

**ARTICLE 350  
PLAYOFFS**

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**3500. ALL PLAYOFFS MANAGED BY COMMISSIONER**

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All playoffs of the CIF Southern Section shall be under the management of the Commissioner of Athletics, who will have final authority and responsibility for their conduct.

- 3500.1 Enrollment based divisions will be used in the sports of boys and girls cross country and boys and girls track and field. By action of the Southern Section Council, once the divisions are established for the playoff, no school shall be allowed to move up to a larger enrollment division. Schools will participate based upon their CBED enrollment figures. Consideration will be given to geography after league placement has been recognized.
- 3500.2 No playoffs will be conducted by the CIF Southern Section Office when less than 20% of the membership field teams in that sport.
- 3500.3 See 54.8 (Emergency Powers).

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**3501. REPORT OF PLAYOFFS**

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At the close of the season for each sport, the Commissioner of Athletics shall compile a report of the playoffs in the "CIF Southern Section Bulletin."

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**3502. IDENTIFYING LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVES INTO THE PLAYOFFS**

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Under the playoff format - in all sports - leagues have the responsibility of developing and identifying the priority for their representatives into the playoffs. This will include the league's priority with regard to any at-large consideration.

Thus, the league through its CIF Council Representative, MUST notify the CIF Southern Section Office prior to the playoff draw, the No. 1 representative, the No. 2 representative, the No. 3 representative, and the league's priority team for consideration to any at-large berth.

If, for example, a league would have a "co-champion" in football, the league - by the method outlined in its Constitution and Bylaws - MUST specify which team is its No. 1 representative and its No. 2 representative. This principle would hold true for any combination, such as a tie for third place in the standings or a "four-way tie" for first place, etc.

NOTE: If two teams from the same league are tied at the end of league competition, and are in different playoff divisions, they may both carry the same designation into their respective playoff divisions. For example, if School A and School B tie for their league's championship, and are in different playoff divisions, they can both be designated as League (1T) in their respective playoff divisions. However, leagues may not exceed its total allowable guaranteed entries regardless of what playoff division those schools would enter. (See Bylaw 3314 for allowable number of guaranteed league entries).

QUESTION:	For recognition purposes, how many schools constitute a league?
ANSWER:	A minimum of four schools or teams make up a league for recognition for guaranteed playoff entry, less than four teams or schools are not recognized for entry into playoffs.
QUESTION:	If my league has a tie for first place and both School A and School B are in different playoff divisions therefore allowing them to carry the first-place designation with them (1T), how would the next league entry be listed?
ANSWER:	The next team listed would be the 3rd place team.

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**3503. FIRST ROUND PLAYOFFS**

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In the first round of the playoffs in all sports, 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 predetermined by the Commissioner. Schools must fulfill their playoff obligation once entered by the league unless excused in an emergency by the Commissioner and/or replaced as an entry by the league prior to completion of the opening round.

In cases where a first representative team meets a second team representative in an opening-round game, the first team representative will be designated as the host team.

Where two first, two second or two third team representatives meet in the opening round, the Commissioner will flip a coin prior to the publishing of the draw to determine the host school.

Leagues are responsible for developing the priority for their representatives and the finish of a team in league play will have no bearing unless it is reflected in the league's priority. For example, if a co-champion had a league priority of a second team representative it would have no special consideration as compared to a second place finisher from another league who had a second team priority and a flip would be made.

- 3503.1 A "wild card game" for entry into the full field will have no bearing on priority for host contests in the first and/or subsequent rounds.
- 3503.2 All freelance entries will be considered as the equivalency of a No. 3 representative with regard to determining host and/or away contests unless they are one of the four seeded teams in which case they will be the host team.
- 3503.3 If schools falling into the category of California Youth Authority and probationary schools would qualify for the post- season playoffs, the contest will be played at an alternate site other than the facility where the school is located.

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#### **3504. HOST TEAM AFTER THE FIRST ROUND**

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To decide who shall be the host team after the first round of competition in any sport will be the sole 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 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 the 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, (2) be considered the host team regardless of where the game is being played, and (3) a "bye" designation shall not count as a host contest for the team drawing the "bye" following the first round and throughout the remainder of the tournament.

