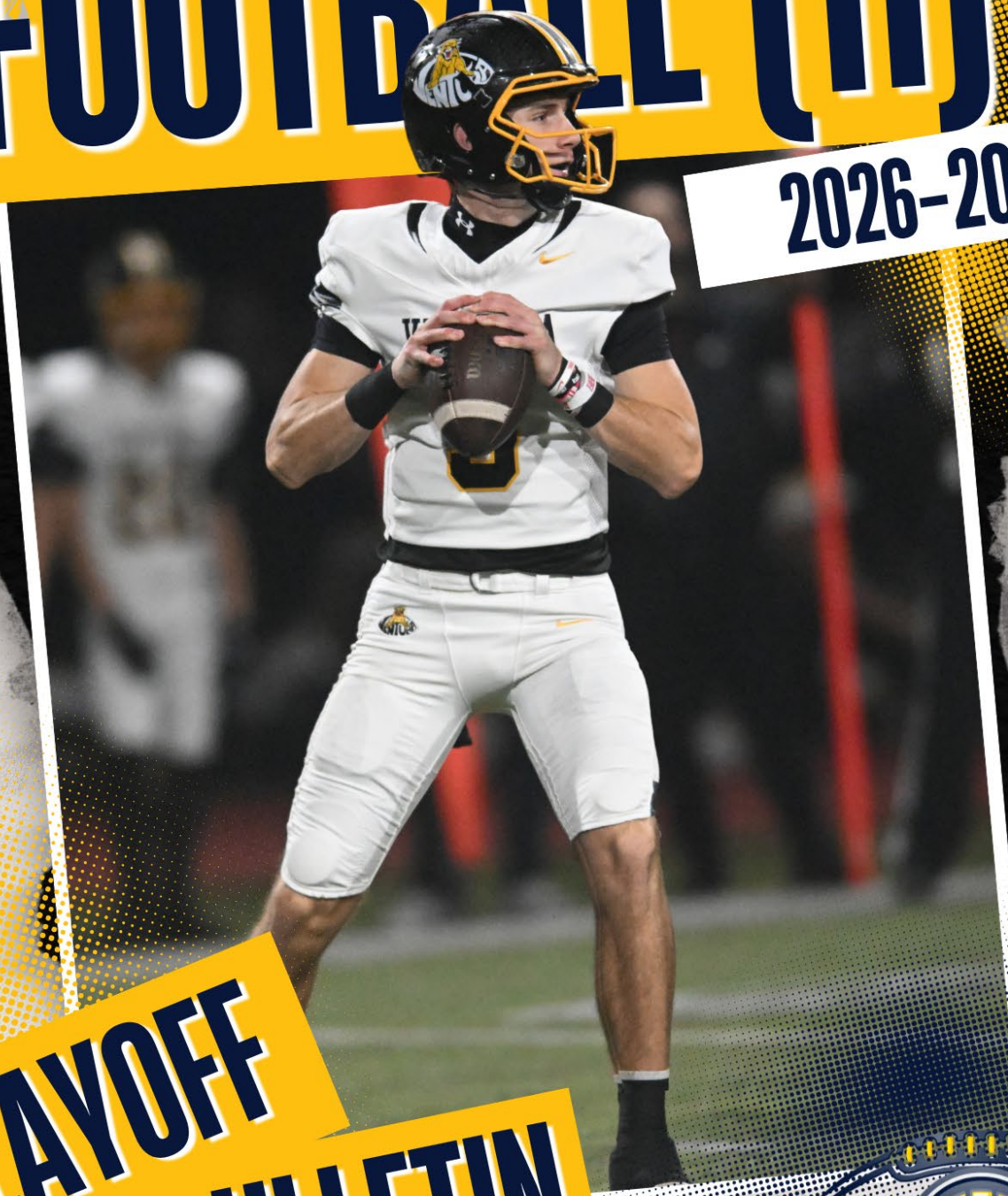
CIF SOUTHERN SECTION

FOOTBALL (11)

2026–2027



PLAYOFF BULLETIN

CIF Ford Southern Section Championships Est. 1913

GET REVVED UP

OMEGA

REVTECH
Redistributed weight provides 3-8% higher spin rate, equates to 60 more RPM's for better accuracy, velocity and distance on every throw.

RAPID BREAK-IN LEATHER
Pre-treated leather reduces break-in time for a softer feel and easier grip out of the box.

PRIME STITCHING
Middle finger and index finger stitching for throwing off-lace, quick release and ball security.

Learn more at wilson.com
Follow us @wilsonfootball

WHERE THERE'S FOOTBALL PRIDE. PROGRESS. PLAY.

OMEGA. BRINGING A NEW SPIN TO THE GAME.

ATTN: Championship Finals Athletic Directors/Football Coaches

FROM: Joe Hoggatt, Assistant Commissioner, Football Administrator
Cailey Sanchez-Collado, Program Coordinator to Joe Hoggatt

SUBJECT: 2026 CIF SOUTHERN SECTION FORD ~ CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

11-PERSON Football Playoff Brackets will be released on SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1,2026 AT 10:00 a.m.
At www.cifss.org

PLAYOFF CONTEST DATES

First Round .....November 6, 2026
Quarter Final Round .....November 13, 2026
Semi Finals ..... *November 20, 2026
Finals .....November 27 or 28, 2026

***ALL divisions must play their semifinal contests on Friday, November 20**

CIF State Regionals/Championships Opt Out Date .....*October 19, 2026
*Last Date to notify CIF State office your team is opting out of CIF State Regionals.
CIF State Regionals.....December 4 or 5, 2026
CIF State Championship Bowl Games.....December 11 or 12, 2026
For additional information on state regional and championship bowl games, visit www.cifstate.org.

COIN FLIP DATES

In an effort to give schools as much time as possible to prepare for football playoff contests, we will be announcing coin flips for home teams according to the following schedule.
Coin Flips results can be found on the Football page of the CIF website (https://cifss.org/sports/football-11/).

Quarterfinal Round.....Sunday, November 1, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.
Semi Finals .....Saturday, November 7, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.
Finals .....Saturday, November 14, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

CHAMPIONSHIP CONTEST SCHEDULE

This schedule is made to alleviate the conflict of all championship games being played on the same day.
It is hoped that advanced planning will assist and accommodate students, as well as the respective communities involved.
ALL CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS CONTESTS WILL BE PLAYED AT 7:00 P.M. UNLESS NOTED BELOW.

Division 1- Friday, November 27, 2026 – Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles
Division 2 through 14 – Schedule announced on Saturday, November 21st at www.cifss.org.
Games will be played on Friday, November 27 or Saturday, November 28 at 7:00 p.m.

STATE REGIONAL INFORMATION

CIF State Regional brackets will be released
on Sunday, November 29, 2026 at www.cifstate.org.

NOTE: Coaches are required to make film exchange arrangements with opponents an hour after pairings are released. (See page 22 on film exchange requirements).

Table of Contents

Calendar Playoff Dates/ Release/Coin Flip Schedule 3
CIFSS Home Requirements 5
Ball Program Memo 6
Playoff Information 7
Submitting an At-Large Application 7
At Large Selection 8
League Designation of Representatives 8
Playoff Checklist 9
Playoff Divisions/Pairings 9-11
Playoff Hosting Information 12-15
Go Fan/ Ticket/Admission Information 16-18
Courtesy Cards/Press Passes 18
Playoff Financial Policy 19-21
Bleacher Rental/Concessions/Programs 19
Travel Expenses/Meals/Lodging 21
Inclement Weather 21
Film Exchange 22
Playoff Jersey Color Requirements 23
Tie Breaker System 24
Mercy Rule 25
Officials Fees/Mileage 26
Protests 26
Media Information 27-28
Playoff Requirements (T.V., Web, Radio Rights, Souvenirs, Ticket, Banner, PA Announcements 29-32

CIFSSHOME REQUIREMENTS

SCHEDULES &SCORES **Complete your schedule in CIFSSHome prior to your season as well as update scores following each contest**
Attention Athletic Directors/Coaches: It is very important that you enter your entire season schedule into CIFSSHOME (www.cifsshome.org) as well as update the scores immediately following your contests.
Log in @ www.cifsshome.org (If you do not have a log in & password as a coach, check with your Athletic Director). Once you are logged in:
-On the left panel, click on "Teams", select "Football"
To **Add a game:**
- On the left panel, click on "Events", select "Add Event", choose Game under "Event Type", choose date of game under "Event Date", choose **Football** under "Sport", choose Varsity under "Level", type the opposing school name in "Add Opponent", choose the type of game under "Select Game Type", click on Home, Away or Neutral under "Location", choose "Start Time" Click on "Save" to add one game or "Save & Duplicate" for multiple games.
- To **Submit your score**:
- On the left panel, click on "Teams", select "Teams Manager", scroll down to **Football** and click on VR to add Varsity scores Click on "Post Result" button, enter your team's score, enter the opponent's score, result should auto populate with either "W", "L" or "T" based on the correct match score entered. If the game was a forfeit, click on the Yes box, enter the set scores in "Notes".

