



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2022

[This one's for the girls](#)

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[Legislative Council approves three bylaw changes](#)

The Legislative Council met via a virtual meeting on Wednesday, July 13 to take action on three proposed changes to the bylaws. The first change was in regards to the Middle School (TMSAA) bylaws, with the other two changes affecting Unified Sports in the TSSAA bylaws.

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[Board of Control works through annual June agenda at multi-day meeting](#)

The TSSAA Board of Control met in Murfreesboro this week, addressing more than 40 agenda items in meetings held on June 7 and 8, 2022.

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[Title IX Trailblazers](#)

Each week, TSSAA is recognizing female leaders - women who were trailblazers before Title IX and during its passage in 1972, and those that helped expand opportunities for female athletes since, particularly for middle and high school girls. Read more about Barbara Daush, Kim Kendrick, Michel Sanchez, Lesley Smith Riddle, Peggy Crabtree Stooksbury, Sherry Horton and Tina Evans.

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[Travel The Scenic Byways Of Tennessee!](#)

Nobody Trashes Tennessee is committed to keeping the state litter-free and that is ever apparent on the 13 designated scenic byways that network across our beautiful state. Ready to experience the Scenic Byways of Tennessee yourself? Check out the new blog post to learn more!

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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 **the proper role of coaches in school 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>.



Sports News

General News

This one's for the girls

TSSAA celebrates girls' sports and the impact of Title IX

June 23, 2022

The story of high school sports for girls in Tennessee begins, frankly, much earlier than in many other states – with initial girls' state championships celebrating their century mark at the same time Title IX marks its Golden Anniversary - but it is one that becomes evermore rich and expressive with each new chapter.

At the dawn of the revolutionary Title IX era 50 years ago this week, the state of Tennessee already had long conducted high school girls' basketball competitions – though not an iteration that any of today's burgeoning athletes might recognize. The Volunteer State, like much of the South, had clung to the antiquated – but still wildly popular – six-on-six, half-court version of basketball.

In fact, Tennessee had conducted its first-ever girls' basketball state championships way back in the 'Roaring '20s' during a six-year span from 1922-1928 and again resumed those battles for state supremacy in 1958.

While the association would add girls' tennis as a sanctioned sport in 1964, it wasn't until the enactment of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments that TSSAA-sanctioned programs for girls would begin to blossom. Although the landmark legislation which banned sex-based discrimination in federally-funded educational programs makes no mention of sports, Title IX has become synonymous with girls' equal opportunity to scholastic-based athletic participation.

As schools began establishing new programs for girls following the passage of Title IX, TSSAA began sanctioning and administering tournaments to follow suit. By 1974, TSSAA sanctioned girls' track and field, and a year after that golf and cross country.

Changes to Girls' Basketball

Change was afoot and upstart girls' basketball programs were standardizing play on the five-on-five rules, but schools playing by the six-on-six girls' basketball rules first developed by TSSAA and other state associations in 1952 faced a difficult choice: hold tight to decades of tradition or join the growing multitudes adopting the five-on-five game.

In 1976, Victoria Ann Cape, a junior at Oak Ridge High School, filed a federal lawsuit against TSSAA, arguing that the association's insistence on the six-player rules was a violation of her 14th Amendment rights. Among the witnesses chosen to testify on the benefits of the full-court game was the University of Tennessee's newly appointed women's basketball coach, Pat Head Summitt.

Summitt had grown up in Clarksville, but since Clarksville was not playing girls' basketball at the time, her family moved to Henrietta so she would have the opportunity to play on the team at Cheatham County High School. During her testimony, Summitt insisted that girls could adapt to full-court play and warned that failure to adopt the five-on-five rules would impede Tennessee girls from having the best

opportunities for college scholarships. While Cape's arguments in the District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee were successful, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ultimately overturned the decision in October 1977.

But the tide had begin to turn.

A poll of school administrators taken that December showed a narrow majority in favor of the full-court rules (191 for to 153 against). Six months later, the TSSAA Board of Control would institute a policy to permit girls' teams to play according to five-on-five rules by mutual agreement, but retaining six-on-six competition in the postseason for the 1978-79 school year.