- 3504.1 Teams receiving a bye in the first round shall be the host team in the next round of the playoffs.

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#### **3505. COMMISSIONER DETERMINES PLAYOFF SITES**

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The Commissioner shall have sole authority in determining sites for playoff competition in all sports and for all rounds.

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#### **3506. ALTERNATE SITE DEFINITION**

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An alternate court or field has been defined as one on which a team has not conducted practice sessions. A team may have played some of its league games and even a playoff contest on a particular court or field, and it could still be classified as an alternate court or field.

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#### **3507. HOST SCHOOL ACCOUNTS FOR ALL GAME REVENUE**

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In football, basketball and volleyball playoff games, the host school will account for all the revenue from the game, pay all expenses for the game, and compile the financial report, sending a copy to the visiting school and the CIF Southern Section. Please refer to Bylaw 144 for detailed information concerning the distribution of receipts from playoff contests in basketball, football, and volleyball.

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#### **3508. TEAM EXPENSES**

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The Commissioner shall set the team expenses to be allowed the traveling team in any playoff contest.

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#### **3509. BROADCAST OR TELECAST FEES**

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The Commissioner shall set the fee to be charged for the right to broadcast or telecast any playoff contest.

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#### **3510. FREELANCE PLAYOFF ENTRY QUALIFICATION**

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If a school does not have membership in a league or the school belongs to a league which does not offer students in a given sport an opportunity to qualify into CIF Southern Section championships, special conditions exist which must be followed in order to qualify for possible entry into a CIF Southern Section playoff activity.

- 3510.1 Team Sports - All freelance schools desiring entry into the playoffs must submit schedules to the Commissioner for evaluation and approval of conditions under which the team may qualify. Schedules must be submitted prior to the start of each season for evaluation.
- 3510.2 Individual Sports - Schools meeting the criteria outlined in 3510.1 above may petition individual athletes for possible entry into CIF Southern Section individual playoff competition. Petitions for such athletes must include a complete data sheet for each individual showing best marks, scores or rankings from any competition held during the current school year. All such petitions must be submitted two calendar weeks prior to the first scheduled date of CIF Southern Section playoff competition.

QUESTION:	How can a freelance team qualify for CIF playoff consideration?
ANSWER:	A school must schedule 80% of allowable contests per sport and they must be at the varsity level. In order to be considered for the playoffs, the school must have a .500 or better record in all contests played and there must be openings in the bracket. Additionally, teams that win 80% of their contests played will be guaranteed entry. (Except football.)
QUESTION:	How can an individual qualify for consideration for freelance competition?
ANSWER:	To be eligible for freelance individual competition, an individual must participate in at least one-half of the number of allowable varsity contests permitted in a particular sport.

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### **3511. PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY**

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An ineligible player is one who is in violation of any State CIF or Section scholastic residence, transfer, age, semesters of attendance, or other eligibility rules.

- A. Games in which the student participated, after the occurrence of the violation shall be forfeited (See Bylaw 500.2)
- B. From the time the CIF Southern Section Office receives the entries from the league, violations discovered will be assessed only against the individual(s) and will not affect the advancement of a team into the playoffs.
- C. Violations discovered after the first round of any playoff will result in disqualification of the ineligible player's team from the playoffs and forfeiture of its last playoff competition. In such cases, the losing team will advance provided the date of the next scheduled contest has not elapsed.
- D. Freelance schools will submit eligibility rosters prior to their second contest of the season to the CIF Southern Section Office. Any additions to the freelance school eligibility roster will be made directly to the CIF Southern Section Office within five (5) school days of each occurrence.

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### **3512. CIF SOUTHERN SECTION TROPHIES**

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Appropriate trophies shall be awarded by the CIF Southern Section to team champions and runner-up in all official sports. The winning or runner-up team has the option of awarding more than the prescribed number of medals or patches at its own expense.

