



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2021

[Virtual stage is set for 2020-21 TSSAA Cheer and Dance Championships](#)

The TSSAA Cheer and Dance Virtual State Championships will be available to the general public to watch on-demand on Varsity TV beginning March 6. TSSAA will host an online awards ceremony on March 9.

[Read More](#)

[COVID-19 Spring Sports Regulations and Rules Modifications](#)

The Board of Control has adopted a series of regulations affecting all sports to keep students, school staff and spectators safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. These regulations and guidelines are in effect immediately for all sports. It is vital that school administrators and coaches are familiar with the information and are purposeful in their application of all guidelines and requirements. Complete information can be found on the [Return to Play page at TSSAA.org](#).

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[Finalists unveiled for the 2021 Mr. and Miss Basketball Awards](#)

The Mr. and Miss Basketball Awards will be presented next month to the top girls and boys in five classifications of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association prior to the championship game awards presentation for each class, respectively.

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[Plans finalized for 2021 BlueCross Basketball Championships](#)

The tournaments will have a new look this season as a result of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. The Division I BlueCross Basketball Championships, which were cut short a year ago, will return to MTSU's Murphy Center in 2021. Due to restrictions and public health concerns in Davidson County, the Division II basketball championships will be held at Hooper Eblen Center on the campus of Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville.

[Read More](#)

[CPA girls' basketball coach honored for distinguished service](#)

For LeGate, the on-court accolades pale in comparison to her true joy in being a veteran high school coach of more than 25 years: it's the joy of seeing her pupils develop into citizens, executives, leaders, mothers, wives and more in their societal roles.

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[NFHS revises guidance on COVID-19 transmission during high school sports](#)

Highlighting the revised guidance is the elimination of the tiered high-, medium- and low-risk categories for sports. Instead, the SMAC suggests that state associations and other stakeholders consider five factors in assessing potential for COVID-19 transmission in high school sports. Two of those factors are that prevailing community infection rates appear to be the strongest predictor for high school athletes being infected, and proven cases of direct COVID-19 transmission during athletics remain relatively rare.

[Read More](#)

[Gamechanger for Baseball & Softball Coaches](#)

We are thrilled to continue our partnership with GameChanger this season! Have you upgraded to their new app yet? Make sure to download GameChanger Team Manager for access to all of the enhancements including: live video with highlight clipping, pitching spray charts and in-game play editing. Make the free switch today!

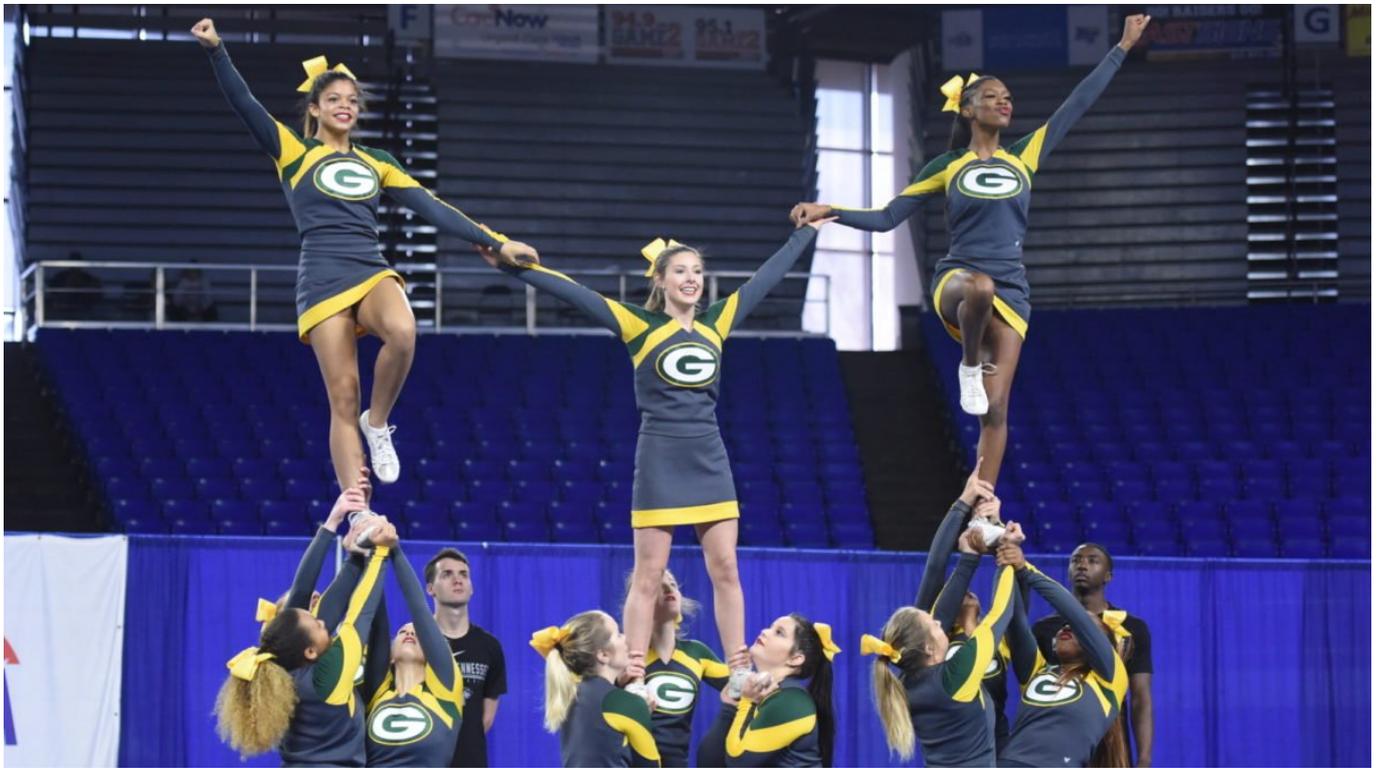
[Read More](#)

