

Changes to the Individual Fencing Championships Qualification for the 2025-2026 Season

Developed by a committee appointed by the NJSIAA consisting of Mike Griffin, Stephen Olson, Rich Molina, Greg Puccio, and Andrew “Lefty” Zlotnick

This proposal has been discussed and approved by the NJSIAA Post Season Fencing Committee as a 2 year pilot program beginning with the 2025-2026 Fencing Season. This set up will eliminate the current District Championship format as the means to qualify for the Individual State Championships.

Individual Championships:

Coaches will use the Touch By Touch (TbT) system to record dual meet results.

Touch By Touch will offer free seminars to train coaches that may need assistance in setting up the program.

Touch By Touch will rank all fencers based on the results that coaches enter.

The top 36 fencers as ranked by TbT in each discipline (by gender & weapon) at the cut off date will automatically qualify for the State Individual Fencing Championship Tournament. If any of the qualifiers decline the invitation, the next ranked individual will be asked to fill that spot. Schools are limited to 3 entries per discipline (by gender & weapon).

Independent Fencers (fencers from schools that do not sponsor fencing) – How to Qualify.

Independent Fencers must be sponsored by their school and meet all the eligibility requirements that NJSIAA athletes must follow.

Each school can enter up to 3 fencers per discipline (by gender & weapon).

Qualification fencing will take place during the NJ Fencing Coaches Centrulo/Santelli Tournament in mid - January.

Independent Fencers will fence off in each discipline (by gender & weapon). A maximum of 4 Independent fencers will qualify in each discipline (by gender & weapon).

Other Qualifiers:

Any fencer who has not qualified due to extenuating circumstances and with valid documentation may petition the NJSIAA Fencing Committee to be allowed to compete.

NJSIAA Individual Fencing Ranking System

Below is the explanation of the NJSIAA Individual Fencing Ranking System used for calculating the Individual Fencer ranking to qualify for the State Individual Championship. Touch By Touch (TbT) will be the mechanism for collecting the data and calculating the ranking.

While submitting the data to TbT will be voluntary, any team that does not submit all regular season dual meet data to TbT by the First Saturday in February will be ineligible for the State Individual Tournament.

ROSTER DEADLINE

- Coaches must input all roster information into TbT by the Friday before December 24th.

REPORTING BOUTS

- In order to qualify for the individual tournament, coaches must report all regular season bouts via TbT.
- Regular season bouts must be fenced and reported by the first Saturday of February - end of day.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF BOUTS

In order to be considered for qualification to the State Individual Tournament, fencers must meet the following criteria:

- Fence the minimum number of 12 regular season bouts by the deadline.
- Regular season bouts that count toward the minimum number are derived from Dual Meet bouts. Not tournament play.
- Have completed bouts fenced and reported by the first Saturday of February - end of day.

FORMULA USED FOR CALCULATING THE RANKINGS FOR INDIVIDUAL FENCERS

The following formula will be used to calculate the rankings for individual fencers. This ranking will be referred to as the Fencer's Seeding Ranking (FSR).

FSR FORMULA:

This is how the ranking of individual fencers will be calculated, which will be used to determine qualification for the State Individual Tournament. This ranking will be referred to as the Fencer's Seeding Ranking (FSR).

$$\text{FSR} = (\text{WinFraction} \times \text{SSF}) + (0.40 \times \text{IVSF})$$

$$\text{FSR} = (\text{WinFraction} \times \text{Season Strength Factor}) + (0.40 \times \text{Individual Victory Strength Factor})$$

FSR - Fencer's Seeding Ranking

WinFraction - a fencer's winning percentage

SSF - Season Strength Factor

IVSF - Individual Victory Strength Factor

WINFRACTION

A fencer's winning percentage (WinFraction) is calculated in the following way:

Number of Bouts Won / Number of Bouts Attempted

- All bouts fenced during Dual Meets in the regular season are considered.

INITIAL POWER RATING

The fencer Initial Power Rating (IPR) will be determined by last year's results via the NJIFA All State Points or the current year of the fencer (Senior, Junior, Sophomore, or Freshmen).

The IPR for each fencer is determined by the Friday before December 24th. No other changes will be made to the IPR after that date.

The points will be awarded as follows:

150 points Previous Season All-State 1-3

120 points Previous Season All-State 4-8

110 points Previous Season All-State 9-16

100 points Previous Season All-State 17-24

90 points Previous Season All-State 25-36

80 points Senior high school fencers with no All State finish previous season

60 points Junior high school fencers with no All State finish previous season

40 points Sophomore high school fencers no All State finish previous season

20 points Freshmen high school fencers with no experience

If a 1st year fencer has USA Fencing experience, their power rating will be determined by either the points according to their USA Fencing rating or the points according to their year in high school, determined by whichever is higher

90 points - A rating

80 points - B rating

70 points - C rating

60 points - D rating

50 points - E rating

0 points - U rating

The max for a fencer's IPR will be: 150

SEASON STRENGTH FACTOR (SSF)

A fencer's Season Strength Factor (SSF) will be calculated by averaging the Initial Power Rating (IPR) of the opponents who comprise the top 60% of the most difficult bouts fenced (i.e., highest rated opponents by power rating).