VARSITY COACHES
Attention Athletic Directors/Coaches: It is very important that you enter your Football coaches (Head & Assistants) into CIFSSHome (www.cifsshome.org) no later than MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2026 to ensure your coaches receive all pertinent emails from the CIF.
Log in @ **www.cifsshome.org** (If you do not have a log in & password as a coach, check with your Athletic Director).
- Click on the **"Users"** tab, click on "**User Manager**", click on the + in the upper right hand corner to add Coaches and Assistant Coaches.
Enter the information requested on the "Add School User" page. Choose "Active" to provide the coach with access to CIFSSHome or "Inactive" for directory purposes only. Choose Yes or No to give the coach access to all sport, click **Submit**.
Choose the applicable options on the Assign Coach to Team page, click Save or Add Another to add additional coach(s).

VARSITY TEAM INFORMATION (TEAM PHOTO) due no later than **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026.**
Log in @ **www.cifsshome.org** (If you do not have a log in & password as a coach, check with your Athletic Director).
- Click on the **"Teams"** tab, click "**Teams Manager**", click on "**Football"**, click on the "**Team Photo**" tab,
Click on the ✎ under "**TEAM PICTURE"**, choose the file, click **Submit.**

VARSITY TEAM INFORMATION (ROSTERS)
Attention Athletic Directors/Coaches: It is very important that you enter your entire Football Varsity roster into CIFSSHome (www.cifsshome.org) no later than WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026.

Log in @ **www.cifsshome.org** (If you do not have a log in & password as a coach, check with your Athletic Director).
- Click on the **"Teams"** tab, click on "**Teams Manager**", click on "**Football**", select VR
You can UPLOAD your roster using the instructions below (1) or you can enter each player one by one (2).
Required roster information for Football is:
First Name, Last Name, Birth date, Year, Number, Position, Height, Weight & Eligibility
(1) To ADD roster players one by one:
- Click on + Add Players One-by-One and complete fields required for Football.
(2) To Import a Roster using an Excel sample file:
- Download the sample file **and** delete the "contents only".
- Copy and paste or type your roster information into the file as the contents and save the file to your computer.
- Only an excel file (xls) can be uploaded that is the exact same format as the sample file.
- Columns for information not required for your sport may be left blank, but the HEADER INFORMATION MUST REMAIN EXACTLY AS THE SAMPLE.
- **Required Columns for Football are:**
First Name, Last Name, Birth date, Year, Number, Position, Height, Weight & Eligibility

- Click on to find your file, Choose File then click Import on
- To confirm the roster has been uploaded, your players' names will be uploaded in the "**Official Roster**" section.
- Click on the ✎ next to the player's name to view each player's information.

FOOTBALL 8 AT LARGE APPLICATION
Attention Athletic Directors/ Coaches: Please follow the instructions below to enter your school as an At Large Entry for Football.
The At Large Application is to be submitted by your school no later than SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2026 NO LATER THAN 11:00 P.M.
Log in @ www.cifsshome.org (If you do not have a log in & password as a coach, check with your Athletic Director).
Once you are logged in:
-On the left panel, click on the "Forms" tab, select "At Large Petition"
-Select "**Football**" from the drop down menu, then click "Add"
TEAMS MUST HAVE A .300 OR BETTER OVERALL RECORD TO MEET THE AT LARGE CRITERA (APPROVED 4.16.26 @ CIF COUNCIL MTG)

OFFICIAL FOOTBALL

OFFICIAL BALL - GST

APPROVED FOR PLAY- OMEGA

APPROVED FOR PLAY- GST PRIME

*BALL HAS BEEN DISCONTINUED

APPROVED FOR PLAY- GRT

Wilson

CONTACT: CRAIG KALB - CRAIG.KALB@WILSON.COM

CONTRACTED THROUGH: JUNE 30, 2031

*THE OFFICIAL BALL RULE IS MANDATORY FOR ALL CIF-SS PLAYOFF ROUNDS.

NFHS STAMP IS REQUIRED IN ALL SPORTS EXCEPT GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL, GOLF, TENNIS AND BEACH VOLLEYBALL.*

OFFICIAL BALL RULE:

SHOULD A SCHOOL FAIL TO PROVIDE THE CORRECT GAME BALL, THE GAME WILL ALWAYS BE PLAYED. TEAMS/SCHOOLS FAILING TO UTILIZE THE CORRECT OFFICIAL BALL IN CIF-SS PLAYOFFS WILL BE REPORTED BY OFFICIALS TO CIF-SS AND WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO HOST THEIR NEXT AVAILABLE HOME PLAYOFF GAME. PENALTY WILL CARRY OVER TO THE NEXT SEASON IF NOT ENFORCEABLE THIS SEASON DUE TO ELIMINATION.

PLAYOFF INFORMATION

CIF Southern Section games will be played under the 2026 National Federation Football Rules, except where superseded by Blue Book rulings or this Handbook/Playoff Bulletin.

The 2026 Football Playoffs will be conducted in 14 playoff divisions. Schools will be placed in their divisions based on the competitive equity format. (refer to Blue Book rule 3519).

PLAYOFF INFORMATION

11-Man Football Guaranteed Entries in all divisions:

Leagues of 4 or 5 teams will get 2 guaranteed entries.
Leagues of 6-8 teams will get 3 guaranteed entries.
Leagues of 9 or more teams will get 4 guaranteed entries.

(Blue Book Rule 3519) In the sport of Football, individual schools will be evaluated and placed into divisions on a yearly basis utilizing a formula based entirely on current regular season results. Final power rankings, and divisional placements, will be determined and released at the end of the current regular season. Seeding all playoff brackets in each division will follow the final power rankings in that division, regardless of league affiliation or league finish. For example, in the First Round, the #1 seed, determined by the final power rankings for that division, will play #16, the #2 seed will play #15, etc. The higher seeded team will host the first-round contest and then CIF Southern Section Bylaw 3504, Host Team After the First Round, will be followed for all subsequent contests.
Note: 3504.1 Teams receiving a bye in the first round shall be the host team in the next round of the playoffs.

11-Man Football At Large Entries in all divisions: :

At Large teams must have a .300 record or better for their complete schedules to be considered. A tie will count as a ½ win and ½ loss as the criteria for .500 or better record. (A record of 4-4-2 would be considered as qualifying). In the sport of football, in order to alleviate byes, if there are no .500 teams entered or all .500 or better teams have been taken, then the next highest rated sub .500 team with at least 3 wins in a divisional grouping will be selected. However, no team under .500 will be placed until all .500 at large entries have been placed.

CIF STATE REGIONAL PLAYOFF OPT-OUT PROCEDURE: Following the conclusion of the CIF Southern Section Championships on November 27/28, 2026, the State Regional and Championship games begin. All 14 CIF Southern Section Champions automatically advance to the Regional Championship games.

If you **DO NOT** want to participate in the State Regional/Championships you must submit an Opt-Out form to our office **no later than OCTOBER 19, 2026**

MANDATORY NOTICE REQUIREMENT

If a school elects to opt out of participation in the Regional Playoffs, the **Principal is REQUIRED to provide written notification to the Section Commissioner prior to the school's Section Semi-Final contest. Failure to comply will result in an automatic $1,000 fine and may trigger additional sanctions as determined by the CIF.**

11-MAN FOOTBALL AT LARGE SELECTION

The 11-Man Football At-Large Selection Committee will meet and the following criteria will be in place:

(1) At Large entry must be submitted in CIFSSHome (www.cifsshome.org) by 11:00 p.m., Friday, October 30, 2026.

(2) Schools submitting an at-large entry, MUST have a complete schedule and results in CIFSSHome (www.cifsshome.org) and verify the schedule and results listed at www.hsratings.com.

(3) At Large entries will be considered based on their CIF-SS Football (HSratings) rankings, filling Divisions 2-14 to 16 teams with Division 1 TBD.

REMINDER: All materials relating to at-large entries MUST be submitted to the CIF-SS office no later than **11:00 p.m. on Friday, October 30, 2026**. If material is not submitted, the team will not be under consideration, as the Selection Committee will have no statistical data from which to draw.