Call for Submissions

We want to include your thoughts in the monthly TSSAA Newsletter! Do you have 50-500 words to share on the topic of **overwork & fatigue in sports**? We welcome submissions from principals, athletic administrators, coaches and students! Consider sharing your thoughts, essays or even poems for an upcoming issue. Please send submissions in Microsoft Word format to mgillespie@tssaa.org.

TSSAA continues its support of the **National SAT/ACT Prep Project** through the NFHS and eKnowledge which allows any Tennessee student to receive a 95% discount on SAT or ACT prep courses. This is a community-service, non-profit project and all

student fees are reinvested to improve the program and reach more families. The project has more than 45,000 five-star reviews and has already assisted nearly 300,000 families. Learn more at <https://eknowledge.com/TSSAA>.



Virtual stage is set for 2020-21 TSSAA Cheer and Dance Championships

Statewide event for middle and high schools moves online

February 2, 2021

Preparations are currently underway for the 2020-21 TSSAA Cheer/Dance Championships which will be conducted in an online "virtual" format this school year due to COVID-19.

Registration and competition information for teams can be found below.

The TSSAA championships recognize middle and high school cheer and dance teams in 35 categories of competition and are normally held in December of each school year. TSSAA worked with UCA for several months to identify a suitable venue for holding the championships in person, but ultimately decided to hold the event virtually using UCA's online competition system.

Teams will film their routine in their own gym, football stadium or other facility with an NFHS-approved surface. Once recorded, teams will upload the video file of their routine to Varsity TV. No special equipment or software is required as coaches can simply film the team's routine on their smartphone or other camera. A UCA/UDA trained judging panel will score the routines just as they would at an in-person event. The deadline for all video uploads has been extended to Friday, February 26 due to the inclement weather.

The TSSAA Cheer and Dance Virtual State Championships will then be available to the general public to watch on-demand on Varsity TV beginning March 6. Each team will receive one FREE one-month subscription to watch.

[Watch the Championships on Varsity TV](#)

TSSAA will announce the competition results in a free live stream on Tuesday, March 9 at 5 PM Central.

[Watch the Awards Show on YouTube](#)

Information for Participating Teams

Registration is now open to all TSSAA or TMSAA Cheer and Dance teams. Please read through the documents below and register for the event through the following link. Registration closes at Noon on Wednesday, February 17.

