



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2022

[TSSAA announces 2022 Tennessee Titans Mr. Football semifinalists](#)

The Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Awards will be presented to the top football players in nine classifications of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association on Wednesday, December 7, 2022, at Nissan Stadium in Nashville.

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[Mullins recognized for distinguished service to track and cross country](#)

While one son, Andrew, is an assistant track coach at Cleveland High School, Sonja Mullins' world of working cross country as well as track and field meets has turned into a family affair for all of them, including her husband, Danny, and other son, Matthew.

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[BlueCross Bowl kicks off Thursday at Chattanooga's Finley Stadium](#)

For the second consecutive season, Chattanooga's Finley Stadium will host the BlueCross Bowl TSSAA State Football Championships. Nine championship games will be held December 1-3, 2022 at the 20,421-seat venue in downtown Chattanooga.

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[Member school administrators weigh in on eight proposals at annual Regional Meetings](#)

The three regional meetings for 2022 were held across the state in November, bringing together leaders of TSSAA member schools to discuss legislative proposals and elect representatives to the organization's Board of Control and Legislative Council. The A. F. Bridges sportsmanship awards were also presented to the winners in each Athletic District and Grand Division.

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[Board of Control finalizes classification in November meeting](#)

The TSSAA Board of Control met in Murfreesboro on Thursday, November 17 to address numerous items on the agenda, including appeals submitted by member schools regarding their district/region placement for the upcoming classification cycle.

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A master's in sport and entertainment management from Trevecca Nazarene University can open professional doors and prepare you to fulfill your calling to the fullest. Learn about a few of the ways this unique degree program at Trevecca can really help you stand out.

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Staying active. Staying close to the sports you love. Being a part of the action while making a few extra bucks. The perks of becoming an official are endless! Every sport needs more officials, so sign up to suit up 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 **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

TSSAA announces 2022 Tennessee Titans Mr. Football semifinalists

Three finalists in each category to be announced on Tuesday, Nov. 22

November 3, 2022

The Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Awards will be presented to the top football players in nine classifications of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association on Wednesday, December 7, 2022, at Nissan Stadium in Nashville. The top kicker in the state will be recognized with a Mr. Football Award, regardless of classification.

Five semifinalists are announced in this release for each classification and the Kicker of the Year category. There are six classifications in Division I and three in Division II. The three finalists for each award will be unveiled by Mike Keith and Titans head coach Mike Vrabel at 8pm ET/7pm CT on Tuesday, November 22. The announcement will be streamed on the [Tennessee Titans website](#) and the Titans social/digital channels. The three finalists for each award will be the ones invited to attend the awards luncheon at Nissan Stadium, where the winner of each award will be announced.

A committee of statewide sports writers selected winners based on performance in the 2022 regular season. Academics and character were also taken into consideration. High school head coaches and members of the media nominated the finalists.

"We are very excited and appreciative about being involved with the Tennessee Titans for the 16th consecutive year," stated Mark Reeves, Executive Director of the TSSAA. "They have helped make the recognition of these 50 student-athletes, their families, and schools possible. The sponsorship of the Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Awards and numerous contributions to high schools across the state since the team moved to Tennessee have meant a great deal to the member schools of the TSSAA."

This is the 38th year that the Mr. Football Awards have been presented to Tennessee's best high school football players. A Mr. Football trophy will be presented to the winners of each category. A Mr. Football plaque will be presented to the other two finalists in each category. The other semi-finalists will each receive a certificate.

Mike Keith, play-by-play voice of the Tennessee Titans, will emcee the awards presentation. A live videostream of the awards will be provided on the [Titans website](#).

2022 Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Semifinalists

DIVISION I, CLASS 1A

Kumaro Brown, MASE

Jackson Cassidy, McKenzie

Sam Driggers, Peabody
Isaiah Thomison, Fayetteville
Kamden Wellington, South Pittsburg

DIVISION I, CLASS 2A

Mason Bowman, Monterey
Jacquan Davis, Fairley
Quincy Hamilton, Westview
Joshua Jackson, Tyner
Zech Prince, East Robertson

DIVISION I, CLASS 3A

Jamarion Dowell, Covington
Easton Elliott, Waverly
Jordan Harris, Alcoa
Mark Joseph, Sheffield
Lance Williams, Alcoa

DIVISION I, CLASS 4A

Gabe Borders, Macon County
Juandrick Bullard, East Hamilton
Marcellus Jackson, Fulton
Walker Martinez, Anderson County
Jamari Person, Haywood

