

Girls Tennis – Add a Third Class

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Indicate the category of the proposed recommendation

State Tournament Recommendations regarding Format and Non-NFHS Rules or NFHS Experiments

Authors of the Proposal

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* Class A ** Class AA

Activity/Activities (Check all that apply)

Tennis, Girls

Current Rule/Policy

State the rule/policy as it appears in the current MSHSL Handbook or Activity/Sport Specific Rules and Policies.

The current rule/policy regarding is found in the MSHSL Handbook in the 400.00 Bylaws pages 78-81 regarding class competition (updated 12/6/18) ... [of particular note is Section D “Class Competition” ##4 highlighted below]

Proposed Recommendation

Submit your proposed change to the above-stated rule/policy.

We propose a 3-class post season tournament for Girls’ tennis divided by thirds allowed under MSHSL classification policy.

Under the current MSHSL policy and formula adopted in 2018, the number of girls’ tennis programs now meets the required number of programs (192) to be divided into the three classes.

Girls tennis currently has 194 programs.

Three class team and individual tournaments will make a significant and positive impact on the tennis experience by making the enrollment ratios more equitable, balancing section numbers, allowing more potential for advancement in section play.

Our proposal provides an equity component for three classes and is appropriately addressing the disparity challenges in both enrollment and socioeconomics faced in Minnesota high school tennis. Using other classification options would not address the challenges in both enrollment and socioeconomic.

Include any other policies that are impacted by this proposal.

None.

Rationale

What is the history of the proposal?

Current girls' tennis classification enrollment ratios are the highest amongst MSHSL sports: for example, 7.2:1 in AA girls' tennis. Most ratios among the top classes for all other sport activities are in the 2s.

Current ratios of two class girls' tennis:

* Class AA - 5.8 to 1

*.Class A 3.41-1

How does your proposal benefit education-based opportunities and MSHSL Mission and Beliefs for all Minnesota students?

Three class ratios would become:

* Class AAA 2.8 to 1

* Class AA from 2.13 to 1

* Class A from 3.28 to 1

The proposed ratios for a three class girls tennis tournament are consistent with those provided to other MSHSL sports and activities

3-Class Girls' Tennis would provide a number of benefits:

* Provides opportunities with 8 more teams + 48 individuals qualifying for a state tournament.

*Continue to provide geographic representation across the state within each class.

* Keeps option for teams to opt-up

* Help build programs due to increased opportunities for post-season advancement

* Provide significantly greater opportunities for success and more student-athletes a more positive tennis playing experience.

Research reveals that two driving factors are important to success, including advancement in postseason play, in MN high school tennis: (larger) enrollment plus (higher) socioeconomics.

MTCA membership clearly supports this change: from 176 responses (representing 78% of membership), 82% percent support 3-class tennis. This proposal also addresses the specific challenge of large school dominance, enrollment and socioeconomic disparities within the sport of Minnesota high school tennis.

What other policies are significant in this proposal?

None.

Provide evidence of support for the proposal from other groups

The proposal for 3-Class Girls' Tennis has received notable support. In a survey to Athletic Directors and Superintendents, of the 101 responses, 83% were in favor (84) and 13% (13) answered 'maybe'. Only 4 responded 'no'.

The Region Advisory supported it 9-6-1. And AD Advisory supported it 8-7.

In the survey, as well as what we heard through Region/AD advisory, the concern was clear. [The same concern was raised at the MSHSL Board Meeting in February 2023.]

1) Does the proposal follow MSHSL policies governing classification?

NOTE: That proposal, submitted last year ('22-'23) included an exception of expanding Boys' Tennis (165 teams) to 3-Classes and introducing a new breakdown for 3-Classes – top 32, then 50/50. This is not a current policy option.

This proposal for only Girls' Tennis expanding to 3-Class addresses those concerns; Girls' Tennis, 194 teams, DOES meet the league policy governing classification.

Impact

How does your proposal affect this activity, including its impact on all classes, areas of the state, and variety of schools

Sections in all three classes will be equitably balanced with 8 sections and 8-9 teams per section. Eight teams will advance to the state team tournament, 16 singles players and 16 doubles teams will advance to the state individual tournament.