Attention Athletic Directors/ Coaches: Please follow the instructions below to enter your school as an At Large Entry for Football. The At Large Application is to be submitted by your school no later than Friday, October 30, 2026 @ 11:00 p.m.

Log in @ www.cifsshome.org (If you do not have a log in & password as a coach, check with your Athletic Director).

Once you are logged in:

-On the left panel, click on the "Forms" tab, select "At Large Petition", select "11-Man Football" then click "Add"

Please be sure that your Schedule is updated in CIFSSHome as this is where the information for the At Large Petition will be created.

LEAGUE DESIGNATION OF REPRESENTATIVES

Under the playoff format, leagues have the responsibility of developing and identifying the priority for their representatives into the playoffs as noted under Article 350 (Playoffs) of the CIF Southern Section Blue Book.

Leagues are guaranteed their appropriate number of entries into the Southern Section Championships, per current Southern Section Blue Book Rule 3514. The At-Large process outlined in the Football Playoff Bulletin will be used to select at-large teams to fill any byes in the draw or to eliminate teams from the draw, to create brackets for Divisions 1-14.

NOTE: If two or three automatic entry teams from the same league are tied at the end of league competition, they may all carry the same designation into their respective playoff division. For example, if School A and School B tie for their league's championship, they can both be designated as League #1 in their respective playoff divisions. However, leagues may not exceed their total allowable guaranteed entries regardless of what playoff division those schools would enter.

All league entries are to be submitted by 11:00 p.m., Friday October 30, 2026 through www.cifsshome.org. Automatic qualifiers will be posted for verification on Saturday, October 31, 2026. Corrections must be made by 1:00 p.m. on that date. No revision of league entries will be allowed after that time. Corrections should be made in www.cifsshome.org as well as notifying ned@hsratings.com.

It is critical for the accuracy of rankings and entries that school and league coordinators confirm their schedules/scores both at www.cifsshome.org and http://www.hsratings.com/. DO NOT wait until the end of the season to verify your information.

No revisions can be accepted after 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 31, 2026.

CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS CHECK LIST

	Item	Completed	Date
1.	Update Player Roster into www.cifsshome.org	_____	_____
2.	Uploaded team photograph into www.cifsshome.org	_____	_____
3.	Log into Gofan.co account to confirm accuracy	_____	_____
4.	Have field reserved in event of home game next round	_____	_____
5.	Pre-game planning with opponent	_____	_____
6.	Contact and confirm with Officials	_____	_____
7.	Secure Medical Coverage for Contest	_____	_____
8.	Provide PA Announcements to Announcer	_____	_____
9.	Arrange for Gatorade Coolers and Products	_____	_____
10.	Confirm CIF/Ford Championship Banner is hung in visible location_____	_____	

PLAYOFF DIVISIONS

The CIF Southern Section Football Playoffs shall be conducted in 14 playoff divisions. In 2026, all divisions will be 16-team brackets, with the exception of Division 1. Bracket size for Division 1 will be determined after the regular season has been completed.

It will be the responsibility of the Commissioner, and his staff to establish the pairings in each first round game for all divisions. Playoff groupings will be created using an average of the total number of automatic qualifiers across all the divisions. A playoff division will start with an automatic qualifier and include all teams until the automatic qualifier which begins the division below it. Once Automatic Qualifiers have been placed into a division, any remaining spots will go to the highest ranked, .500 or better at large teams in that grouping. If there are not enough .500 or better at large teams, then the highest rated sub .500 team(s), will be selected. The ranking of each team will be determined by a schools rating at the designated time Saturday afternoon, October 31, 2026.

The Division 1 representatives will be placed in the bracket and seeded one through the final team in the draw, as determined by the selection process. This will be regardless of league finish and designation. Division 2-14 Representatives will be placed in the bracket and seeded one through sixteen, as determined by the selection process. This will be regardless of league finish and designation. The higher seeded team, regardless of league finish, shall be the host school in the first round.

Important information to be considered regarding the formation of the 2026 playoff divisions:

1. Rankings for all teams will be determined at a designated time Saturday afternoon, October 31, 2026. Rankings will be taken from http://www.hsratings.com. As the rankings are dynamic, only these rankings, from that moment will be used. HS Ratings rounds to the nearest 10th in posting their rankings, however teams that are tied in rating, will be taken in the order posted on HS Ratings, as they will be put into order based on their true decimal rating, not reflected in the public number posted.
2. After all teams have been placed into division one, the next available automatic qualifier and all remaining teams after that will make up sixteen team brackets to form divisions 2-14.
3. With the recommendation of the 11-Man Football Advisory Committee, all divisions will start with an automatic qualifier, who will serve as the #1 seed in that division.
4. An average number of automatic qualifiers will be used to place teams into division. It is an average, with some divisions having more, and some less than the average depending on the order of automatic qualifiers and number of at-large teams in a grouping of teams. There are currently 180 automatic qualifiers for the 2026 season. (This number is subject to change based on participation of all teams during the league portion of our season.)
5. Once automatic qualifiers have been placed into a division, and pending space, any remaining sports will go to the highest ranked, at-large teams in that grouping. If there are not enough at-large. 500 teams, then the highest sub .500 team(s) will be taken.

A Sample Divisional Breakdown follows on the next two pages: The average number of automatic qualifiers per division is 13 for the example.

EXAMPLE 2026	AVG 13 AQ Per Division		
Team - Overall Rank	HS Ratings Ranking	Designation	Seed
Division 1		Potential 8 team bracket	
1		Automatic Qualifier	1
2		Automatic Qualifier	2
3		Automatic Qualifier	3
4		Automatic Qualifier	4
5		Automatic Qualifier	5
6		At-Large (6-4)	6
7		Automatic Qualifier	7
8		At-Large (6-4)	8
Division 2		16 Team Bracket	
9		Automatic Qualifier	1
10		At-Large (5-5)	2
11		At-Large (6-4)	3
12		Automatic Qualifier	4
13		At-Large (4-6)	
14		Automatic Qualifier	5
15		Automatic Qualifier	6
16		Automatic Qualifier	7
17		Automatic Qualifier	8
18		Automatic Qualifier	9
19		Automatic Qualifier	10
20		Automatic Qualifier	11
21		Automatic Qualifier	12
22		Automatic Qualifier	13
23		Automatic Qualifier	14
24		At-Large (4-6)	
25		At-Large (5-5)	15
26		Automatic Qualifier	16
27		At-Large (7-3)	
Division 3		16 Team Bracket	
28		Automatic Qualifier	1
29		Automatic Qualifier	2
30		Automatic Qualifier	3
31		At-Large (6-4)	4
32		At-Large (4-6)	
33		Automatic Qualifier	5
34		Automatic Qualifier	6
35		Automatic Qualifier	7
36		At-Large (6-4)	8
37		At-Large (5-5)	9
38		Automatic Qualifier	10

40		Automatic Qualifier	**12**
41		Automatic Qualifier	**13**
42		Automatic Qualifier	**14**
43		Automatic Qualifier	**15**
44		Automatic Qualifier	**16**
45		At-Large (6-4)	
46		At-Large (4-6)	
47		At-Large (7-3)	
48		At-Large (5-5)	
Division 4		16 Team Bracket	
49		Automatic Qualifier	**1**
50		Automatic Qualifier	**2**
51		Automatic Qualifier	**3**
52		Automatic Qualifier	**4**
53		At-Large (7-3)	**5**
54		Automatic Qualifier	**6**
55		Automatic Qualifier	**7**
56		Automatic Qualifier	**8**
57		Automatic Qualifier	**9**
58		Automatic Qualifier	**10**
59		Automatic Qualifier	**11**
60		Automatic Qualifier	**12**
61		Automatic Qualifier	**13**
62		Automatic Qualifier	**14**
63		Automatic Qualifier	**15**
64		Automatic Qualifier	**16**
65		At-Large (5-5)	
66		At-Large (6-4)	
Division 5			
67	18.3	Automatic Qualifier	**1**

In the example above, Division 1 was created using the top 8 teams and any at-large candidates before the next automatic qualifier.

19 Teams were considered for the 16 spots in Division 2. Team #25 was selected over sub .500 at-large teams #13 and #24. Team #27 was a .500 at-large, but was not included as the bracket was full. There are 13 automatic qualifiers and 3 at-large teams in Division 2

20 Teams were considered for the 16 spots in Division 3. At-large team #33 was passed over due to other .500 at-large teams being available at #37 and #38. There are 13 automatic qualifiers and 3 at large teams in Division 3.