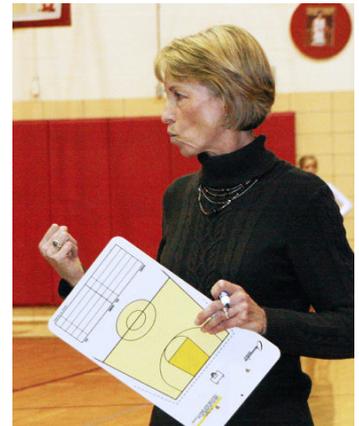
The final chapter in the battle over Tennessee's girls' basketball rules would be written the next spring when the Board of Control – with the state's nine regions represented – took final action on the matter at its March 1979 meeting. After nearly a decade of controversy, the Board's vote to drop the six-on-six rules modifications was nearly unanimous and thus began the "full-court" era of girls' basketball in Tennessee.

Jill Prudden, a transcendent girls' high school basketball figure who had been among her sport's pioneers as a player at Michigan State University, recalled Pat Summitt stepping in again with words that became fundamental in the Board's decision to switch.

"Pat Summitt made the statement that she was not going to recruit the state of Tennessee if it didn't go to five-on-five," said Prudden, an Illinois native who had grown up with the full-court game and earned one of the early women's athletics scholarships to Michigan State.

Prudden would invest 31 years in coaching girls' basketball at Oak Ridge High School, her teams amassing a 908-161 record and three state championships. Now, more than a decade removed from coaching, and six years post-induction into TSSAA's Hall of Fame, Prudden reflects positively on the change that was made in going to the full-court rules.

"It was interesting. First of all, I think there were many that thought half-court was a great game and some weren't happy about the change. In terms of what it meant, you know, you just heard all the stereotypes: girls can't do this, girls can't play, it's not exciting. I think Tennessee girls' basketball was really good, much better than in Michigan at that time. And I was really pleased to see that the product was good, because it opened doors."



Jill Prudden

New State Championships and the Growth of Soccer

While debate over girls' basketball rules garnered broad attention, dozens of trophies and awards were presented to champions in new, girls-only competitions. Chattanooga's Girls Preparatory School won the first-ever TSSAA state golf title and Harpeth Hall of Nashville claimed the first girls' cross country title in 1975; and another Chattanooga-area program, Kirkman Technical High School, won the first girls' volleyball crown the next year.

When Tennessee sanctioned girls' softball in 1979 and crowned its first champion, it was the only state in the South to have embarked upon that sport with the fast-pitch style of play; indeed, some Tennessee high school teams played slow-pitch contests with teams from neighboring states when they traveled and then played fast-pitch games at home.

A late comer to the TSSAA championship schedule was soccer, first sanctioned by the association beginning with the 1986-87 school year and still on a growth trajectory in the United States.

Susan Williamson, a TSSAA Hall of Famer who's been an integral figure in prep soccer since its establishment in Tennessee in the mid-1980s, remembered her own struggles in finding a path in athletics. Her Farragut High School did not have a girls' basketball team for her final two years of school, and when she initially began to play soccer in the Knoxville area, she soon found herself on a men's-league team for a decade.

"I remember when Title IX came in, I was in college then, a freshman at UT, and there was no girls' basketball team," Williamson said. "Girls felt discriminated against, we couldn't play full-court basketball, only half-court. I would play full-court pickup games with the guys."

By the end of that decade, Williamson had made the move to the pitch, and she's remained a fixture in the sport in various capacities since that time. She's been directly involved with the TSSAA, assigning referees and working as a supervisor, for more than 35 years.

"I knew nothing about soccer when I started in 1978; I didn't know how to play," she said. "Back then you would play two weeks of a sport in high school gym class and that was it. During that time, there weren't enough soccer referees in Knoxville, and the referee association reached out, and I became a soccer referee in 1980."

But young, determined female athletes had already found a path on the soccer field, Williamson recalled, even before its addition to the state's official roster of prep sports.



Susan Williamson

“The Dixie Conference, which was a high school soccer league unaffiliated with the TSSAA, had used me to assign referees for their games,” Williamson said. “So when it became sanctioned by TSSAA, I became the assigner for high school games in the East Tennessee area. And I continued to referee all that time until I stopped refereeing in about 2002.

“I can remember, as girls started developing teams, you started seeing more and more youth teams in the area. The level of play in that time has really improved a lot, and girls’ soccer has not only really spread in high school but in youth circles as well.”