Class AAA: History verifies the domination of current AA girls' tennis by the very largest schools in the state of MN. This proposal will keep the largest schools together:

**** Examples:** Minnetonka, Edina, Shakopee, Burnsville, Prior Lake, Elk River, Edina

**** Class AA:** brings together teams with (more) similar enrollment plus creates opportunities for mid-sized school teams and individuals to advance to State:

**** Example(s):** Delano, Hutchinson, Chisago Lakes, Mankato East, Mankato West, Grand Rapids, Alexandria, Monticello, Red Wing, Princeton, Marshall, New Ulm (*co-op), Worthington

Class A: still keeps the smallest schools together and provides opportunities for these schools:

**** Example(s):** Foley, East Grand Forks, Thief River Falls, Luverne, Mora, Fairmont, Waseca, Glencoe-SL, Park Rapids, Pine City, Roseau, Lake City

Administration

How does your proposal impact section and state tournaments?

Our proposal:

* Will require an additional State Tournament site.

- * Will require additional section (management plus State Tournament site management)
- * Class A Section Tournaments be administered by Class "A" Regions
- * Class AA & AAA Section Tournaments be administered by Class "AA" Regions
- * Will add 8 more teams + 48 individual participants
- * Will require more USTA roving officials

Length of Tournament

How does your proposal impact the needed competition time for section and state tournaments?

We can use the same schedule for Section + State tournaments. Therefore, no change in competition time will be necessary; however, as there will be fewer teams per section in the biggest classes (AAA & AA), the start date for section play could (potentially) be moved later, which could allow for late, regular season rescheduling of matches from inclement weather.

Participants

How does your proposal impact the number of participants/teams?

Our proposal will increase the number of tournament teams by 8 and individual participants by 48 individuals in singles (16) + doubles (32).

How does your proposal impact the percentage of participants/teams that would qualify for the state tournament?

This will increase the percentage of state tournament teams by 4% (from 8% to 12% in Girls' Tennis). The increase of qualifying individual participants will be approximately 4% of overall individuals.

Facilities

How does your proposal impact the facilities needed to accommodate your recommendation at both the section and state level?

An added class will require an additional (indoor) facility for State competition. The MTCA has communicated Life Time Fitness in Bloomington regarding interest and availability in hosting a State Tournament.

Life Time Fitness has enthusiastically expressed an interest in hosting the Girls' State Tournament.

* This facility is located in the Twin City metropolitan area, consistent with current State Tournament sites at the Baseline Tennis Center and InnerCity Tennis. Life Time Fitness previously hosted the State Tournament.

Awards

How does your proposal impact the number of awards at both section and state?

Our proposal will require an increase of 4 team + 60 individual medals for Team State and 10 medals for Individual State competition.

Other

Provide any other pertinent information not included in this proposal

Research reveals that two driving factors are important to success, including advancement in postseason play, in MN high school tennis: (larger) enrollment plus (higher) socioeconomics. Both socio-economic disparity and enrollment disparity are well documented in the sport of tennis. Our proposal provides support to address both disparities.

As noted earlier, the MTCA did previously submit a proposal for classification for both girls' and boys' tennis in 2022-23. Our proposal received a favorable review from a majority of the Region Committees and also the AD Advisory Committee. The MSHSL did not accept our proposal based on the joint proposal of boys' tennis and girls' tennis together as they have different numbers of programs. Therefore, this proposal has been revised and is being submitted on the behalf of girls' tennis only and fits all the current criteria of three class bylaws.

In this revised proposal, we are only seeking what other activities, which fit MSHSL policy governing classification, have been afforded. It is our belief that the programs, and specifically our athletes, deserve such consideration.

Our previous proposal included constructive discussion and debate. The MTCA took attentive note of concerns and constructive feedback along the way. We (again) appreciate your careful review and look forward to addressing any questions/concerns along the way.

Primary Author and Contact for Proposal

Proposal submitted by

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Position

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