18 Teams were considered for the 16 spots in Division 4. There are 15 automatic qualifiers and therefore room for only 1 at-large team in Division 4.

PLAYOFF HOSTING INFORMATION

DETERMINATION OF SITES

In the first round of the playoffs, the arrangement shall be as follows: The Commissioner shall match the teams for first-round playoff contests and the host school for these games shall be pre-determined by the Commissioner. Teams will be placed in the bracket and seeded as determined by their rating. The higher seeded team, regardless of league finish, shall be host school in the first round.

The decision of who shall be the host team after the first round of competition, is the responsibility of the Commissioner. In cases where two teams are paired after the first round of the playoffs, the team having the fewest number of host games in playoff competition in the entire draw, shall be designated as the host team. When both teams have had an equal number of host playoff contests, the Commissioner shall toss a coin to decide that host team. When a school has been designated as the host school for a playoff contest, it shall (1) act in that capacity unless excused by the Commissioner, and (2) be considered the host team regardless of where the game is being played.

The designation of "host" does not guarantee the game will be played at the host school's facility. It does designate the responsibility for management of the contest, which includes suggesting a site that will handle the anticipated crowd. A host school may use its home site facility if it can safely provide for the anticipated crowd. Approval of the site will be made by the Southern Section office, after taking into consideration input from the participating schools and evaluation of crowd sizes from previous years.

CIF-SS OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS

With limited time between each round of the playoffs, a tremendous strain is placed on the staff at the CIF-SS office, in arranging myriads of details connected with insuring a successful playoff season. Game sites must be established, officials secured, ticketing set up, press credentials issued, and press releases distributed. To expedite matters, our staff will be in the office on Saturday, November 7, Saturday, November 14 and Saturday, November 21 during the playoffs. Saturday office hours are 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.

With the numerous specifics involved in conducting playoffs, the host school MUST **SEEK APPROVAL FROM THE CIF-SS BY 3 P.M. MONDAY, AS TO THE EXACT SITE OF THE UPCOMING PLAYOFF CONTEST.** This deadline must be met for game officials to be assigned, information to be distributed to the press for advanced publicity and to allow ample time for field inspection, if necessary. As indicated earlier, schools are to have sites tentatively under reservation in advance, thus allowing for a quick answer by 3 p.m. each Monday.

PHYSICIAN

Medical coverage for all C.I.F. Southern Section Football Playoff games is defined by Blue Book Rule 2222.2: A licensed medical doctor, or the primary health provider designated by the home team as team physician or team doctor, shall be in attendance at all playoff games. The fee shall be paid from the gross game receipts.

PLANNING MEETING

Member schools, on occasion, have reported they have encountered problems in crowd control at night football games. In some instances, there have been fights, games suspended, reports of vandalism and serious problems in the parking lots. This again points up the extreme need for proper preparation and pre-game planning for all football playoff contests.

It is **required** that administrators from the two competing schools communicate to discuss details connected with the staging of the contest. Visiting students and supporters should be given detailed information regarding the best method of reaching the site of the contest, where to park, where to enter the stadium and where their allotted seats are located. The half-time entertainment, and all activities connected with the game, should be thoroughly worked out.

EQUAL FACILITIES

Although it is necessary that one team be designated as the host team, it shall be kept in mind that the game belongs equally to both competing schools. **A pre-game planning meeting must be held to cover all details connected with the staging of every playoff contest**.

Blue Book Rule 3516: The visiting school in dual team playoff contests is entitled to equal facilities, including one-half of the seating, locker rooms, phone lines, spotting facilities, etc.

If headphones are provided for one team, they must also be provided for the other team. If equal headphones cannot be provided, neither team may use the phones. The same principle of equal facilities applies to camera sites, dressing facilities, press box seats for spotters, etc.

The time period between the first and second half should be equally divided so that each school will have an opportunity to present its band and drill team. If one school does not wish to provide any half-time entertainment, it may relinquish its time. If mutually agreeable to both teams, the half-time period may be extended to 20 minutes.

PRESS BOX ACCOMMODATIONS

The host school is responsible for supervising proper accommodations in the press box. An adult should be assigned to handle this important function. Press box seats should be reserved for members of the news media. They have been advised to call ahead and reserve seats. Sometimes this is not possible and the person in charge of the press box should use sound logic in admitting bona fide members of the press to the Press Box.

Too often the press box loses its meaning when faculty members, friends, relatives, district personnel, board members, etc., occupy it. This is not the purpose of the press box. Schools are reminded of the importance of maintaining good public relations and are encouraged to cooperate fully with members of the media.

CHECK TIMER

The check timer for playoff games shall be a faculty member or responsible adult. The host team will supply a faculty timer. It is recommended that a sound device be used to denote the end of each period.

BALL

The NFHS rule book specifies that either a rubber covered, or leather covered football is legal. In cases where either school desires to use a different type of ball, each school will furnish its own ball for the game and there will be no charge made to game expenses. **Wilson is the official football of the CIF Southern Section. In all Championship Finals, a football for each team will be furnished by Wilson and the CIF Southern Section.**

CHEERING SECTIONS

Fan/Student cheering sections are encouraged to cheer and support their own team and should display proper sportsmanship with respect to the opposing team and the game officials. They are expected to follow the following guidelines and failure to do so may lead to removal from the contest and/or forfeiture of the contest.

1. No noisemakers (horns, bells, victory bells, sirens, chimes, wooden blocks, balloons, thunder sticks, etc.). Megaphones may only be used by the school's uniformed cheer squads.
2. Cheering devices such as rally towels, pom poms and pennants are acceptable when used within the bounds of good sportsmanship.
3. It is the expectation that cheering section behavior will be monitored by the assigned school staff of the school that they represent. All improper behavior/language should be addressed and corrected immediately by school staff supervisors.
4. Face painting is acceptable from the neck up only and shall not include any inappropriate letters or symbols. Assigned school staff shall monitor their cheering sections in regard to face painting.

If your school is fortunate enough to advance to the Championship Finals, there is an added responsibility that we ask of your administrations. Our Championship Finals are an intense experience for all involved, as they should be. However, with the passion brought by your school and your communities comes your obligation to assist us in maintaining proper control of all students and fans. Our action plan always includes working with your administration first for assistance with any issues that relate to your crowd. To effectively manage all aspects of these contests, we ask your school for the following…

1) Participating schools will provide the required number of faculty supervisors we request at the event and make sure to inform our staff when they are present.
2) Assist in briefing those supervisors before the start of your game on the responsibilities they have in maintaining proper control of your students and fans.
3) Strongly emphasize with all involved that there will be swift action taken against anyone who behaves inappropriately.
4) Assist us in acting against those who violate appropriate standards of behavior and sportsmanship.

A school's failure to monitor their students and fans may result in sanctions being placed against your school such as loss of future home playoff contests, payment for damages caused, etc. Be sure to review with your constituents the seriousness of these consequences so we may prevent any problems from occurring.

It is our hope that we can provide a memorable championship experience for all of our stakeholders and with your help and cooperation there is no doubt that will be accomplished.

PRE-GAME PREPARATION

1. Go to the official's dressing room or see the officials on the field. Get the proper pronunciation of their names and the positions they will work.

2. Go over the referee's signals with him and ask for any instructions he might have. It is up to you to interpret his signals to the crowd. If you have a person on the sidelines relaying information to you, explain this to the officials, so they can forward information about unusual rulings to you.

3. Go to each team and be sure you have the correct numbers and names of the players.

4. Be sure you have the proper starting line-up for each team. Coordinate the announcing of the starting line ups with any other pre-game activities (playing of the National Anthem) so that the game will start on time.

5. Check the accuracy of any information about the visiting team you plan on using before the game, or at halftime, with someone from that team. You should have done this for your own team during the week.

6. Always start your program by welcoming the crowd and introducing yourself. Example: "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Memorial Stadium, this is Earl Richard, your game announcer."

7. Give the line-ups at a moderate pace – not too fast, but especially not too slow. Start with the left and go across the line, then the running backs, receivers, and quarterback.

8. After you give the line-ups, give the names of the officials in this order – Referee, Umpire, Head Linesman, Field Judge, Back Judge.
9. Give the winner of the toss and the options the captains chose.

10. If the national Anthem is used, invite the crowd to sing. For example: "Ladies and Gentlemen, would you please rise and join our director Al Rhienke and the Eagle Band in singing our National Anthem."

