



March 1, 2024

# MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

## Competitive Equity Playoffs... What's Next?

On January 30, 2024, the CIF Southern Section Council voted 79-8 to amend Bylaw 3519 which addresses playoff groupings and how individual sports and teams within a sport are placed into divisions. The current, soon to be former, competitive equity playoff model has used data from the previous two years to establish playoff divisions prior to the season starting. Though this has been a progressive model compared to other areas of the state and the country, this method did not take into consideration how competitive a team might be in the current year. The new system established by January's vote will only evaluate how competitive a team is in the current season and then place teams into divisions based upon their ranking for that year.

Currently, the Assistant Commissioners in each sport are looking into and assessing ranking systems that can be applied properly to a given sport. There are a variety of options available to us through companies such as Massey, MaxPreps, SBLive, and others. Football currently uses a system developed by CalPreps which provides football rankings not just for California but for all states across the country. Each year, these groups make minor adjustments to their algorithms in order to maintain or enhance their accuracy. As we adopt our systems and establish the parameters for the algorithms we will be using, we too will continue to make adjustments yearly to ensure the most accurate outcome possible.

Regardless of what is adopted, it will only be as good as the data that is included. Accurate and timely schedules and scores for every team at every school will be imperative to the success of our new system. To that end, the CIF Southern Section is working to develop a "Data Hub" whereby schedules and scores input on various websites will come to a centralized location and be shared by all those who participate in the program. Though our bylaws state that schools must enter their scores into CIF Home, this could be accomplished by entering a score on another platform which would end up on our

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system. It is imperative that athletic departments throughout the Southern Section ensure that the systems they have in place to update schedules and scores are effective, accurate and timely. If we collectively accomplish these tasks, the CIF Southern Section will have the most precise and relevant way to establish playoff divisions and seeding of any high school athletic association in the country.

## More Observations from the Commish

Having experienced another playoff season as your commissioner, I continue to notice the great things that happen in our office that most people around the Section are not aware of. I would like to take a moment to recognize a few staff members in our office who work so hard for our member schools throughout the year but in particular, during our championship seasons.

The financial aspects of running an organization that relies so heavily on playoff revenue is no easy task. This includes organizing the ticketing through Go-Fan, coordinating with host sites on game income and expenses, paying for all officials, and so much more. The two people most responsible for all this are Mitch Carty, our Chief Financial Officer, and Erin Courtemarche, our Financial Assistant. They do a fantastic job of making sure the financial aspects of our tournaments run seamlessly and they both take care of our entire organization. The volume of transactions in and around our championship seasons is startling. Without Mitch's leadership and Erin's guidance and support, we would not be as financially sound and efficient as we are today.

Customized and personalized programs, social media, marketing obligations, designs and logos... These are just a few of the responsibilities our Marketing Department has for our championships and other projects throughout the year. Jackie Gibson our Director of Marketing and Brianna Sutrisna, Marketing Coordinator are experts in this field. They are the ones who provide the high-quality graphics and

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design our public facing materials provided to both schools and families. Their work helps create a championship atmosphere at our final's facilities, not to mention our social media presence throughout the year. Jackie and Brianna truly help create positive and professional exposure for our athletes and allow our corporate partners to be proud of having established their relationships with us.

## In Conclusion...

Spring is here and the days are getting longer and warmer. Though many schools offer more sports during this season compared to fall and winter, the rhythms seem to be much slower and more relaxed. Let's hope the rain stays away so we can fully enjoy our spring athletic offerings. Good luck to everyone!!!

**Mike West**

