



National History Bowl

Varsity Playoff Procedures

The Varsity playoffs consist of a Championship bracket with two halves - a winner's bracket and a loser's bracket - and consolation placement matches for all teams once they have dropped out of championship contention.

Playoff Qualification:

The top two teams in each afternoon pool qualify for the winner's bracket and are seeded from 1-16:

1. by their afternoon position (i.e. all pool winners 1-8, all pool runners-up 9-16), then
2. by their record (all 5-0 pool winners ahead of 4-1 pool winners, etc.), then
3. by their afternoon total points, then
4. by morning position, record, and total points.

The third and fourth place teams in each afternoon pool qualify for the loser's bracket and are seeded from 17-32 by the same criteria as the 1-16 seeding above.

Championship Bracket:

The Championship bracket is a modified double-elimination bracket, such that teams starting in the loser's bracket begin the playoffs with a loss.

Two teams in the winner's bracket will win each of their first three playoff games. Those teams have a bye in Round 4 on Saturday night, will play each other to determine the Winner's Bracket Champion in Round 5 on Sunday, and are each guaranteed to make the Final Four.

When a team loses a game in the first three rounds of the winner's bracket, they move to the loser's bracket. The two teams that survive through Round 5 of the loser's bracket advance to the Final Four. When a team loses a game in the first five rounds of the loser's bracket, they move to consolation placement playoffs as described below.

Consolation Placement Playoffs:

- The eight teams that lose in the first round of the loser's bracket play a three-round mini-tournament to determine 25th through 32nd places; this takes place in playoff rounds 2, 3, and 4 on Saturday night.

- The eight teams that lose in the second round of the loser's bracket play a three-round mini-tournament to determine 17th through 24th places; this takes place in playoff rounds 3 and 4 on Saturday night and playoff round 5 on Sunday afternoon.
- The six teams that lose in the third round of the loser's bracket play a three-round mini-tournament to determine 11th through 16th places; this takes place in playoff round 4 on Saturday night and playoff rounds 5 and 6 on Sunday afternoon. (Note: The top two teams in this mini-tournament will have byes in Round 4, and the two teams that lose in Round 4 will be done after Round 5 and do not play in Round 6.)
- The four teams that lose in the fourth round of the loser's bracket play a two-round mini-tournament to determine 7th through 10th places; this takes place in playoff rounds 5 and 6 on Sunday afternoon.

In all of the above mini-tournaments, teams are seeded based solely on their original playoff seeding.

- The two teams that lose in the fifth round of the loser's bracket play a single match to determine 5th and 6th places in Round 6.

Final Four:

The four teams that are still in championship contention after Playoff Round 5 play modified semi-finals in Round 6. The procedures for Round 7 and, if necessary, Round 8, depend on whether the sole remaining undefeated team (the Winner's Bracket Champion) wins in Round 6.

- If the Winner's Bracket Champion wins Round 6, then they will hold a one-game advantage in a final against the winner of the other semi-final. That is, if the Winner's Bracket Champion wins in Round 7, they are the tournament champions; if the Winner's Bracket Champion loses in Round 7, the two teams play a final match in Round 8, the winner of which is the tournament champion. Meanwhile, the losers of the Round 6 semi-finals will play a 3rd place match in Round 7.
- If the Winner's Bracket Champion loses Round 6, then there are three remaining teams with one loss; the Winner's Bracket Champion automatically advances to the final, and the other two one-loss teams play in Round 7 to determine the other finalist. The two remaining teams then play in Round 8, the winner of which is the tournament champion.