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING SPORTSMANSHIP

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, CIF SOUTHERN SECTION PLAYOFF CONTESTS ARE CONDUCTED UNDER THE STRICTEST CODE OF GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP…THE OFFICIALS ARE NEUTRAL, REPRESENTING THE COMMISSIONER, AND ARE SELECTED BECAUSE OF DEMONSTRATED ABILITY…SPECTATORS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUPPORT THEIR OWN TEAM, AND ARE REQUESTED TO DISPLAY PROPER SPORTSMANSHIP WITH RESPECT TO THE OPPOSING SCHOOL AND THE OFFICIALS…THE CIF SOUTHERN SECTION THANKS YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS…

2026
CIF-SOUTHERN SECTION FOOTBALL TICKETS

Through the CIF Southern Section's partnership with GoFan, ALL PLAYOFF TICKETS will be available online for digital purchase and presented electronically at the event gate for validation and entry.

Host school game management has shifted away from ticket sales TO ticket promotion prior to the event AND ticket validation at each entry point of the playoff event. Host schools will have access to live sales data via their Go Fan HQ account as well as the ability to manage and promote their events.

Venue capacity management is extremely important as each event (host, visitor, public and private) will have an assigned capacity available for purchase/entry. Each member school will be required to validate their gymnasium and stadiums capacities in CIFSS Home (www.cifsshome.org) to ensure the proper number of tickets can be made available.

Host schools MUST report CASH SALES tickets sold to the CIF Southern Section on the day following the event to CIF Chief Financial Officer, Mitch Carty (mitchc@cifss.org), as these sales along with the GoFan digital sales will account for the total revenue of the contest and will be split as per the CIF Southern Section playoff split percentage distribution.

Complimentary Tickets:

Each school participating in the playoffs in the revenue sports of Tackle Football, Basketball and Volleyball will be entitled to complimentary general admission tickets for each contest, based upon the schedule below:

Tackle Football (11person):	25 complimentary tickets
Tackle Football (8 person):	10 complimentary tickets
Basketball:	15 complimentary tickets
Volleyball:	10 complimentary tickets

Host schools can issue complimentary tickets via their GoFan HQ account. Complimentary tickets can be shared to one email address at a time OR all complimentary tickets can be sent to one email address. If multiple complimentary tickets are sent to one email address, please NOTE that only one (1) allowable transfer exists to get the ticket into the hands of the correct patron.

If additional tickets are desired, they must be purchased at the prevailing rate by the school. Drivers of team and rooter buses must be provided with tickets by the school; they will not be admitted without a ticket. These tickets are also to be used for scouting purposes.

Admission Prices:

Playoff Admission Prices (Non-Championship Games)

Adult General Admission Ticket - $12.00
High School Student Ticket (With HS Identification) - $6.00
Children Ticket (Ages 3-13) - $6.00
Students who do not present a high school picture ID at the gate will have to pay $12.00 for admission.

Championship Games (Divisions 2-14)

Adult General Admission Ticket - $14.00
High School Student Ticket (With HS Identification) - $7.00
Children Ticket (Ages 3-13) - $7.00
Students who do not present a high school picture ID at the gate will have to pay $14.00 for admission.

Gate Procedures:

All schools hosting playoff games should make certain that gate personnel are advised of the following procedures:

1. Tickets presented for admission are to be redeemed/validated at the admission gate.
2. All tickets are to be checked for appropriate date, opponent, color and round verbiage. This is to prevent someone from entering with a ticket designated for another game, or with a ticket that is designated for another playoff game/round. This also prevents an adult from entering with a student ticket, a student with a child ticket, etc.

All schools hosting playoff games should have one entrance gate designated as the “Pass Gate”. This gate, properly identified with an appropriate sign and staffed by a qualified person, would be used exclusively for the admission of all holders of CIF-SS Courtesy Cards, Press Passes, Photo Passes, and Gold Life Passes.

It is highly recommended that the visiting team have a faculty member, or other representative, assigned to the main entrance gate prior to and during the game.

Admission of Faculty Personnel (both schools):

Only those regular faculty personnel from the competing schools, who have been assigned definite supervisory responsibilities for the playoff game, will be admitted free of charge. No other administrators, counselors, faculty, or staff members will be admitted free, without a complimentary ticket.

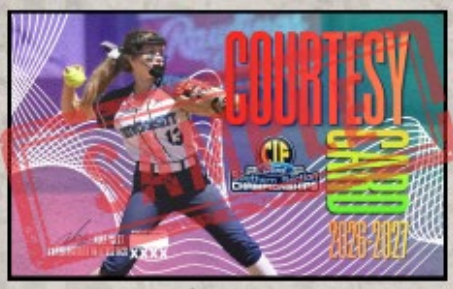
CIF Southern Section courtesy cards may be accepted for admission should the facility not exceed capacity limited due to tickets sold.

There will be NO Courtesy Cards accepted for admission to the Division 1 championship football game.

CIFSS COURTESY AND PRESS CARDS
WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED
AT DIVISION 1 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

2026 - 2027
CIF-SS APPROVED PASS GATE CARDS

CIF-SS COURTESY CARD
GOOD FOR BEARER +1



CIF-SS MEDIA CREDENTIAL
GOOD FOR BEARER ONLY

CIF-SS GOLD LIFE PASS
GOOD FOR BEARER +1

CIF STATE COURTESY CARD
GOOD FOR BEARER +1

CIF-SS MVP AD
GOOD FOR BEARER +1

PLAYOFF FINANCIAL POLICY

As per CIF Southern Section Blue Book amendments approved in the Spring of 2026, below are the by-laws which shall serve as the Financial Policy and govern playoff finances.
143: In the sports of basketball, tackle football, and volleyball ("revenue sports") it is mandatory that admission be charged in all playoff games (preliminary rounds through the championship final). In all other "non-revenue" sports with the exception of the championship finals which the CIF Southern Section manages, schools are NOT to charge admission for these activities. However, upon petition to the Commissioner's office, by the principals of the schools involved, to charge admission, the Commissioner may waive this policy. In such cases the gross revenue will be split equally between the schools, with the visitor paying its own travel and the host paying the game expenses.

144: Playoff splits:

144.1: In all rounds of the tackle football, basketball and volleyball playoff games in which the host school is hosting the game, the GROSS revenue (less the cost of officials) shall be split in the following manner, by sport – tackle football, basketball, and volleyball: 40% Host, 23% Visitor and 37% CIF Southern Section. The host school is responsible for all game related expenses; the visitor is responsible for their travel expenses. NO EXPENSE REPORTING to the CIF Southern Section will be required.

144.2: In the rounds of tackle football, basketball and volleyball playoff games, in which the CIF Southern Section is serving as the host, the NET profit shall be split 20% to each school and 60% to the CIF Southern Section. The CIF Southern Section shall pay for all game related expenses and travel, meal and lodging allowances to both teams.

144.3: In championship playoff competitions for all other "non-revenue" sports, the CIF Southern Section shall receive the NET profit if the office manages these contests. Expense allowances and honorariums may be allocated to schools assisting in the event hosting responsibilities.

BLEACHER RENTAL

Schools complementing their spectator seating capacity by renting additional bleachers must be advised this is an expense of the host school (please see CIF Southern Section, Blue Book by-law 144.1).

CONCESSIONS AND PROGRAMS

Where concessions and programs are involved in a playoff contest, the profit or loss from such enterprises shall not be included in the financial report. The CIF-SS will furnish electronic programs for all finals games. Additionally, CIF-SS T-shirts and hats will be provided at some finals sites. The programs, T-shirts, and hats income will not be part of the gate receipts. No other programs, T-shirts, or hats will be allowed. In all other games, the host school reserves the right to handle the program and concessions as a separate venture and need not share the profit, nor expect the CIF-SS or the visiting school, to share in any loss.

GAME PERSONNEL

The host management is responsible for staffing the stadium with the personnel necessary to conduct the contest. The same pay schedule followed for league contests should be used to reimburse ticket sellers, ticket takers, police, physician, and custodial help.

In playoff contests, payment to faculty personnel to supervise a rooting section is not an allowable expense and may not be charged to game expense. It is realized that some schools pay faculty persons to supervise rooting sections in league contests, but because this is **not** the policy in many schools, the Executive Committee has ruled that if a school (host or visitor) desires to pay such personnel, it shall do so out of its share of the net receipts and not charge the cost to game expense.

There is a wide disparity of staffing policies for athletic contests among schools in the Southern Section. Because of this, schools in the playoffs are asked to assign the minimum number of personnel necessary to assure efficiency and safety.