DIVISION I, CLASS 5A

De'Sean Bishop, Karns
Malaki Dowell, White County
Brayden Latham, Knoxville West
Jordyn Potts, Powell
Braxton Sharp, Munford

DIVISION I, CLASS 6A

Justin Brown, Blackman
Arion Carter, Smyrna
Kade Hewitt, Oakland
Jack Risner, Blackman
Noah Vaughn, Maryville

DIVISION II, CLASS A

Jared Curtis, Nashville Christian
Kevin Finch, USJ
Ashton Jones, DCA
D.J. Merriweather, Clarksville Academy
Garrett Weekly, Friendship Christian

DIVISION II, CLASS AA

Kaleb Beasley, Lipscomb Academy
Orlando "Boo" Carter, Chattanooga Christian
Brock Glenn, Lausanne
Charlie Robinson, Knoxville Webb
Maureice "Junior" Sherrill, Lipscomb Academy

DIVISION II, CLASS AAA

Max Carroll, Briarcrest
Gabe Fisher, MBA
Carson Gentle, McCallie
Caleb Hampton, Baylor
Marcel Reed, MBA

KICKER OF THE YEAR

Max Gilbert, Lausanne
Oziel Hernandez, Germantown

Reese Keeney, Farragut
Ben Shrewsbury, Daniel Boone
Jacob Taylor, Oakland



Distinguished Service

General News

Officiating News

Mullins recognized for distinguished service to track and cross country

Serves as timer for more than 50 events per year in Chattanooga and beyond

November 18, 2022

As her kids dedicated themselves as stalwart cross country, as well as track and field, athletes at Chattanooga Christian School in the early 2000s, Sonja Mullins knew she likewise wanted to invest in the sports as more than just a mother supporting her children from the bleachers.

So Mullins started keeping the books and various other data points.

"It was better than sitting in the stands for four hours at a meet," she said. "So, I started keeping the books and now I've been doing something in the track and cross country world for the past 22 years."

Mullins didn't stop when her sons' prep racing careers ended, and she hasn't stopped working with youth track and cross country athletes in the decades since, earning selection this month as the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association's Distinguished Service Award winner for November.

"I've done everything from scoring to now I own my own timing company," Mullins said of TXC Timing, which works closely with both the TSSAA and TMSAA as well as myriad schools in the Chattanooga area. "And I do most of the timing in the Chattanooga area for all cross country meets and track meets. Usually, I'm the meet director and timer.

"I just continue to do it because I love the kids and enjoy the people I've met. I've made some great friends and worked with some incredible athletes and kids and that's why I've continued to do it."

While one son, Andrew, is an assistant track coach at Cleveland High School, Sonja Mullins' world of working cross country as well as track and field meets has turned into a family affair for all of them, including her husband, Danny, and other son, Matthew.

It takes the household working together, along with Sonja Mullins' sheer force of will, for a busy season of events.

Consider:

"So this past fall, and I'm just finishing cross country today," Mullins shared in a recent phone call. "I did 24 meets between elementary, middle and high school. Probably closer to 30, because I also help with elementary and middle school meets for the Chattanooga Independent Schools Conference.



Sonja Mullins

“In the spring, it’s 15 to 20 meets and that doesn’t include state meets. We do the state pentathlon and decathlon, as well as middle school and high school state track. From August through November and from March through May, it’s extremely busy.”

Still, it remains a labor of love for Mullins. She’s reminded as much on this day while tearing down equipment from a season-ending meet.

“I really have enjoyed doing it, and I’ve got this T-shirt that says, ‘Inspire every kid you meet,’” Mullins shared. “It’s been my passion through the years, to inspire kids.

“I had a girl come up to me from Cleveland (today) just to say, ‘Thanks so much for cheering us on at all our meets.’ Or, sometimes they will come up and say, ‘Mrs. Mullins, can we have our picture made with you?’

“It’s become something we do as a family, and I enjoy that time. I think that’s what I enjoy the most, the chance to help young kids.”

TSSAA is proud to honor Sonja Mullins for the years of contributions she has made to student-athletes in track and field and cross country.

AUTHOR

John Brice



[Sports News](#)

[Championships News](#)

BlueCross Bowl kicks off Thursday at Chattanooga's Finley Stadium

Three-day event features 18 teams from across the state

November 26, 2022

The BlueCross Bowl TSSAA State Football Championships return to Chattanooga's Finley Stadium this Thursday. Nine championship games will be held December 1-3, 2022 at the 20,421-seat venue located just off W 20th St. in downtown Chattanooga.

