

## KHSAA State Tennis Formats - Team Tennis

### Tournament Format

#### Historic

- Singles and Doubles participants accumulate points by advancement through perspective brackets.
- The seeding of the brackets could have an effect on outcome and advancement.
- Seeding was done by select committee made by representatives of coaches or regional managers.
- The regional championship has historically been decided on individual advancement points, with points awarded for each match won, and the highest number of points winning the regional title.
- The Regional title, until 2016, was decided by advancement points with points awarded for each match won, and the highest number of points winning the regional title.
- Until 2003-2004, the singles winner and runner-up, and the doubles team winner and runner-up from each region advanced to the state tournament. In addition, the team champion from each region sent both of its singles players, and both of its doubles teams to the state tournament. Only these individuals participated in the state tournament.
- In 2004-2005, the advancement to the state tournament was changed to include the top four singles entrants and top four doubles teams, allowing for the expansion of the bracket to a full 64-entrant bracket in all four tournaments. This move increased participation by the membership as it was viewed that the prior format excluded too many schools.

#### 2011

- A team format was devised using the top three singles and two doubles and playing best 3/5 to determine a winner.
- Regional champions (determined by advancement points) qualified for a semi-state round that was played in conjunction with the singles and doubles events.
- The four semi-state teams advanced to the team competition that was held during the same weekend as the singles and doubles events.
- In order to participate in team format, seven individuals were required, three singles entrants and two doubles teams.
- Schools with less than this amount could not participate.

#### 2015

- Following series of Sports Medicine international studies, recommendation made by KHSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee to limit players to two full matches per day.
- Prior competition without this limitation saw many cramping and exhaustion issue at the state tournament.

#### 2016

- A team format was devised where three singles and two doubles matches were played.
- Feedback from school administrators was not for an additional week of competition and expenses.
- So for that year, the championship was decided based on team play. Issues arose regarding bracketing (few wanted to play against the elite schools), as well as “stacking”, a concept where coaches may or not be totally forthcoming about the ability of players to help with potential advancement pairings.
- The membership (in terms of the Principals and Designated Reps) loudly opposed the new format due to concerns about implementing mandatory matches for seeding.
- In essence, it was viewed by the athletic administrators as an additional spring sport as many of the schools continued to play a typical individually bracketed season as well and had difficulty working in the required matches.

- Based on Sports Medicine recommendation, it was determined that KHSAA would not allow for overlap of team tournament and individual tournament that would create a situation where a student might play more than two matches in one day.
- Tennis advisory committee vehemently opposed discussion where coaches would declare whether students were playing in individual or team tournament as a way of having overlapping events. Had this restriction been implemented, the tournaments could overlap, but no student would play more than two full matches.
- Third set tiebreaker reinforced to ensure that no athlete played more than two full matches in one day.

2017-current

- The team format returned to points accumulated by Singles and Doubles participation by advancement through the bracket.
- The Board and staff concurred that the regional championship needed to continue to be decided by individual competition, and there was not rationale to decide the region by one method (point system) and the state by another (full team play).

#### Original Request Newly Formed Tennis Coaches Association

- Tennis Coaches Coaches was formed and proposal for the KHSAA to return a team play format including 16 regional championship teams.
- The original Coaches Association proposal was to change back to the 2016 model, where the team state championship trophy would only be awarded for team play, and no point aggregate trophy was to be given.
- Alternative proposal was to see if the KHSAA chose not to sponsor the team event, they proposed a members-only event where KHSAA Regional Manager managed KYHSTCA Region, then KYHSTCA board members managed section and state.
  - Request was for matches played in KYHSTCA event would not count toward KHSAA limitation of seasons.
  - Request was to consider this an official championship whether or not managed by KHSAA including trophies, etc.
  - Board historic stance has been that if it has KHSAA name on it, KHSAA should manage.
- Proposal infers that regardless of who manages the team event, no team trophy be given for the individual tournaments.
- Concept discussed during 2016-2017 school year, and reviewed at the September 2018 Board Meeting, to play either weekend before or after Singles and Doubles Events using same play criteria (2 of 3 sets with 10-point tie-breaker) as the Singles and Doubles use.
- The Board took no action on the proposed KYHSTCA proposal and concurred to remain using the current format of points accumulated by Singles and Doubles competition as the method of determining a team championship.

#### Considerations

- Small squad participation. Just two years ago, a team was able to finish in the top 2 in overall competition with only one or two competitors (This has happened often in sports like track and field where a successful participant can earn many points)
- Accusations were made within the Association that staff (current contact Mike Barren) opposed the event due to workload. This has never been discussed and is not in any way accurate.
- The irony of the accusation about Mike is that, on a personal level, Mike's family was impacted negatively by the change back to points based competition. In all likelihood, Mike's son would have been that 7<sup>th</sup> player in true team play, but deciding to go to the individual points situation eliminated that option. Mike has long advocated for whatever the school administrators desire.

- Potentially yet another week or weekend of spring competition conflicting with other spring activities.
- Just this past year, tennis and track moved later into spring on a permanent basis to help with testing and graduation activity conflicts.
- Current schedule has state tennis tournament in one week, sandwiched conveniently between the Creason Tournament and the Southern Qualifier, both events that draw quite a few Kentucky competitors.
- A members-only event would require schools to join the coaches association in order to participate, rather than being able to participate at no charge based on membership dues paid to KHSAA.
- There will be discussion about enthusiasm following a team win compared to a points based win. Is this different than swimming, wrestling, cross country, track and field or golf?
- Is this a case where administrator perspective and coach perspective simply do not coincide?
- Does the view of a small segment truly represent the membership? Be mindful that a 2017 survey about championship participation showed the the member schools were nearly 50-50 on whether a team based championship or individual based championship should be conducted
- Is a membership survey in order to clarify the previous vote on the Triennial Survey? People voting for “team” championship may not have been voting for team vs. team, but rather, voting to continue giving a team trophy. Or would a survey simply lead people to think a change was imminent if this was not the wishes of the Board of Control?
- How does the requested waiver of the limit of seasons for team play relate to other sports? Should the Board exempt dual meet wrestling from any limits or indoor track and field?
- Other sports have alternative tournaments (All A Classic, State Dual Wrestling, etc.) conducted by other organizations but they must be held within the limitation of seasons for those sports and no exemptions are granted to that limitation.
- It would be fairly straight forward to go back to the pre-2005 qualifying for state (no at-large qualifiers) and not have 64 team brackets in all four brackets, and then have enough time within the schedule to also do team play. But this would be at the expense of participation by many schools.
- Is it wise to conduct single meetings or better to simply invite the group to a future Board meeting so that all hear the same things at the same time.