[Begin Registration](#)

Event organizers will be using BAND to update coaches with important information and answer questions throughout TSSAA's virtual event. **This group is exclusively for coaches registered for this event.**

Documents

[Virtual Championship FAQ \(PDF\)](#)

[2020-2021 TSSAA Cheer Rules and Regulations \(PDF\)](#)

[2020-2021 TSSAA Dance Rules \(PDF\)](#)

[Registration Instructions \(PDF\)](#)

[Filming Guidelines \(PDF\)](#)



2007 Class AAA Miss Basketball Finalists

Sports News

General News

Finalists unveiled for the 2021 Mr. and Miss Basketball Awards

Thirty student-athletes to be recognized for their performances during the 2020-21 regular season

February 10, 2021

The Mr. and Miss Basketball Awards will be presented next month to the top girls and boys in five classifications of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association prior to the championship game awards presentation for each class, respectively.

A statewide committee of sportswriters selected the finalists based on performance during the 2020-2021 regular season. Academics and character were also taken into consideration. High school head basketball coaches and members of the media nominated the finalists.

This is the 37th year that the Mr. and Miss Basketball Awards have been presented to Tennessee's best high school basketball players. American General was the sponsor of the event since the inception of the awards in 1985 until 2001. The Memphis Grizzlies were sponsors of the awards from 2002-2004. From 2005-2015 the Mr. and Miss Basketball Awards were presented at the conclusion of each respective championship game as part of the post-game trophy ceremony.

Division II-A Miss Basketball Finalists

Jordaynia Ivie, Lakeway Christian
Olivia Lee, Trinity Christian
Maggie Vick, Lakeway Christian

Division II-AA Miss Basketball Finalists

Jaloni Cambridge, Ensworth
Carmyn Harrison, Hutchison
Jaila Lee, Brentwood Academy

Class A Miss Basketball Finalists

Madison Hart, Gibson County
Kassie Monday, Clarkrange
Karly Weathers, Loretto

Class AA Miss Basketball Finalists

Jalynn Gregory, Macon County
Jada Harrison, Westview
Reagan Hurst, Upperman

Class AAA Miss Basketball Finalists

Denae Fritz, Maryville
Acacia Hayes, Riverdale
Tessa Miller, Stone Memorial

Division II-A Mr. Basketball Finalists

Alex Anderson, Tipton-Rosemark
Kameron Jones, ECS
Braeden Moore, CPA

Division II-AA Mr. Basketball Finalists

B. J. Edwards, Knoxville Catholic
Chandler Jackson, Christian Brothers
Trent McNair, Brentwood Academy

Class A Mr. Basketball Finalists

Trey Johnson, Cosby
Walter Peggs, Madison Academic
Grant Strong, Clay County

Class AA Mr. Basketball Finalists

Jakobi Gillespie, Greeneville
Trey Morrow, Scott
Toris Woods, Bolivar Central

Class AAA Mr. Basketball Finalists

Mason Miller, Houston
Matthew Schneider, Siegel
Grant Slatten, White County



Sports News

Championships News

Plans finalized for 2021 BlueCross Basketball Championships

New venue secured for Division II tournament

February 4, 2021

Tournament Central

With district basketball tournaments beginning in the next few weeks, arrangements are being finalized for the 2021 TSSAA BlueCross State Basketball Championships. The tournaments will have a new look this season as a result of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to restrictions and public health concerns in Davidson County, the Division II basketball championships will be held at Hooper Eblen Center on the campus of Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville. The tournament will be played over a three-day stretch, March 4-6. The four games played each day will be scheduled as two, two-game sessions with each ticket good only for one session.

The Division I BlueCross Basketball Championships, which were cut short a year ago, will return to MTSU's Murphy Center in 2021. Murphy Center has been the host of many TSSAA basketball tournaments since 1975.

Games played Wednesday through Friday each week of the Division I tournament will be scheduled as three, two-game sessions with each ticket good only for one session. Tickets to the Division I Championship games on March 13 and 20 will be single-game tickets.

Seating capacity at both venues will be limited and participating schools will receive information on how to access their team allotment through the GoFan platform. There will be no reserved seats available for any of the tournaments and no tickets are expected to be available to the general public. TSSAA Championship Event cards and TACA cards will not be accepted.

The NFHS Network will provide live video streaming of every game through NFHSnetwork.com and the NFHS Network apps. TSSAA Network audio coverage and live stats will be available at TSSAAsports.com. Championship games will also be carried on a statewide network of television stations which will be announced at a later date.



Distinguished Service

Sports News

General News

CPA girls' basketball coach honored for distinguished service

February 17, 2021

The wins number in the hundreds.

The back-to-back state championships also remain an unprecedented feat in school history.

For myriad on-the-court reasons, Becky LeGate has carved a swath in Tennessee high school basketball as an iconic figure.