VENUE, EQUIPMENT, RENTALS & GAME PERSONNEL EXPENSES: School Hosted Revenue Sports

As per by-law 144.1, the host management is responsible for securing the venue, including additional equipment and rentals to conduct the contest. Additionally, the host management is also responsible for staffing the venue with the personnel necessary to conduct the contest. Personnel includes security/police, ticket validators, physicians/athletic trainers, scorers, timers, announcers and custodial services.

Payment amounts to secure the venue, rent equipment and hire personnel are at the discretion of the host school as the host is responsible for ALL game-related expenses. Hosts are reminded to be mindful of their expenses as they are NO LONGER reportable for reimbursement from the CIF Southern Section. Instead, the host receives a larger share of the gross revenue from the contest.

VISITOR TRAVEL EXPENSES: School Hosted Revenue Sports

As per by-law 144.1, the visiting school shall pay for its own travel expenses, which includes chartered or school bus transportation, meals and lodging. Visiting schools are reminded to be mindful of their expenses as they are NO LONGER reportable for reimbursement from the CIF Southern Section. Instead, the visitor receives a larger share of the gross revenue from the contest.

ALLOWABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

As per by-law 144.2, in the situation where the CIF Southern Section serves as the host of a playoff event in a revenue sport, both participating teams shall be entitled to submit travel expenses (via www.cifsshome.org) which include mileage reimbursement, meal allowances and lodging allowances.

Mileage

The maximum subsidy per mile (listed below), round trip, will be approved for either chartered or school bus transportation. Distances obtained from www.mapquest.com shall be used, when available, for computing mileage.

Tackle Football: $3.50 per mile
Basketball: $1.50 per mile
Volleyball: $1.50 per mile

Meals:

No subsidy will be permitted towards assisting with meals without prior approval of the CIF-SS. This is necessary to ensure uniform subsidies for all schools For trips less than 140 miles round trip, no meal allowances will be approved. For trips exceeding 140 miles round trip, the number of meals allowed each school will be determined by the CIF-SS on the basis of distance. The allowance for meals for the travel party including players, coaches, managers and administrators shall be entitled to an allowance by sport. Schools may take additional personnel if they wish, but meals will be at their own expense.

Tackle Football: 44 meals
Basketball: 17 meals
Volleyball: 18 meals
Where meals are approved, maximum subsidies are:
$3.00 for breakfast
$5.00 for lunch
$8.00 for dinner

Lodging:

No subsidy will be permitted towards assisting with lodging without prior approval of the CIF-SS. This is necessary to ensure uniform subsidies for all schools. For trips less than 550 miles round trip, no lodging allowances will be approved. For trips exceeding 550 miles round trip, the maximum shall be $10.00 per person for a group of not more than 44 people (Tackle Football), 17 people (Basketball) and 18 people (Volleyball).

INCLEMENT WEATHER

It is difficult to predict what the weather conditions will be like for our football playoffs. During late November and early December, the weather can pose many problems for school administrators charged with the responsibility of staging football playoff games. Rain and fog constitute major problems, and each must be handled in a different manner.

The accepted policy provides that the two schools administrations and the head official are responsible for determining whether the game will be started. After it is under way, the decision as to whether or not it should be continued, suspended, or called, rests solely with the game officials.

RAIN: A game can be played even though it rains prior to, or during, a contest. Some of the questions which should be considered in the decision to postpone a playoff football games due to rain are:

1. Has the rain made the field unplayable?
2. If a game is being played in a junior college or community owned stadium, will the stadium manager permit the game to be played in the event of rain?
   Do weather conditions, and the forecast for the following day, justify postponing the contest to the next afternoon or night?

FOG: Over the years fog has caused the most serious problem in the staging of playoff football games. In such situations it is foggy during the day, while at other times, the fog continues to increase in density as the evening progresses. Many times, the surrounding area has fog, while in the stadium itself it is fairly clear. The reverse of this can also occur.

When fog has been present during the week, or is predicted for the weekend, the host management should check out the stadium the night before the scheduled game and keep in close contact with weather personnel. If conditions are warranted, a decision to postpone the game should be made before the gates are opened. With nearly all games scheduled for Friday nights, a postponement to Saturday afternoon would be in order.

If fog conditions are uncertain, and it is the best judgment of the host management to attempt to play the game, the following precautions should be taken:

1. “Rain checks” should be prepared and given to each person entering the stadium.
2. Prior arrangements should be made regarding the time, date, and location of the game, in the event it is to be postponed due to rain or fog.
3. The public-address announcer should keep the spectators informed of the following:

Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of interruption unless the teams agree to terminate the game with the existing score.
When weather conditions are construed to be hazardous to life or limb of the participants, the crew of game officials is authorized to delay or suspend the game. If a game is suspended due to events beyond the control of the administrative authority, then the game will resume at the point of interruption on the next calendar day.
Further questions should be directed to the CIF-SS office, relative to rain and fog conditions.

FILM EXCHANGE

There shall be a mandatory exchange of four game films between the competing schools. Each coach will have his choice of any four of his opponent's game films which may include the most recent game. These original film copies shall be unedited and shall include all plays as originally filmed. In addition to the mandatory exchange, it shall be permissible for either coach to secure from other sources, any game videotape of his opponent that he may desire to view for the purpose of preparing for his next playoff game. If a school entering the playoffs has not videotaped any of its games, it should communicate that fact to the Commissioner, prior to the beginning of the playoffs.

It is mandatory that coaches exchange game film electronically or bring their film with them to

a mutually agreed upon site on the day the initial pairings are announced. All subsequent exchanges will take place at a mutually agreed upon location by Noon, the day after each playoff game. The coaches shall return the tapes to one another the night of their playoff game.
Any violation of the mandatory film exchange rule (refusal to cooperate) should be reported at once to the CIF-SS office. Such violation may subject a team to disqualification from the playoffs.

Suggested Guidelines for Filming

A. Filming should be from a height of 30' or higher.

B. Recording should include the entire contest.

C. Recording should start before the snap/kick and continue until the play is over. The camera should not continue to run when the play is dead.

D. Picture should be clear and numbers of players readable.

E. Picture should include enough players on both teams to recognize offensive and defensive formations. The camera should follow its own team during kick plays.

LENGTH OF GAMES

The timing of the game will be under current National Federation Rules.

JERSEYS

The host team shall wear dark-colored jerseys and visiting team white colored jerseys for all playoff contests.

TIE-BREAKER SYSTEM

The “25-Yard Tie-Breaker System” is authorized for use in the Southern Section for playoffs as follows:

1. Respective leagues have the option of adopting the plan for use
2. If adopted, all ties within league must be resolved with the “25-Yard Tie-Breaker System”
3. If adopted, the plan may be used for the V, JV or Frosh/Soph levels, or any combination of
4. By mutual consent, the plan may be used for non-league contests
5. **The “25-Yard Tie-Breaker System” will be used for all CIF-SS playoff contests**
6. May not be used beyond the last allowable playing date to determine entry into the playoffs

TIE GAMES

The twenty-five yard line tiebreaker system will be used in all divisions and all games, **(including finals)**, of the CIF Southern Section football playoffs, when games end in regulation time with the score tied. Although the ball will be placed on the 25-yard line for tiebreakers, we will adopt the National Federation 10-yard tiebreaker rules, with the exception that teams will be able to make first downs and have the opportunity to score on a defensive interception or fumble recovery. Complete details for the 10-yard line tiebreaker are listed on page 87 of the 2024 National Federation Official High School Football Rules.

HOW THE TIE-BREAKER WORKS

If the score at the conclusion of regulation play is tied, there will be a timeout. The captains of the two squads will meet at midfield, with the officials, for a flip of the coin. The winner of the toss will have the option to defend a goal or to determine possession.

Then, each team will have the opportunity to score from the 25-yard line and the team which outscores the other in the “overtime” session will be the winner, following the rules of football.

.... For example, the team on offense first will have one series of downs in which to score a touchdown (and try to kick for a one-point conversion or a run-pass for a two-point conversion) or kick a field goal. The other team will have one series of downs in which to equal, or surpass, the points scored by the first team. If the second team on offense does not equal or surpass the first team on offense, the first team on offense wins. If the second team scores more points than the first team, the second team wins. If the second team scores an equal number of points, the whole procedure is repeated until a winner is determined.

MERCY RULE

A mercy rule will be in effect for all football contests in the C.I.F. Southern Section, which includes pre-season games, league games and playoff games, including Championship Finals. This means that if one team has a lead of 35 points or more at the end of three quarters, there will be a running clock for the 4th quarter until the end of the contest. If schools wish to invoke a running clock prior to the start of the 4th quarter, they can do so by mutual agreement of both schools. I have attached the relevant rule to this memo, so you can see the details.