Franklin High School won seven of the first eight girls’ soccer championships, including the first in 1986. Notre Dame interrupted their streak in 1988, while Farragut and Germantown each made multiple state title appearances over the same period.

Just as Prudden brought her 3 Cs – Class, Community, Court -- to her Oak Ridge program, Williamson also pointed to the doors opened on and off the playing surfaces, and the intrinsic life lessons therein.

“You learn life lessons and obviously you develop confidence and courage and the ability to test yourself and see how far you can go,” Williamson said, as she assessed the big-picture, societal impact of Title IX. “That’s how I saw myself up-and-coming as a referee. When I first started refereeing there weren’t any girls or women’s teams, but as I continued I saw more and more.

“To be able to continue to participate in a sport like soccer, as a player or referee, you have to develop the qualities of confidence and courage to do the right thing and fight through adversity. And then there’s giving back to the community through soccer, the love of the sport of soccer, and I love watching the game at any age, even little kids.”

The Future of Girls’ Sports

The TSSAA has continued to usher in new elements of female empowerment in the 2000s. In 2002, girls’ bowling was officially added as a sanctioned sport, and less than a decade ago, girls’ wrestling also joined the state’s roster of sports.

This year, when Rossvie High School’s girls’ wrestling team captured a state duals title, it was a national watershed moment; Rossvie stood as the nation’s first-ever girls’ wrestling state dual-meet champion.

There certainly is more out there on the horizon. Girls’ flag football and lacrosse are surging in popularity around the nation, with the Tennessee Titans investing in girls’ flag football and the growing interest in the sport around the midstate.

“Now when I look and see, oh my goodness,” Prudden said. “There’s so much more parity and equity. For a young lady to play in high school now and get a full-ride college scholarship, to have the chance to play in the pros and play in the United States. I’m sure for some, the steps seem slow for these things, but from my perspective it’s just amazing what has occurred in my lifetime.”

Equally amazing to think what more the future could hold.



1930 Girls' Basketball Grand Division Champions (Nankipoo, Linden, Oliver Springs)



Pearl High School won the first Class AAA girls' basketball championship under the five-on-five rules in 1980.





Chattanooga Kirkman Volleyball Team, 1978. Kirkman won the first five volleyball championships, 1976-1980.

AUTHOR
John Brice



General News

Meeting Agendas/Minutes News

Legislative Council approves three bylaw changes

Action taken during special called virtual meeting

July 13, 2022

The Legislative Council met via a virtual meeting on Wednesday, July 13 to take action on three proposed changes to the bylaws. The first change was in regards to the Middle School (TMSAA) bylaws, with the other two changes affecting Unified Sports in the TSSAA bylaws.

The TMSAA change was in regards to officials. Article IV, Section 16 of the TMSAA bylaws now states: "For varsity contests, all officials must be registered and approved by TSSAA."

The definition of a Unified Partner in regards to Unified Sports was changed to state:

"Unified Partner - A student participating in Unified Sports who has no intellectual disability or cognitive delay. Unified Partners are paired with Unified Athletes to participate on Unified Sports teams. Unified Partners are not eligible to participate **in the TSSAA postseason at the state level** on the school team for the sanctioned sport in which they are participating in the Unified competition."

The final item the Council approved was a change to Article II, Section 26 (Athletes Participating in Unified Sports) of the TSSAA Bylaws. The bylaw now reads as follows:

"Unified Partners must meet all TSSAA eligibility requirements. They are not eligible to participate **in the TSSAA postseason at the state level** on the school team for the sanctioned sport in which they are participating in the Unified competition."

The full minutes from the meeting can be found by clicking on the link below.

Documents

[Legislative Council Minutes \(July 13, 2022\) \(PDF\)](#)



General News

Meeting Agendas/Minutes News

Board of Control works through annual June agenda at multi-day meeting

Childress closes in on final days as TSSAA Executive Director

June 8, 2022

The TSSAA Board of Control met in Murfreesboro this week, addressing more than 40 agenda items in meetings held on June 7 and 8, 2022.

Three schools applied for and were approved for membership in the association. Winchester Christian Academy in Franklin County, Apostolic Christian Academy in Blount County, and Mt. Pisgah Early College High School in Shelby County were all approved for TSSAA Membership for 2022-23.