Yet for LeGate, the on-court accolades pale in comparison to her true joy in being a veteran high school coach of more than 25 years: it's the joy of seeing her pupils develop into citizens, executives, leaders, mothers, wives and more in their societal roles.

For all of those components, as well as the considerable on-court successes, LeGate, head girls' basketball coach at Christ Presbyterian Academy in Nashville, has been named the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Associations' Distinguished Service Award winner for February.

"For me, it's all about the relationships with the girls and families that I coached," LeGate said. "When I look back, yes I love the game of basketball. But that is not enough to sustain that (grind) and to sustain that passion. But what is, is just being a coach and having this amazing opportunity to really speak into the lives of these young girls. I have been blessed over my 26 years to have the most incredible girls. Now, they're all over the world. All over the country doing these amazing things.

"Honestly, that's why I haven't necessarily gone onto a different level, because where I am, I'm able to make such a difference and do it in such a way that really makes it satisfying."

LeGate has former proteges in all walks of life. Lauren Thompson, who still holds the state record for most defensive rebounds in a single game in the state tournament, has emerged as a marketing executive for Jordan Brand at Nike headquarters in Beaverton, Oregon. Ashley Boykin, another former understudy, has emerged as one of the top realtors in Nashville's ultra-competitive market, with Boykin "setting all kinds of records," LeGate noted.

She's also got too many former players now in various vocations stemming from the medical field to coaching and teaching. Sarah Menees, for one, is excelling as the middle school coach at Goodpasture. There are myriad others.



B Le Gate

LeGate's CPA Lady Lions won a pair of Class AA State Tournament titles in 2012-13; she previously had helped make Davidson Academy a similar powerhouse in girls' prep basketball in the Volunteer State.

Of course, LeGate's family is rather synonymous with excellence in girls' basketball in Tennessee. Her father, Weldon "Jake" Gibbs, won more than 300 games as head coach at Greenbrier High School, where Becky and her sisters were an integral part in that program's success at the state tournament level.

"I always wanted to be a coach," said LeGate, whose husband, Kevin, is also an assistant coach and athletics leader at CPA. "Growing up just as a little girl and going with my dad to games, watching him, I just loved every aspect of being a coach. The relationships outside of basketball to the teaching of the game, I loved that part. Practice is my favorite thing, and it was that way even as a player.

"I always knew I was going to be a coach, but I didn't know what level. I had high aspirations of being a college coach, but I went to Belmont and played for Tony Cross and he was an amazing coach and it was an unbelievable group of girls over my four years."

In addition to counting the late Cross among her key mentors, as well as her father, LeGate also fashioned a strong bond with legendary former Belmont men's basketball coach, Rick Byrd.

She even served as the Byrd family babysitter during her early years at Belmont, where her husband also had served as a Byrd assistant coach.

Now, the family dynamic has come full circle.

"That's been really neat," LeGate said of her family's evolution through basketball. "It's also been neat for my girls (Faith and Savannah) to have their granddaddy in the reverse role in the stands. It's fun.

"We are a very competitive crew. Game night, whatever we do. It's quite spirited."

So, too, is LeGate's walk in life.

TSSAA proudly salutes Becky LeGate for her many years of contributions to student-athletes in Tennessee.

AUTHOR

John Brice



Sports News

General News

NFHS updates rule regarding blocking below the waist in high school football

February 5, 2021

The rule regarding blocking below the waist in the free-blocking zone in high school football has been revised for the upcoming 2021 season.

This rule change was recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Football Rules Committee at its January 10-12 meeting, which was held virtually this year. This change to the 2021 NFHS Football Rules Book was subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

As a result of numerous interpretations of current language regarding blocking below the waist in the free-blocking zone, the committee approved another condition in Rule 2-17-2 that must be met for a legal block below the waist in the free-blocking zone, which is a rectangular area extending laterally 4 yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage.

The new requirement (2-17-2c) is that the block must be an immediate, initial action following the snap. Under the current rule, an offensive lineman can delay and then block below the waist if the ball is still in the zone. In the committee's ongoing quest to minimize risk in high school football, the change was approved to require the block to be immediate.

"This change makes it easier for game officials to judge the legality of blocks below the waist and minimizes risk of injury for participants," said Bob Colgate, NFHS director of sports and sports medicine and liaison to the Football Rules Committee. "This change lets game officials observe the block and make a call without having to determine where the ball is and what formation the offense lined up in."