[Championship Information & Tickets](#)

BlueCross Bowl Schedule

ALL TIMES EASTERN

Thu. 11 AM, Division II-AA Championship, CPA vs. Lipscomb Academy
Thu. 3 PM, Division II-A Championship, Friendship Christian vs. Nashville Christian
Thu. 7 PM, Division II-AAA Championship, MBA vs. Baylor
Fri. 11 AM, Class 3A Championship, Alcoa vs. East Nashville
Fri. 3 PM, Class 1A Championship, Clay Co. vs. McKenzie
Fri. 7 PM, Class 5A Championship, Knoxville West vs. Page
Sat. 11 AM, Class 4A Championship, Anderson Co. vs. Pearl Cohn
Sat. 3 PM, Class 2A Championship, Tyner vs. Riverside
Sat. 7 PM, Class 6A Championship, Oakland vs. Beech

Ticket Information

Advance tickets through GoFan (gofan.co) are \$12 each and good for all three games in a day. Tickets at the gate are \$15 each. All spectators school-age and older must have a ticket. Gates will open one hour prior to the first game.

[Purchase Championship Tickets](#)

Television Coverage

Telecasts of all nine championship games will be produced by NFHS Network and distributed to outlets across the state. To find the station and channel in your area, view the guide below. Online streaming via NFHSnetwork.com is available for those not able to view a live television broadcast.

[Television Guide](#)[Watch Live Online](#)

About Finley Stadium

Finley Stadium has a clear bag policy for spectators. Only one clear plastic bag no larger than 12 inches by 6 inches by 12 inches or a one-gallon, clear, resealable plastic storage bag per person will be permitted. Fans will also be allowed a small clutch purse not to exceed 4.5 inches by 6.5 inches. No other bags will be allowed inside Finley Stadium. All items, including clear bags and clutch purses, are subject to search at the gates. Smoking and vaping is prohibited at the stadium.

Parking

Parking will be \$10 per day, cash only. Parking attendants will be stationed at each entrance of the North Lot (between Main St. and the stadium). Parking is available on a first-come, first-served basis.



General News

Meeting Agendas/Minutes News

School administrators gather for annual Regional Meetings

A.F. Bridges Award winners recognized

November 11, 2022

The three Regional Meetings for 2022 were held this week across the state, bringing together leaders of TSSAA member schools to discuss legislative proposals and elect representatives to the organization's Board of Control and Legislative Council. The A. F. Bridges sportsmanship awards were also presented to the winners in each Athletic District and Grand Division.

Seventy-five percent of member schools had an administrator present for the meetings (354 of 471). The best attended meeting was the Middle Regional Meeting where 126 of 165 member schools were in attendance.

A full list of A. F. Bridges Award winners are included below.

Eight elections were held for seats on the Board of Control and Legislative Council. The individuals elected are listed below:

- Mike Reed of Morristown-West High School (Board of Control, First Athletic District)
- Bryan True of Loretto High School (Board of Control, Sixth Athletic District)
- Dexter Williams of Trinity Christian Academy (Board of Control, Seventh Athletic District)
- David Meske of Webb School of Knoxville (Board of Control, East Tenn. Independent School Representative)
- Rob Speas of Hardin Valley Academy (Legislative Council, Second Athletic District)
- Les Trotter of Waverly Central High School (Legislative Council, Sixth Athletic District)
- Bo Griffin of Millington Municipal Schools (Legislative Council, Ninth Athletic District)
- Tom Densford of St. George's Independent School (Legislative Council, West Tenn. Independent School Representative)

The membership voted on eight proposals presented by fellow member schools. A proposal by Copper Basin High School to include charter schools with independent schools in Division II for postseason competition (Article I, Section 3) was supported by 71% of the membership.

Fayette Academy submitted two proposed changes to the bylaws. The first proposal was to require all transfers to boarding schools to sit out one year from their last game that an athletic record was established. The proposed change was supported by 84% of the schools in attendance. The second proposal submitted by the school was to allow only one transfer per year from outside the state of Tennessee to be eligible regardless if they have a bona fide change of address. More than 96% of the membership voted against this proposal.

A proposed change to the Home School Rule (Article II, Section 12) was submitted by Blackman High School. The proposed change would permit a transfer of a home school student with a current athletic record into the school in which they participated with as a home school student and be eligible at the varsity level. This was supported by 94% of the member schools in attendance.