- The SSF statistic is multiplied by the winning percentage for all bouts fenced during regular season competitions.

EXAMPLE: If a fencer had a total of 25 bouts, only the top 60% of bouts will be averaged (15 in this example, which is found by taking total number of bouts x 0.60). The power rating points of the top 60% of opponents are then added up (regardless of who won) and that number is then divided by 15 (in this example) for the SSF.

Example of Top 60% Opponents' Initial Power Ratings:

1. 120
2. 120
3. 100
4. 100
5. 100
6. 80
7. 80
8. 80
9. 60
10. 60
11. 60
12. 50
13. 40
14. 40
15. 40

Total: 1130

Sum of Initial Power Rating Points of top 60% of Opponents / 15 = Season Strength Factor (SSF)

1130/15 = 75 (always round to the nearest ones place) SSF

SSF IS USED IN THE FIRST PART OF THE EQUATION:

Winning Percentage x Season Strength Factor (SSF)

FSR = (WinFraction x SSF) + (0.40 x IVSF)

INDIVIDUAL VICTORY STRENGTH FACTOR (IVSF)

A fencer's Individual Victory Strength Factor (IVSF) will be calculated by averaging the Initial Power Rating (IPR) of the opponents who comprise the top 60% of the victory bouts (victory bouts are bouts won in Dual Meets during the regular season).

- The IVSF measures the strength of the opponents against whom victories were gained during regular season Dual Meets.
- Victory bouts against opponents with the highest Initial Power Rating (IPR) will be ranked first.
- After the bouts are ranked as indicated above, the IVSF will average from the best 60 percent of all the victory bouts.
- The Regular Season ends on the first Saturday of February - end of day

EXAMPLE: If a fencer won 10 bouts, the highest strength of the 6 victory bouts (.60 x 10 victory bouts, round to the closest ones place) should be used. Take the average of those top six opponents' Initial Power Ratings and you have the IVSF for this example.

1. 120
2. 100
3. 100
4. 80

5. 80

6. 60

Total: 540

Average: $540 / 6 = 90$

IVSF IS USED IN THE SECOND PART OF EQUATION: $(0.4 \times \text{Individual Victory Strength Factor})$

$0.4 \times 90 = 36$

36 should be entered into the second part of the equation.

$\text{FSR} = (\text{WinFraction} \times \text{SSF}) + (0.40 \times \text{IVSF})$

FAQ

1. What is the purpose of the Initial Power Rating and does it being higher help me?

The Initial Power Rating (IPR) is used to calculate a portion of the Fencer's Seeding Ranking (FSR) for the fencer's opponents. The IPR does not benefit the fencer who receives that initial rating. Meaning, a high initial rating has no bearing on the individual fencer's outcome in a given season. Rather, the fencer's opponents are benefitted by fencing higher rated opponents throughout the season. The IPR as of the Roster Deadline set by NJSIAA will not be adjusted throughout the season, regardless of a new rating being earned. The following season however, will reflect accordingly!

2. What is the difference between the Season Strength Factor (SSF) and the Individual Victory Strength Factor (IVSF)?

The SSF encompasses the strongest bouts of the fencer's season while the IVSF looks at the strongest bouts that have been won by the fencer. As stated above, the SSF is the average of the top 60% of all bouts that were fenced this season regardless of outcome. The IVSF is similar in taking the average of the top 60% but the list that is used is only from bouts won this season by the fencer.

3. How does my fencer qualify for the Individual Tournament?

Season results for all dual meets must be entered into TbT (Touch by Touch) by the end of the day on the first Saturday of February. The fencer will have to fight during the regular season matches to move up the ranks. The top 36 in each discipline qualify for the Individual State Championship.

4. Do the previous season's matches affect anything for this current season?

The only place where previous season results will affect anything for the current season, is in the Initial Power Rating (IPR) of the fencer. Check out the IPR section above for a full breakdown of how the fencer's finish in All-State will give the fencer a higher initial rating.

5. What happens if I have a fencer that joins after the deadline?

A request must be sent to Al Stumpf (astumpf@njsiaa.org) to grant the fencer to be a part of the current season. If the fencer is approved they will be allowed to participate in the rankings for the season. If not, the results of their bouts will not count towards any ranking for the season nor qualification for the Individual State Championship.

6. When do scores need to be reported in TbT (Touch by Touch)? What about NJSchoolSports.com/NJ.com?

All regular season dual meet scores are required to be input in TbT before the end of the day on the first Saturday of February in order to be eligible for the Individual & State tournaments. In order to be in compliance with NJSIAA rules, all Dual Meet data must still be submitted to NJ.com within 24 hours of the competition. Using TbT gives a simple breakdown after the meets of what data will need to be transferred over. Our suggestion is to track the scores in real-time in TbT as the meets progress in order to easily enter the data into NJSchoolSports.com after the dual meet has concluded. For the inaugural season, we will be required to complete dual entry of the data with the hope for the second season to have single entry where TbT will sync with NJSchoolSports.