Blocking in the back continues to be legal in the free-blocking zone by offensive linemen who are on the line of scrimmage and in the zone at the snap, against defensive players who are in the zone at the snap and the contact is in the zone.

The committee noted there has been no criticism of the current rules governing blocks in the back as they are delayed blocks by nature, above the waist and considered to be a safe and necessary legal block.

"I believe this rule change will help make the interpretation of blocking below the waist consistent across the country starting next football season," said Richard McWhirter, chair of the NFHS Football Rules Committee and assistant executive director of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association.

The Football Rules Committee is composed of one representative from each of the NFHS member state associations that use NFHS playing rules, along with representatives from the NFHS Coaches Association, NFHS Officials Association and NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

A complete listing of the football rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on “Activities & Sports” at the top of the home page and select “Football.”

According to the most recent NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, 11-player football is the most popular high school sport for boys with 1,006,013 participants in 14,247 schools nationwide. In addition, there were 31,221 boys who participated in 6-, 8- and 9-player football, along with 2,604 girls in all four versions of the game for a grand total of 1,039,828.

NFHS Revises Guidance on COVID-19 Transmission During High School Sports

By NFHS on February 02, 2021

[*nfhs news*](#)

After evaluating experiences of schools participating in high school sports during the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) has revised its May 2020 guidance document with a new “Statement on Risk of COVID-19 During High School Sports.”

Highlighting the revised guidance is the elimination of the tiered “Potential Infection Risk by Sport” that placed sports in high-, medium- and low-risk categories. Instead, the SMAC suggests that state associations and other stakeholders consider five factors in assessing potential for COVID-19 transmission in high school sports.

Two of those factors are that prevailing community infection rates appear to be the strongest predictor for high school athletes being infected, and proven cases of direct COVID-19 transmission during athletics remain relatively rare.

The other recommended factors to consider are that participants in non-contact sports show lower rates of COVID-19 infection than those in contact sports, participants in outdoor sports show lower rates of infection than those in indoor sports, and using face masks for indoor sports results in similar COVID-19 transmission rates to those seen in outdoor sports.

Regarding the discontinuation of the high-, moderate- and low-risk categories, the committee noted that as “knowledge of the virus that causes COVID-19 has evolved, we have increasingly recognized that transmission depends upon multiple factors that cannot be easily accounted for by simply dividing sports into three distinct categories of risk.”

In addition to the shared experiences of many states participating in high school athletics, the SMAC used current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, as well as published and unpublished data in adopting the five factors instead of the tiered infection risk by sport as the best current guidance for participating in high school sports during the pandemic.

“We applaud the great work of the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee throughout the past year to provide state associations and high schools with well-considered information during the pandemic,” said Dr. Karissa Niehoff, NFHS executive director. “We appreciate the committee’s most recent attempts to reassess how student-athletes can participate in sports moving forward. While we have to be concerned about transmission of the virus first and foremost, we also must consider the mental health of students who have been unable to play sports thus far this year.”

The final factor for consideration moving forward is based on accumulating evidence that the majority of sports-related spread of COVID-19 appears to occur from social contact, not during sports participation.

The committee noted that preventing spread of the virus from social contact remains paramount to the continuation of sports during the pandemic. As a result, social distancing, use of masks, staying home when ill and proper hygiene must continue to be emphasized in the locker room, on the field and court, while traveling and interacting in the community.

In addition to the five factors to consider in assessing the potential for COVID-19 spread in high school athletics, the SMAC listed three other resources for consideration, including materials from the CDC, the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee, a 15-member advisory committee, is composed of medical doctors, certified athletic trainers, high school coaches and officials, research specialists and state high school association executives that regularly develops position statements related to medical aspects of conducting high school athletics.

“If the medical profession has learned anything in the past year, it is that we have to be open to regularly assessing all available evidence and make appropriate changes in policies and procedures in places of business, schools and athletics,” said Dr. Michael Koester, chair of the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee who practices pediatric and adult sports medicine at the Slocum Center in Eugene, Oregon.

The “Statement on Risk of COVID-19 During High School Sports” can be accessed on the NFHS website at: <https://www.nfhs.org/media/4295118/nfhs-smac-statement-on-risk-of-covid-19-during-high-school-sports-january-27-2021-final.pdf>