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## LHSAA Rules Being Dissected

 Posted By: Site Administrator /

 Attempt for unity, Baton Rouge, Clean up the playoff structure, Highest seed in each of the four divisions, Lafayette, LHSAA executive director Eddie Bonine, Louisiana High School Athletic Association, Newbies, Straighten out the playoff system, Superdome

**By Ron Brocato, Clarion Herald Sports**

When the Louisiana High School Athletic Association holds its annual convention in January, nearly one-third of the member principals will be “newbies.”

And few will be up to speed on the association’s constitution and bylaws when it comes time for them to vote on what I expect to be a slew of new rule proposals.

That may not be a bad thing, considering LHSAA executive director Eddie Bonine believes the organization is at a crossroads, with many issues to resolve.

Relations between the public and non-public schools have been slowly evaporating since 2013 when the split playoffs forced on private and parochial schools went into full effect.

Visits to meetings in Lafayette and Baton Rouge last week amplified the frustration of Select school principals and athletic directors, who are trying to repair the broken association.

What I discovered is that the LHSAA's executive committee is more enthusiastic about adding bass fishing to the list of championship events than facilitating an attempt for unity.

But Bonine has greater concerns that he is fervently trying to convey to the principals.

"We need to clean up the playoff structure, which right now is financially unfeasible for many of the schools," he said.

While non-Select schools will hold their class football championships in the Superdome, the site of the division championship games for Select schools will be determined by the highest seed in each of the four divisions.

Seeding will also determine where the Select school championships will be played in baseball and softball. So, it will be imperative for private and parochial school principals to agree on where and when their playoffs will take place. They are running out of time to communicate that before the LHSAA summer meeting.

### **Rewriting the rules**

As you read this, an attorney well-versed in constitutional law is picking apart the LHSAA's handbook. Bonine said it needs to be revised.

"(The attorney) has found overlays, as well as things that are confusing and misleading," he said. "She went over it for five hours (so far) and has changed wording so that anyone who reads the handbook will understand what it means.

"We need to clarify interpretations so the membership will understand what they are voting on. There are gray areas and confusing language ... and some redundancy."

The executive director called upon the principals to straighten out the playoff system that is driving schools further apart.

"There are 109 schools that are considered 'Select.' Some are magnet schools, which may actually belong in the non-Select categories," Bonine pointed out. "If we have more splits, what does it do to the 109 schools? I'm worried it will hurt more kids. I don't believe there exists a true championship experience."

*Ron Brocato can be reached at [rbrocato@clarionherald.org](mailto:rbrocato@clarionherald.org).*

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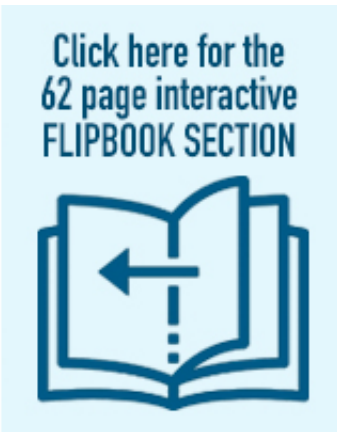
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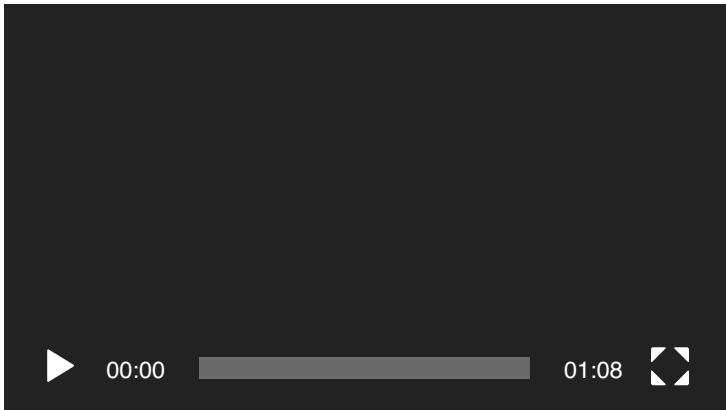




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