A proposed change to the Amateur Rule (Article II, Section 18) was submitted by the TSSAA staff. The change is intended to clarify that students cannot be compensated for their performance in contests, but can be compensated for other activities (modeling, instructional services, sponsorships, etc.) provided that there is no reference to a TSSAA school, TSSAA accolades or championships. The proposed change reads:

*A student **who has never received payment for performance** in the sports which this Association governs and who has always contested under his/her own name is an amateur. (Accepting money for officiating athletic contests, **payment for instructional services**, or for working as an employee in a city or county recreation program is not a violation of this regulation.)*

Students may receive payment for activities not related to performance provided that they are carried out in a manner that does not suggest or reasonably suggest the endorsement or sponsorship of the TSSAA school. The student's activities for which they are compensated may not include an image or likeness of the student in a uniform, or other clothing or gear depicting the name or logo of the TSSAA member school the student is attending or has attended. No reference to TSSAA accolades or championships may be used in the student's activities for which they are compensated.

Slightly more than 90% of the member schools voted in favor of the proposal.

The sixth proposed change to the bylaws was submitted by Tennessee Online Public School. It was a proposed change to the Virtual School Rule (Article II, Section 27). The current wording of the bylaw states:

In order for a student to practice or participate at any level, the student must reside in the geographic area of the LEA of the member virtual school. The virtual school must be a member of TSSAA in good standing. The administration of the virtual school must choose to allow their students to participate for their zoned public schools.

The proposed change reads as follows:

The participating student must have a legal residence within the school district of the school where he/she will be participating, if participating with a public school. If participating with a private school, the student must have a legal residence within a 20 mile radius of the private school and meet all tuition and financial aid requirements.

There was more of a divide in the voting by member schools, as 59% were in favor of the proposal and nearly 40% were opposed.

Hardin Valley Academy submitted a proposed change to the Repeating Rule (Article II, Section 7). The change speaks specifically to the "Coaching Link" portion of the rule, and states:

Coaching Link - If a student enrolls in a high school where an "athletic coaching link existed in the past 24 months, that student is ineligible for 12 months past their first date of enrollment at the high school at all levels in the specific sports where a linkage was present. Links may include (1) attendance at an individual camp; (2) playing on non-school (independent) teams including all-star, 7 on 7, and AAU teams (and then enrolling in that coach's school); (3) enrolling in a school where a former coach has been hired; and (4) enrolling in a school where a former or current personal trainer or strength and conditioning coach is employed.

Students who live a public school's geographic zone or attending a private school's direct feeder school are exempt from the Coaching Link.

Only 23% of the membership voted in favor of the proposed change.

The final proposal was submitted by Alcoa High School and is related to Hybrid Schools. The proposed change was that student athletes who attend a Hybrid School must play within the district in which they reside. 40% of the member schools voted in favor of the proposed addition.

The proposals will be considered by the Legislative Council at their next scheduled meeting, which will be held on December 8.

The full results appear in the minutes attached below.

A. F. Bridges Award Winners

Photo Gallery

School System Administrator of the Year

David McLain - Greene County Schools (Athletic District 1)
Tony Clower - Roane County Assistant Director (Athletic District 2)
Mark Griffith - Marion County Schools (Athletic District 3)
Kurt Dronebarger - White County Schools (Athletic District 4)
Michael Brown - Sumner County Athletic Director (Athletic District 5)
Jacob Sorrells - Marshall County Schools (Athletic District 6)
Marion King - Jackson-Madison County Schools (Athletic District 7)
Tim Haney - Trenton Special Schools (Athletic District 8)
David Stephens - Bartlett Schools (Athletic District 9)

Principal of the Year

Betsy Oliver - Unaka High School (Athletic District 1)
Justin Nivens - Oliver Springs High School (Athletic District 2)
Gerald Harris - Tyner Academy (Athletic District 3)
Paul Parsley - Coffee County Central High School (Athletic District 4)
Bryan Feldman - Clarksville High School (Athletic District 5)
Dr. Katherine Hill - Page High School (Athletic District 6)
Jason Bridgeman - Jackson North Side High School (Athletic District 7)
Jacob Cross - Union City High School (Athletic District 8)
Roger Jones - Collierville High School (Athletic District 9)

Athletic Director of the Year

Conchita Owenby - Gatlinburg Pittman High School (Athletic District 1)
Robbie Bennett - Heritage High School (Athletic District 2)
Jared Hensley - Soddy Daisy High School (Athletic District 3)
Todd Harris - Stewarts Creek High School (Athletic District 4)
Kristi Utley - Beech High School (Athletic District 5)
Phil Ross - McEwen High School (Athletic District 6)
Michael Poteete - Henry County High School (Athletic District 7)
Greg Scott - Milan High School (Athletic District 8)
Mike Kelly - Christian Brothers High School (Athletic District 9)