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### **3513. PLAYOFF ENTRIES TENTATIVE**

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All entries into the playoffs are tentative until the first round is completed. Updated results or new information may necessitate changes in any draw when necessary. No change in entries will be permitted after the first round (or "wild card" game if it applies to a league entry) has been played.

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### **3514. NUMBER OF TEAM ENTRIES INTO PLAYOFFS**

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In the sport of 11-person football, the team entry formula for each league into the playoffs is as follows:

- 4 and 5 team leagues = 2 entries
- 6-8 team leagues = 3 entries
- 9 or more team leagues = 4 entries

In the sport of 8-person football, only league champions will be guaranteed automatic entries into the playoffs.

In all sports other than football, the team entry formula for each league into the playoffs is as follows:

- 4 team leagues = 2 entries
- 5 and 6 team leagues = 3 entries
- 7 and 8 team leagues = 4 entries
- 9 or more team league = 5 entries

- 3514.1 In all team sports other than wrestling and football (For information regarding at-large entries for Football, see the Football Playoff Bulletin), additional entries beyond a league's guaranteed number of entries will only be permitted to enter the playoffs to fill any byes which exist in the opening round. Wildcard contests will be for situations where the number of teams that are guaranteed entries from their leagues necessitate that additional contests be played to reduce the number of teams entered to the required number of the original draw. (For example, when there are 37 teams entered as guaranteed entries from their leagues into a particular playoff draw, there must be 5 wildcard contests played to reduce the number of teams from 37 to 32, the required number of the original draw.) At-large teams, teams meeting the at-large criteria (.500 or better overall record), can only be accepted into the playoffs if there are openings in the original draw after all of the league's guaranteed entries are submitted. (For example, when there are 30 teams entered as guaranteed entries from their leagues into a 32-team draw, there would be 2 byes in the bracket and those byes could be filled by teams who were not guaranteed entries from there.

In all team sports at-large selections will be considered from the next place beyond the guarantee that are .500 or better. After all those schools have been taken and there are still positions available, the next place teams that are .500 or better will then be considered. Next, all 3rd place teams would be taken before any 4th place teams would be considered. (A tie will count as half a win and half a loss for a .500 record or better.) For specific information on the at-large selection process, see the respective Playoff Bulletin for each particular sport.

QUESTION:	How will the CIF Southern Section Office determine additional entries into the playoff draw to fill byes after each league has submitted their three guaranteed entries?
ANSWER:	As provided for under Bylaw 3502, a playoff committee will select the additional entries to fill the draw from the league's priority team entry that has been submitted for consideration as an at-large berth to fill any bye which may exist.

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### 3515. NOISEMAKERS PROHIBITED

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No noisemakers (horns, bells, victory bells, sirens, chimes, musical instruments other than those in the band, etc.) will be permitted inside the gymnasium, stadium or playing fields at any CIF Southern Section contest (non-league, league, tournament or playoff). Cheering devices such as wooden blocks, or other similar objects, are prohibited. Megaphones shall be used only by uniformed cheerleaders for the purpose of directing and controlling rooting sections. The improper use of any of the above listed devices by supporters of a team would subject that team to possible forfeiture of the contest

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### 3516. EQUAL FACILITIES

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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.

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### 3517. WILD CARD TEAMS

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Where the number of teams exceeds the number of openings in the draw, the Commissioner may order a special playoff contest ("Wild Card System") to determine the draw for the playoffs. Insofar as host team designation in the regular playoff draw, this "Wild Card Contest" will have no bearing when such a procedure is used. The Commissioner, or his representative, will draw the contending 4th, 3rd team representative (and 2nd team representatives if required by the number of leagues in a division and the number of teams in the draw) or freelance teams by lot and conduct a coin flip between same for the purpose of designating the host team in such a "Wild Card" contest. For all enrollment-based playoffs, please refer to specific sport bulletins.

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### 3518. ADDITIONAL CONTESTS TO DETERMINE ENTRY ONLY

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Leagues may not conduct additional contests beyond the prescribed limits unless said contests are to determine ENTRY and not representative priority.