The Board voted to change the football mercy rule to decrease the margin necessary to bring about a running clock from 35 points to 30 points. No other part of the rule was changed. The mercy rule in football only applies in the second half and if one team's deficit falls under 30 points at any time, the game goes back to standard timing.

The Board also voted to return to the traditional, pre-pandemic handling of canceled football contests. Canceled games will be considered no-contests, meaning that teams will no longer receive a win if their opponent cancels, and any contract between the schools will be enforceable.

A state championship event for TMSAA in the sport of volleyball beginning with the 2023-24 school year was approved by the Board. The championship would take place in the fall. There are currently TMSAA state championships held in girls' and boys' basketball, softball, baseball, track and field and cross country.

Financial reports for the basketball, wrestling, and bowling tournaments were approved as well as the financial reports for the A.D. and Cheer/Coaches conferences.

The Board approved a change to the postseason baseball format proposed by Bartlett High School and the Tennessee Baseball Coaches Association, which will go into effect beginning with the 2022-23 school year. Region tournament participants must now win two games to advance to the sectional tournament. A game will be played between the semifinal round losers, the winner of which will face the loser of the region final game to determine the second team that will advance out of the region tournament. The sectional round will now become a best two-out-of-three series between the region champion of one region playing the region runner-up from the opposing region. The region champion would first host a doubleheader on Thursday to open the series, then if a game three is needed, the deciding game would be held the next day at the same site.

The Board of Control heard a report by the staff in regard to the number of coaches ejected, disciplinary action and unsportsmanlike incidents investigated during the 2021-22 school year. In addition, the Board voted to resume the A. F. Bridges Awards Program this upcoming school year, allocating \$27,000 in award money for the 27 winning schools.

On Wednesday, Board president Mike Reed of Morristown West High School presented outgoing Executive Director Bernard Childress with a plaque in recognition of his 27 years of service to the association. The meetings this week are among Mr. Childress' final official contributions as director, whose retirement begins at the end of the month. Mr. Childress used the opportunity to thank the Board for its faithful work during his tenure.

The Board interviewed finalists for the position created by the promotion of Mark Reeves to Executive Director and voted to hire Joe Blair of Brentwood High School to assume many of the duties former handled by Reeves.

The full minutes from the meeting can be found by clicking on the link below.

Documents

[Board of Control Minutes \(June 7-8, 2022\) \(PDF\)](#)

Title IX Trailblazers



TITLE IX^{at} 50

Celebrating and Growing Opportunities

TSSAA Title IX

We recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of Title IX, the landmark law supporting female participation in education-based programs. The passage of Title IX led to a movement here in Tennessee, where now more than 51,000 female athletes compete annually in 10 sanctioned TSSAA and TMSAA sports. During the last school year, 43 girls' teams and 269 female individuals claimed state championships in these 10 girls' sports. Yet on June 23, 1972, when the law was passed, there were only two sanctioned TSSAA girls' sports with state championships: basketball and tennis. Almost immediately, the TSSAA Board of Control and Legislative Council began rapidly expanding access to girls' sports by sanctioning and subsequently adding state championships in the following: track & field (1974), golf (1975), cross country (1975), volleyball (1976), softball (1979), soccer (1986), bowling (2002), wrestling (2015), and most recently, dual wrestling (2022).

During our state championships this school year, TSSAA would like to honor the women who played and coached for the first-ever state championships in their sport. We need the membership's help in locating these teams and individuals. If you represent one of the schools that won, or if you have contact with someone from one of these teams, we would encourage you to let us know by emailing titleix@tssaa.org or asking those individuals to complete [this form](#). We aim to collect photos and stories from these first girls' championships to share with the student-athletes competing for championships today. We would also like to invite these first female champions to their sport's state championship this school year. We appreciate your help in this undertaking and look forward to honoring these true TSSAA Trailblazers during our 2022-2023 state championships.

[List of First TSSAA Girls' State Champions](#)

[First TSSAA Girls' State Champions Contact Form](#)

Because the opportunities for today's athletes were built on the perseverance of those who came before, the TSSAA is looking to its member schools to help us identify the important Title IX figures in your own communities. We ask that if there is someone from your area that we need to know about, please complete the submission form at the link below. We are looking for female leaders from both past and present - women who were trailblazers before Title IX and during its passage in 1972, and those that helped expand opportunities for female athletes since, particularly for middle and high school girls. These could include athletes, teams, coaches, officials, or administrators. If you have any questions or ideas about this endeavor, please let us know in the comment box on the submission form. We look forward to learning more about some of the incredible female leaders who have had an impact on our member schools!