Female Coach of the Year

Laura Cook - Science Hill High School (Athletic District 1)
Carol Mitchell - Gibbs High School (Athletic District 2)
Amy McGowan - Cleveland High School (Athletic District 3)
Dana McWilliams - Upperman High School (Athletic District 4)
Mary Taylor Cowles - Ensworth High School (Athletic District 5)
Andrea Kelly - Summertown High School (Athletic District 6)
Sherrri Smith - Fayette Ware High School (Athletic District 7)
Kayla Irvin - Crockett County High School (Athletic District 8)
Deanna Smith - Kirby High School (Athletic District 9)

Male Coach of the Year

Terry Hoese - South Greene High School (Athletic District 1)
Joseph Gaddis - Oak Ridge High School (Athletic District 2)
Donnell Dunning - Brainerd High School (Athletic District 3)
Mark Purvis - Watertown High School (Athletic District 4)
David Tucker - Franklin Road Academy (Athletic District 5)
Jason Loveless - Richland High School (Athletic District 6)
John Wilkins - McKenzie High School (Athletic District 7)
Jarod Neal - Westview High School (Athletic District 8)
Bubba Lockett - Christian Brothers High School (Athletic District 9)

Official of the Year

Harold "Butch" Patterson (Athletic District 1)
Barry Mathis (Athletic District 2)
Joe Scruggs (Athletic District 3)
Mike McKenzie (Athletic District 4)
Rico Greene (Athletic District 5)
Randy McNeece (Athletic District 6)
Mark Suggs (Athletic District 7)
Jeff Leyhue (Athletic District 8)
Tim Cooper (Athletic District 9)

Contributor of the Year

Roy Farne - Volunteer High School Announcer (Athletic District 1)
Jim Freeman - WLAF Radio (Athletic District 2)
Craig McClure - Soddy Daisy Wrestling (Athletic District 3)
Mark Moran - President of Tullahoma QB Club (Athletic District 4)

Josh & Jennifer Thompson - Nashville ReadyMix (Athletic District 5)
Ned Rich - Maury County (Athletic District 6)
Tim Rogers - Talk Show 96.5 (Athletic District 7)
Bradley Owens - 93.7 FM Medina (Athletic District 8)
Katie Perkins - OrthoSouth Sports Medicine (Athletic District 9)

East Tennessee Divisional Finalists

CLASS A

First Baptist Academy
North Greene High School
Rockwood High School (Winner)

CLASS AA

Chuckey-Doak High School
Scott High School
Seymour High School (Winner)

CLASS AAA

Cleveland High School
Daniel Boone High School
Jefferson County High School (Winner)

Middle Tennessee Divisional Finalists

CLASS A

Forrest High School
Hickman County High School (Winner)
Mt. Pleasant High School

CLASS AA

Macon County High School
Valor College Prep
Waverly Central High School (Winner)

CLASS AAA

Antioch High School (Winner)
Clarksville High School
Nolensville High School

West Tennessee Divisional Finalists

CLASS A

Adamasville High School
Fairley High School
Greenfield High School (Winner)

CLASS AA

Chester County High School (Winner)
Kirby High School
St. Mary's Episcopal School

CLASS AAA

Briarcrest Christian School
Dyer County High School (Winner)
Overton High School

Documents

[2022 Region Meeting Minutes \(PDF\)](#)



General News

Meeting Agendas/Minutes News

Board of Control meets in Murfreesboro

Classification for the next two years is finalized after hearing appeals from member schools

November 17, 2022

The TSSAA Board of Control met in Murfreesboro on Thursday, November 17 to address numerous items on the agenda, including appeals submitted by member schools regarding their district/region placement for the upcoming classification cycle.

Three schools applied for and were approved for membership in the association. Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence High, Kirkwood High School in Clarksville, and Kehilla High School in Nashville.

More than 20 schools submitted appeals to the Board in regards to their district/region placement for the 2023-2025 classification cycle. Five schools appealed their enrollment figures. The complete results of those appeals can be seen in the minutes of the meeting (linked below).

Both Hamilton High School and Raleigh-Egypt High School appealed sanctions placed on their girls' basketball programs after an unsportsmanlike incident that occurred during the regional semifinal game between the two schools towards the end of the 2021-22 season. After reviewing the report of their sportsmanship and community service initiatives, the Board voted to remove the second year of restrictive probation that was originally placed on both girls' basketball programs.

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

Documents

[Board of Control Minutes \(11-17-22\) \(PDF\)](#)