- 3518.1 Please note, leagues **MAY NOT** conduct additional contests beyond the prescribed limits unless said contests are to determine **ENTRY** and not representative priority. Additionally, leagues must have this as part of their Constitution and must secure permission from the CIF Southern Section Office before conducting such playoffs for entry. If a league covers such Conditions in its constitution, it is still obligated to stage said contest on or before the last specified allowable playing date.

An example of the above application would be that two teams finish in a tie for the last guaranteed entry in the final league standings and the league also has it stipulated in its Constitution that the deadlock may be broken by a special playoff game. As long as that contest is played on or before the last specified date, the two teams would be permitted to play as a process in determining **ENTRY** into the playoffs. However, should there be an outright league champion and the two teams deadlocking for second place, a special playoff game would NOT be permitted, as both teams already have guaranteed entry into the playoffs. In this latter example, the league would then refer to the next segment of its Constitution to see which team would be declared the No. 2 representative, the other becoming the No. 3 representative.

- 3518.2 If time does not permit a playoff for entry, the league must again resort to the next item in its Constitution to determine its designation.
- 3518.3 In the sport of football, the 25-yard tie breaker system may be used to determine ENTRY, provided it meets all other guidelines noted above, including the last specified playing date.

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**<>3519. PLAYOFF GROUPINGS**

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The following procedures for conducting the business of playoff groupings will be in effect for the sports listed below:

Fall – Tennis (Girls), Team Golf (Girls), Tennis (Girls), Volleyball (Girls), Water Polo (Boys)

Winter – Basketball (Boys/Girls), Soccer (Boys/Girls), Water Polo (Girls)

Spring – Baseball, Team Beach Volleyball (Girls), Team Golf (Boys), Lacrosse (Boys/Girls), Softball, Tennis (Boys), Volleyball (Boys)

- <>3519.1 Schools will be evaluated and placed into divisions on a yearly basis for the sports listed above utilizing a formula based entirely on current regular season results. Final rankings and divisional placements will be determined and released at the end of the current regular season. Seeding in each division will follow the final rankings, regardless of league affiliation or league finish. For example, in a sixteen-team bracket, the #1 seed, determined by the final 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.
- <>#3519.2 It is MANDATORY that all Southern Section member schools enter the results of ALL regular season contests into the CIFSSHome system immediately following each game ([www.cifsshome.org](http://www.cifsshome.org)).
- <>#3519.3 Member schools who fail to accurately enter complete regular season results into the CIFSSHome system, in any of the sports listed above, will not be placed into a playoff division and will be ineligible to participate in the Southern Section Championships in that sport for that year.
- <>#3519.4 Leagues are guaranteed their appropriate number of entries into the Southern Section Championships, per current Southern Section Blue Book Rule 3514.

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**<>3520. PLAYOFF GROUPINGS – ENROLLMENT/GEOGRAPHY/DATA-BASED**

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- 3520.1 Boys and Girls Cross Country – Divisional placement for each school will be done yearly using school enrollment, according to Section and State designated numbers.
- #3520.2 Boys and Girls Swimming and Diving– Divisions will be formulated every year by individual team and gender competitive equity. Competitive equity will be calculated using League Finals and Southern Section Swimming and Diving Championship results, and assigning corresponding point values from the NISCA Power Point tables. Points will be averaged and totaled and teams will be rated. The CIF office will determine teams within each of four divisions. Boys and Girls will be rated separately and may be placed in different divisions. Leagues MUST submit exported results in .HY3 or .SD3 format before the completion of the CIF Championship Meet.
- #3520.3 Boys and Girls Track and Field – Divisional placement for each school will be done yearly using school enrollment, according to Section and State designated numbers.
- <>#3520.4 Dual Meet Wrestling – Divisions formulated every two years using Masters Meet qualifiers, by schools over a two-year period.
- <>#3520.5 Individual Wrestling – Divisions formulated every two years using Masters Meet qualifiers, by league, over a two-year period.

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**3521. PLAYOFF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

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After a reasonable request from the Commissioner's office, schools that continue to be delinquent with financial reports will not be allowed to host a game during the playoffs in all sports for a period of one year.