Feel free to share the submission link with anyone in your school community that may have a special interest in or information to share for this project.

[Title IX Trailblazer Submission Form](#)

TSSAA Title IX Trailblazers

[Tina Evans - July 12, 2022](#)

[Sherry Horton - July 5, 2022](#)

[Peggy Crabtree Stooksbury - June 28, 2022](#)

[Lesley Smith Riddle - June 21, 2022](#)

[Michel Sanchez - June 14, 2022](#)

[Kim Kendrick - June 7, 2022](#)

[Barbara Daush - May 31, 2022](#)

[India Weaver - May 24, 2022](#)

[Pam Whitfield - May 17, 2022](#)

[Judy Flatt Delk - May 10, 2022](#)

[Rita Rosenbalm Hackler - May 3, 2022](#)

[Teresa Lawrence Phillips - April 26, 2022](#)

[Debbie Shipley Hill - April 19, 2022](#)

[Susan Russ - April 12, 2022](#)

[Jean Litterer - April 5, 2022](#)

Tennessee Title IX News

[TSSAA recognizes Kirkman teams as first-ever girls' volleyball state champions](#)

[Summit's Siemen becomes state's first girls' flag football college signee](#)

[This one's for the girls - TSSAA celebrates girls' sports and the impact of Title IX](#)

[Williamson County Schools Girls' Flag Football Media Day Broadcast](#)

[Tennessee first state in nation to crown Girls' Wrestling Dual State Champions](#)

TENNESSEE SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

TITLE IX TIMELINE

PRE-TITLE IX

The only TSSAA-sanctioned girls' sports are basketball (split court, 6 players) and tennis. State championships were held in girls' basketball from 1922-1928 and again beginning in 1958, and in tennis beginning in 1964.

1972

Title IX legislation passes on June 23, 1972. In November, the Board of Control votes to sanction girls' track & field for the 1973-74 school-year.

1974

Coffee Co. HS wins the first girls' track & field state championship. The Board of Control votes to sanction

1975

1975

Girls Preparatory School wins the first girls' golf state championship and Harpeth Hall wins the first girls' cross country state championship.

Significant Board of Control votes: girls' and boys' basketball state championships to be held at the same site and time; girls can play on boys' teams in non-contact sports; girls' teams can compete against boys' teams, but they must also participate with the boys in the post-season; exceptions granted to hire qualified women who were not full-time certified teachers as girls' basketball coaches; girls' volleyball sanctioned for the 1976-77 school-year.

1979

Richland HS wins the first girls' softball state championship. The Board of Control votes to adopt the NFHS rules for girls' basketball for the 1979-80 school year, allowing girls to play full-court.

1986

The Legislative Council votes to sanction girls' soccer for the fall. Franklin HS wins the first girls' soccer state championship.

2001

The Legislative Council votes to sanction girls' bowling for the 2001-02 school-year.

2014

The Legislative Council votes to sanction girls' wrestling for the 2014-15 school-year.

2018

Michel Sanchez becomes the first female elected to the Board of Control.

2022

Tennessee becomes the first state in the nation to crown a girls' wrestling dual meet state champion when Rossvieview HS wins that title.

girls' golf to be played in the spring of 1975 and girls' cross country for the 1975-76 school-year.

1976

Chattanooga Kirkman Technical HS wins the first girls' volleyball state championship. Pat Head testifies in Cape v. TSSAA in support of full-court rules for girls' basketball.

1978

Board of Control votes to sanction girls' softball for the spring of 1979; later that year they vote to adopt NFHS fast-pitch rules.

1980

Girls' softball is considered a "major" sport by the Board of Control.

1994

Dr. Jean Litterer becomes the first female elected to either TSSAA governing body when she serves on the Legislative Council.

2002

Mt. Juliet HS (DI) and Elliston Baptist Academy (DII) win the first girls' bowling state championships.

2015

Science Hill HS wins the first girls' wrestling state championship.

2021

The Board of Control votes to hold a girls' wrestling dual meet state championship for the 2021-22 school-year. Emily Crowell becomes the first female to serve as Assistant Executive Director for the TSSAA.