This item has been approved for statewide adoption, for both regular and post-season contests. This is in accordance with NFHS Football Rules 3-1-2 and 3-1-3.

1. Prior to the 4th Quarter, by mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee, a *"running clock"* may be used if the point differential between the two teams reaches 35 or more;

2. If at the start of the 4th Quarter or at any time during the 4th Quarter, the point differential is 35 or more points, a running clock shall be used for the reminder of the contest;

3. Once the *"running clock"* is in effect during the 4th Quarter, it shall remain in effect for the balance of the contest, even if the team that is behind subsequently scores to make the deficit less than 35 points;

4. The *"running clock"* will be administered as follows:
   A. The game clock will start with the snap or legal touch of a free kick on the first play following the establishment of the pertinent point differential, and continue to run uninterrupted when:
      - A 1st down is awarded to either team, including following a change of possession;
      - The ball or runner is out-of-bounds;
      - A legal or illegal forward pass is incomplete;
      - A play results in a touchback;
      - An inadvertent whistle occurs;
      - During all penalty enforcements.

   B. The game clock shall be stopped for:
      - A score (including touchdown: try; field goal; safety);
      - The free kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch;
      - A charged team time-out;
      - A coach-referee conference;
      - An official's time-out (injury; equipment; 1st down measurement; other, as required);

   C. Following a stoppage for any reason in B. above, the game clock will start when the ball is next:
      - Marked ready-for-play; or
      - Legally touched on the free kick following a score, a fair catch or awarded fair catch

TEAM BENCHES

During CIF-SS playoff games, the team benches will be restricted to authorized personnel consisting of substitutes, coaches, student managers, trainer and team physician. Parents, members of booster clubs and other such unauthorized personnel must sit in the stands. Schools are urged to issue visible sideline tags to those that are authorized for easy recognition.

OFFICIALS

Officials for all playoff games will be coordinated through the CIF-Southern Section. Seven officials will be used for the Semi-Final round. Please communicate with your out of area assignor to confirm officials. Whenever possible, out of area Officials will be assigned for every round of the 2026 Football Playoffs. The Commissioner will appoint officials for all playoff games based on the merit of each official's work during the regular season.

Official fees shall be paid by the CIF Southern Section through the Arbiter platform. For all playoff rounds and divisions, officials will receive $155.00. For the championship game in all divisions, each official will receive a fee of $172.00. When necessary, mileage will be paid to the Head Official. Please see CIF-SS Blue Book regarding official's mileage.

The home school will be notified of the appointed officials for all playoff contests. If you have not been notified by Wednesday, please call Cailey Sanchez-Collado (caileysc@cifss.org) for those names.

There will be 7 Man Official Crews for Semifinal and Championship Rounds.

CHAIN CREWS

At all CIF-SS football games the persons assigned to the "Chain Crew", responsible for marking down and distance on the field, shall be responsible adults.

PROTESTS

By action of the CIF-SS Council, protests of playoff contests involving National Federation Rules will no longer be entertained following the conclusion of the contest.

Coaches may direct questions to the game officials, as they pertain to a possible misapplication of the rules, in accordance with the National Federation rules governing that sport. No protest may be carried forth once the contest is completed. Coaches are encouraged to carry National Federation rulebooks with them for all playoff contests.

Schools will still have the opportunity to protest a contest, in accordance with Southern Section Rule 1111.2, as it pertains to use of an ineligible player or violations of any CIF-SS rule in connection with the contest.

GAME BALL

Please be advised that Wilson football has been designated as the official ball for all

playoff games. The NFHS Authenticating Mark is required by rule on the ball. The Southern Section office, along with Wilson, will be providing schools with footballs for the championship games only.

MEDIA INFORMATION

Regular 2026-27 Media Credential, issued by the CIF Southern Section, will be honored at all football playoff games, **except the Division 1 Final game**.

Members of the media are urged to contact host schools and request press accommodation's in advance of scheduled games. There will be occasions when this is not possible. Therefore, the host school is requested to make every effort to arrange a suitable working area for the covering media.

In any championship contest directly managed by the CIF Southern Section (Division 1 Final) special media credentials will be issued. Credential requests should be requested through the credential request at www.cifss.org.

CIF-SS PLAYOFF BROADCASTS

The CIF Southern Section retains broadcast rights for all playoff contests and has the sole authority to approve radio and/or television coverage. Prior approval of any broadcast of any playoff contest must be secured from the Director of Communications one week in advance of the contest.

RADIO BROADCASTS

Radio stations planning to broadcast a CIF-SS playoff contest in any sport must request prior permission from the CIF-SS. Please contact Thom Simmons thoms@cifss.org) at the CIF Southern Section Office to obtain the charges for all rights fees.

All rights fees for radio broadcasts are to be filed directly with the CIF-SS, they are not to be included as part of the host school contest financial report.

The CIF Southern Section reserves the right to contract independently with a radio, television, cable-television production companies or Internet streaming entity for exclusive coverage rights to any CIF Southern Section playoff or championship event.

There will be no fee charged for periodic progress reports made by a radio station during a playoff contest, provided there are no more than six of these reports for any single game. Such reports may not exceed two (2) minutes in duration and may not contain play-by-play descriptions of live action.

TELEVISION & INTERNET BROADCASTS

The CIF Southern Section retains the broadcasting and cablecasting and live streaming rights for all playoff contests, and permission for the same must be secured from the Director of Communications, who will have the sole authority to approve the coverage, a minimum of one week in advance.

DELAYED TELECASTS OF CIF-SS playoff games are permissible but may not be aired prior to 11:00 p.m. on the date of the contest. Consideration of any LIVE TELECAST will necessitate contractual negotiations with the CIF-SS Commissioner of Athletics, a minimum of 10 days prior to the event.

For CIF-SS football playoff and championship contests a rights fee shall be paid DIRECTLY TO THE CIF-SS in advance.

Rights fees for television broadcasts of CIF-SS playoff contests are to be filed directly with the CIF-SS and are not to be included in the host schools financial report. By action of the CIF-SS Executive Committee, the rights fee for all broadcasts will be retained by the Southern Section to offset costs for all schools.

Payment of rights fees shall be required for any television broadcast, cablecast or livestreaming coverage of CIF-SS playoff contests, regardless of the commercial, or non-commercial, intent of the coverage.

News report film or video tape of any CIF-SS playoff contest is permissible, without payment of fees or prior approval provided the intent of such film or tape is used for news reports only. Such reports may not exceed two (2) minutes in duration and may not contain play-by play descriptions of live action.

AUDIO AND VIDEO REPRODUCTION EQUIPMENT

All CIF Southern Section playoff contests are copyrighted events of the CIF-SS. Any rebroadcast of a CIF-SS playoff contest, live or delayed, by any medium, will be subject to an advance rights clearance from the CIF Southern Section Commissioner of Athletics.

CIF SOUTHERN SECTION FORD CHAMPIONSHIPS
REQUIREMENTS - ALL TEAMS AND HOST SITES
2026-2027

Rosters & Scores: Complete schedules are to be submitted to CIFSSHOME prior to each season. Update scores following every contest direct to CIFSSHOME
Additional directions on accessing CIFSSHOME are included in this document.

TV/Web/Radio Rights: Any TV or streaming webcast (video or audio) or radio transmission of a CIF-SS playoff or championship event requires a contract and rights fees through the CIF-SS office prior to the contest. The only 'exceptions' are: Games broadcast via The NFHS Network, Spectrum Sports Net, Spectrum.

Championship Merchandise: The exclusive vendor for CIF Southern Section Championship souvenirs (t-shirts, scarfs, pins, beanies, hats, etc…) is our long-time partner *CIF T- shirts*. These are the official items sold each year per sport. You are likely familiar with their annual shirts at the finals. You can order team and individual items through them at **www.ciftshirts.com**.

Official Ball Required: Only the approved for play models in each ball sport may be played by either school during CIF-SS playoff contests. Violation of this rule will result in loss of your next home playoff game. The current Official Ball list for each sport is included and available at www.cifss.org in the "Resources" drop down. This policy has been in effect since 2002.

Gatorade Only: Only Gatorade jugs, cups, bottles, ice chests may be used or visible during any CIF-SS playoff contest. (No Powerade, Body Armor, etc). The only acceptable alternative is a plain-wrap or Igloo labeled products. This rule does not apply to the actual liquid distributed to athletes. This policy has been in effect since 1995.

