



To: NJSIAA Program Review Committee

From: Tony Maselli, Chief Operating Officer

Date: October 10, 2025

RE: Establishment of Tournament Criteria

Proposal

The purpose of this proposal is to establish clear and transparent criteria for what the NJSIAA considers to be a tournament in order for an event to be excluded from a sport's maximum game limit rule. By defining these standards, the NJSIAA seeks to ensure transparency, consistency and accountability across all sports and all schools. This proposal will begin with the 2025-26 winter season, and the complete criteria and procedures have been included for your reference.

Proposed Tournament Criteria

1. Eligibility: Only NJSIAA member schools may participate.
2. Minimum Size: At least 8 schools, with teams playing no more than 3 games.
3. Maximum Size: Up to 32 schools, with teams playing no more than 5 games.
4. Brackets & Scores:
 - Tournament brackets must be published on NJ.com.
 - All game results must be entered on NJ.com after each game.
5. Event Organizer: Must be run by a county, conference, or NJSIAA-approved affiliated organization (such as a NJ coaches association).
 - Third-party event organizers are not eligible.

Rationale

Currently, there is no uniform standard for what constitutes a tournament under NJSIAA's maximum game limit rule. This lack of clarity can create inconsistencies in scheduling and enforcement. Establishing clear, transparent, and enforceable criteria ensures that all schools are held to the same standard when organizing or participating in tournaments.

By setting eligibility requirements, minimum and maximum tournament sizes, and limits on the number of games, the NJSIAA can prevent the misapplication of the maximum game limit rule while still allowing schools to benefit from the competitive opportunities tournaments provide. Publishing brackets and results on NJ.com promotes transparency, accountability, and accurate record-keeping for both the NJSIAA and participating schools.

Requiring that tournaments be organized by counties, conferences, or NJSIAA-approved affiliated organizations ensures that events are legitimate, properly supervised, and aligned with the mission and values of the NJSIAA. Excluding third-party event organizers prevents potential conflicts of interest, profit-driven scheduling, or tournaments that do not prioritize student-athlete welfare.

In short, these criteria protect the integrity of competition, maintain fairness across member schools, and provide a clear framework for how tournaments fit within the maximum game limit rule.

NJSIAA Tournament Criteria & Procedures

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Tournament Procedures

1. County/Conference/League Tournaments
 - If your county, conference, or league runs a tournament that all schools can participate in, you must participate unless you are formally released from the tournament.
 - County/Conference/League tournaments do not count toward the maximum number of games limit.
 - If you are released and you choose to enter another tournament, only NJSIAA approved tournaments will not count towards the maximum game limit.
2. Qualifying Tournaments
 - NJSIAA approved tournaments that require qualification to enter, and you do not qualify, you may enter another tournament.
 - If you choose to enter another tournament, only NJSIAA approved tournaments will not count towards the maximum game limit.
3. Invitational Tournaments
 - Only NJSIAA approved tournaments will not count towards the maximum game limit.
4. Participation in multiple approved tournaments
 - In the event you have participated in two or more NJSIAA approved tournaments, you must declare only one as a non-counting tournament by the cutoff date for that particular sport.

Current NJSIAA Approved County/Conference/League-Equivalent Tournaments

1. South Jersey Soccer Coaches Cup – B/G Soccer
2. South Jersey Tournament of Champions – Field Hockey
3. South Jersey Invitational Basketball Tournament – G Basketball
4. Joe Hartmann Diamond Classic – Baseball