (CM 1.19)

Sect. 4: Divisional Alignment

Football shall be aligned into four (4) divisions based upon enrollments and petitions subject to the approval of the Classification Committee.

Division I (850 +) 21 Schools					
<u>West</u>		<u>Central</u>		<u>East</u>	
Nashua South	1697	Pinkerton	2979	Portsmouth-Oyster River	1779
Nashua North	1545	Concord	1329	Dover	1423
Bedford	1367	Londonderry	1219	Spaulding	1346
Keene	1263	Man. Central	1106	Man. Memorial	1345
Goffstown	1032	Salem	1069	Exeter	1329
Merrimack	1013	Alvirne	955	Winnacunnet	988
*Bishop Guertin	767	Windham	884	Timberlane	934

Division II (550-849) 16 Schools

<u>East</u>		<u>West</u>	
Kingswood	727	Man. West	756
Pembroke	718	Hollis Brookline	713
Merrimack Valley	715	Souhegan	709
Plymouth	643	Hanover	693
Bow	639	John Stark	657
Kennett	612	Milford	613
*Trinity	345	Con-Val	603
*St. Thomas Aquinas	341	*Pelham	466

Division III (406-549) 12 Schools

*Lebanon	642	Gilford	442
Laconia	543	Inter-Lakes-Moultonborough	434
Bishop Brady-Hopkinton	536	Sanborn	433
Epping-Newmarket	491	Somersworth	411
Kearsarge	485	*Campbell	337
Monadnock	475	Stevens	432

Division IV (1-405) 8 Schools

*Fall Mountain	430	Hillsboro-Deering	340
*Prospect Mountain	408	Raymond	326
Farmington-Nute	382	Mascoma	317
Newfound	368	Newport-Mount Royal	311

Sect. 5: Criteria of Play

No school may play another school more than once during the regular season except when the number of schools in a division is eight (8) or less after petitions, then a school may play one other school twice during the regular season. Thanksgiving Eve/Thanksgiving Day games are to be submitted on your original schedule. However, Thanksgiving Eve/Thanksgiving Day games will not count toward your maximum/minimum number of games nor will they be counted in the standings. **Exception Division I teams not qualifying for the postseason, wishing to play an additional game may do so the first weekend of the football postseason.** However, these games will not count toward our maximum/minimum number of games nor will they be counted in the standings. (Waiver CM 1.26)

Sect. 6: Tournament Selection will be based on:

- Division I:
 1. The team in each conference (West, Central, East) with the best Football Point Rating for the regular season will be the conference champions. These teams will be seeded 1st, 2nd, or 3rd based on their point rating.
 2. The next ten teams with the best Football Point Rating in the Division will be selected to compete in the preliminary round. These teams will be seeded 4-13 based on their point rating.
 3. The bracket will follow By-Law Article I: Policy, Sect. 16: Tournament Pairings.
 - Division II (CM 1.24):
 1. The team in each conference (East and West) with the best Football Point Rating for the regular season will be the conference champions. These teams will be seeded 1st or 2nd based on their point rating.
 2. The next six teams with the best Football Point Rating in the Division will be selected to compete in the quarterfinals. These teams will be seeded 3-8 based on their point rating.
 3. The bracket will follow By-Law Article I: Policy, Sect. 16: Tournament Pairings.
 - Division III (CM 5.26)
 1. The top eight teams with the best Football Point Rating in the Division will be selected to compete in the tournament. These teams will be seeded 1-8 based on their point rating.
 2. The bracket will follow By-Law Article I: Policy, Sect. 16: Tournament Pairings
 - Division IV (CM 5.20):
 1. The top four teams with the best Football Point Rating in the Division will be selected to compete in the tournament. These teams will be seeded 1-4 based on their point rating.
 2. The bracket will follow By-Law Article I: Policy, Sect. 16: Tournament Pairings
- Only games in division will count toward tournament selection prior to the Tie-Breaking Procedure.
- Non-divisional and out-of-state games DO NOT count in the standings for all divisions. These games will be utilized during the tie-breaking procedures if necessary; therefore, it will be necessary to manually report scores to the NHIAA.

Sect. 7: Tie Breaking Procedure

In the event of a tie for a tournament position, the Football Committee shall resolve the tie by using the following criteria (CM 5.18):

- A. If two schools are tied for a tournament position:
 - a. The winner of Head-to-Head competition will be selected.
 - b. The Football Point Rating System will be applied.
 - c. Football Point Rating against NHIAA divisional opponents selected for the tournament including all teams involved in a tie for the last position. Once the tournament teams have been selected, the teams that were tied for the last position are no longer used in breaking ties as they are not considered tournament teams.
 - d. Quality of wins against tournament teams in division including all teams involved in a tie for last position (ranking) **
 - e. Football Point Rating against divisional opponents on the road ***
 - f. Football Point Rating against divisional opponents at home.
 - g. Wins on the road regardless of division or state.
 - h. Wins at home regardless of division or state.
 - i. If teams are still tied, the team that defeated the highest NHIAA seeded team in their division (this includes both tournament and non-tournament teams) will be selected.
- B. If three (3) or more schools are tied for a tournament position:
 - a. The winner in head-to-head competition will be used if all schools involved in the tie have competed against each other.
 - b. The Football Point Rating System will be applied.
 - c. Football Point Rating against NHIAA divisional opponents selected for the tournament including all teams involved in a tie for the last position. Once the tournament teams have been selected, the teams that were tied for the last position are no longer used in breaking ties as they are not considered tournament teams.
 - d. Quality of wins against tournament teams in division including all teams involved in a tie for last position (ranking) **
 - e. Football Point Rating against divisional opponents on the road ***
 - f. Football Point Rating against divisional opponents at home.
 - g. Wins on the road regardless of division or state.
 - h. Wins at home regardless of division or state.
 - i. If teams are still tied, the team that defeated the highest NHIAA seeded team in their division (this includes both tournament and non-tournament teams) will be selected.

** Ranking is defined as the total number of wins by beaten opponents in division that qualify for the tournament against other tournament teams divided by the total number of games against tournament opponents. Example: If you played eight tournament teams and you beat three of them, you would add the wins against tournament teams of those three beaten opponents. You would then divide that total by the number of tournament opponents played by all eight of the tournament teams you have played.

***On the road – means games scheduled as “away” games.

Sect. 8: Football Rating System

The point rating system that will be used to break ties for playoff seeding purposes:

10 points per win

Out-of-state games and out of Division will not be rated

Opponents' Value earned as a result of wins or ties by opponents who were beaten or tied by a school:

	WIN	TIE
Beaten opponent	2	1
Tied opponent	1	.5

The point rating of a school will be determined by adding the total of "own value" plus "opponents' value" and dividing by the number of games played by the school.

Sect. 9: Playoff Game Sites and Officials

- A. All playoff games, preliminary through semifinal, will be played at the site of the higher seeded school.
(CM 5.26)
- B. Final game venues will be determined by the NHIAA Football Committee.
- C. Officials for all playoff games will be selected by a committee composed of the Chairman of the Football Committee, the Supervisor of Football Officials and the Executive Director of the NHIAA.

Sect. 10: Awards

Official NHIAA championship and runner-up plaques, in addition to 45 team medals, will be awarded to the respective champion and runner-up teams in each division.