CIF-SS Souvenirs: The 'CIF Southern Section', 'CIF-SS', 'Southern Section' and 'CIF' marks and logos are registered trademarks with the State of California. Schools may only use the CIF Southern Section marks on rings, patches and banners, by doing business with a CIF-SS licensed vendor. **Schools may only use the CIF Southern Section marks on apparel and other souvenir items exclusively through ciftshirts.com. Schools creating items with CIF-SS registered marks from a non-licensed vendor will face sanction and/or will be required to purchase any unsold shirts/items at the Championship Final.** A list of the currently licensed vendors for these products is included and regularly updated on www.cifss.org.

Please note: The use of only "CIF" is strictly prohibited per the State CIF registered trademark. The "CIF", is not just the CIF Southern Section. Only those teams in State regionals, bowl games and individual sport finals actually qualify to use CIF without Southern Section attached. Any such use must be approved in advance by the CIF State office.

Host Site Requirements:

Playoff Tickets: (This pertains to revenue sports of basketball, tackle football and volleyball): It is mandatory to sell tickets for admission to all CIF-SS playoffs and championship contests. Through the CIF-SS partnership with GoFan, all playoff tickets will be made available online for digital purchase and presented electronically at the event gate for entry. Patrons can purchase in advance via gofan.co, via private links made available by the participating schools or via QR code at the entry gate of the playoff event. All playoff revenue will be sent directly to CIF-SS. Both the host and visiting schools may receive a revenue share split from the gross revenue less the cost of officials in the case of a profit game.

CIF-SS/FORD Banner: It is a requirement of each host school (including off-site) that the CIF-SS/Ford Championship banner be displayed at every playoff home game in football and the gymnasium sports post football season (or on the electronic signage where schools/ venues do not display banners). If you need a banner, please contact jackieg@cifss.org

Gatorade: It is a requirement of each school use only Gatorade product/jugs/cups/squeeze bottles during CIF-SS championship events. No other competitive product shall be used. Water can be placed in Gatorade merchandise.

PA Announcements: As a host of a CIF-SS playoff contest, the CIF-SS announcements take precedence over the host school's messaging and must be read in entirety at each playoff contest. Home schools are the host of a CIF-SS event in the playoffs. For contractual requirements, please read all the provided PA's each contest. PA's for each sport can be found on cifss.org under the designated sports page.

Media Credentials: Accredited working media should be given admission to all playoff games by showing their CIF-SS Media credential.

CIF SOUTHERN SECTION FORD CHAMPIONSHIPS
ADDITIONAL AWARDS
2026-2027

PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATES:

Each member of a team participating in the CIF-SS playoffs can receive a Participation Certificate. These certificates will be downloaded and printed solely by your school. The certificate is in a 'Type-In' format and may be downloaded from the CIFSSHOME website under **AWARDS**.

ADDITIONAL AWARDS:

Plaques:

If your team won or was a finalist in a CIF-SS championship and you need to purchase any additional champion/finalist plaques contact **All American Trophy by contacting at (323) 725-1962.**

"Champion", "Finalist" "ALL-CIF" Patches

Champion, Finalist and ALL-CIF patches must be exclusively ordered through **JL Custom Jackets and Patches at www.jlcustomjackets.com, (951) 867-3200**

CUSTOM AWARDS/ RINGS/BANNERS/APPAREL SOUVENIRS USING CIF-SS:

Schools often seek to create custom patches, gym banners and championship rings that include both the school and CIF-SS marks/logos/names. Example: 'ACME BOYS BASKETBALL 2026 CIF-SS CHAMPIONS'. Schools may create these items using CIF-SS marks only through a CIF-SS licensed vendor.

CIF-SS 'registered' trademark: The "CIF Southern Section", "CIF-SS", "Southern Section" and "CIF" marks and logos are registered trademarks with the State of California. Schools may only use the CIF Southern Section marks on rings, patches and banners by doing business with a CIF-SS licensed vendor. Schools creating items with CIF-SS registered marks from a non-licensed vendor will face sanction and/or will be required to purchase any unsold shirts/items at the Championship final if similar non-licensed items appear at the contest. A list of the currently licensed vendors for these products is included and regularly updated on www.cifss.org.

Please note: The use of only "CIF" is strictly prohibited per the State CIF registered trademarks. Only those teams in State regionals, bowl games and individual sport finals actually qualify to use CIF without Southern Section attached. Any such use must be approved in advance by the CIF State office.

CIF-SS vendors who are licensed to create custom items for schools that include CIF-SS:

Championship Patches (circle shape) Playoffs or Prelims, Finals Patches (shape of a shield) for participation in Cross Country, Track & Field or Swimming Finals, Masters Patches (oval shaped) for participation in a Masters Track & Field or Wrestling event and Wrestling Dual Meet (rectangle shaped) are sold "ON-SITE" by the CIF-SS vendor. Additional patches post event can be ordered through any of the licensed CIF-SS patch vendors:

Chenille Patches

JL Varsity Jackets & Patches	www.jlcustomjackets.com	(951) 867-3200
CIF Tshirts	www.cifsstshirts.com	(951) 789-5858
C&L Custom Jackets	www.cljackets.com	(714) 828-6900
Embroidery & More	www.embroideryandmoredesign.com	(951) 471-5200
PC & C Embroidery	https://pccembroidery.com/	(909) 403-4558
The Advertising Specialists	https://www.tassigns.com/page/cif-southern-section-licensed-patch-provider	(626) 966-4770
We Got Em Tees	https://wegotemtees.com/	760-983-6087|909-727-7699

Custom Banners/Souvenirs Your school may create custom items that include the CIF-SS mark or logo (championship banner, banners for your gym, etc…) through a licensed CIF-SS vendor (and their specialty).

Integrity Design	www.IntegrityDesignUSA.com	(855) 341-8817
C&L Custom Jackets	www.cljackets.com	(714) 828-6900
The Advertising Specialists	https://www.tassigns.com/page/cif-southern-section-licensed-patch-provider	(626) 966-4770

Rings

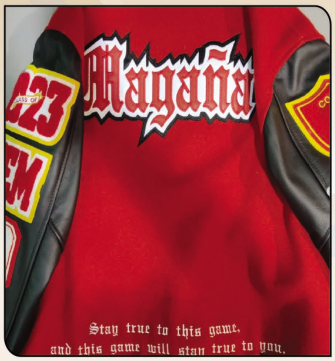
Herff Jones	https://highschool.herffjones.com/
J. Lewis Small	www.jlewissmall.com
Jostens	www.jostens.com
Signature Style Jewelry	www.signaturestylejewelry.com
Baron Championship Rings	https://baronrings.com/

PROTECT YOUR SCHOOL TRADEMARKS: The CIF Southern Section strongly suggests you double- check the status of *your school* licensed/registered marks and logos now. Some schools have permanently lost control of others selling their merchandise with no royalty or approvals because the proper State of California licensing/registering process had not previously occurred or been enforced.

For additional vendors licensing information, please contact CIF Southern Section, Director of Marketing & Corporate Partnerships, Jacqulyn Gibson at jackieg@cifss.org or 562-493-9500.

JL CUSTOM JACKETS

Official CIF Licensed Patch & Jacket Manufacturer



LETTERMAN JACKET SPECIAL $339.00

WOOL BODY WITH LEATHER SLEEVS AND POCKETS	VARSITY LETTER SEWN ON FRONT	MAKE AND SEW ON UP TO 3 SPORT EMBLEMS
EMBROIDER FIRST NAME, SCHOOL NAME, MASCOT NAME AND 1 SPORT ONTO THE FRONT	CUSTOM GRADUATING YEAR IN CHENILLE MATERIAL	

You can design and purchase your own custom patches on our website.

JL Custom Jackets and Patches

To Order Call:

(951) 867-3200

or visit us on the web:

www.jlcustomjackets.com

7161 Old 215 Frontage Road, Moreno Valley, CA

Fax (951) 867-3277

EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTOR FOR ALL
CHAMPIONS
FINALISTS
RUNNER-UP &
ALL CIF Patches

15 Business Day Turnaround Time for All Patch Orders
6 - 8 Week Turnaround Time for All New Jacket Orders

* Prices subject to change without notice disclaimer

THE
BEST
USE
THE
BEST
GATORADE
GATORADE
FROST
CRISP & COOL
THIRST QUENCHER
GLACIER CHERRY

MUSCLES. SPEED. AGILITY. SMARTS.

OUR VEHICLES. OUR ATHLETES.

CIF Est. Ford 1913 Southern Section CHAMPIONSHIPS

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FORD DEALERS
PROUDLY SUPPORT SO CAL HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS.