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May 3, 2019

KHSAA Board of Control
Commissioner Julian Tackett
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, KY 40505

Re: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Dear KHSAA Board of Control and Commissioner Tackett:

I want to thank you for your time commitment to providing athletic opportunities to high school students in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. As a former high school athlete, I appreciate your efforts to develop, regulate, and purify athletic activities in our state. The discipline, work ethic, time management, accountability and determination required for one to compete in high school athletics while maintaining good standing in academics, provides critical life lessons that are unique to student-athletes.

Sports have always been a major component of my life. I was fortunate enough to continue my athletic activities after high school, and earned a scholarship from Missouri State University to play golf. This would not have been possible for me without the work the KHSAA does to ensure that our student-athletes have plenty of opportunities to participate. The lessons and skills I obtained from being a student-athlete, are tools that I used throughout my education, and continue to use in my career. I am indebted to my experiences as a student-athlete because I know that I would not be in the position I am in today without having had them. It has been my lifelong dream to become a lawyer. The work ethic and determination that allowed me to reach that goal, correlates directly to my experiences as a student-athlete.

I mention this because I am not the only person with a story like this. The majority of us that "go pro in something else," treasure the times we had competing and participating in high school sports. For many, high school athletics is the last time an individual will compete on a team, or in a sanctioned event.

Which brings me to the reason for writing to you. I write to you out of concern for our student-athletes. The opportunities previously mentioned are being diminished as a result of the KHSAA Board of Control's decision to change the format of the state golf tournament. I am concerned about the research that was or was not conducted in making this decision. I am concerned because I have spoken to countless people throughout the state who are involved in the game of golf and with student-athletes, and every person I have spoken with has provided the same opinion of opposition and concern.

I am concerned because the rationale given for the changes (improving pace of play) is not furthered by implementing these rules. Pace of play is an issue at every level of golf. To combat pace of play, coaches, student-athletes, parents and rules officials need to be educated and the rules directed at improving pace of play must be enforced. This begins at the start of each season with educational training for coaches, who can teach their players and implement change at the root of the cause. In the many conversations I have had with people familiar with high school golf, the fifth or fourth player shooting a score in the 100s is not the cause of slow play. In fact, it is not uncommon for the top one or two players to have a slower pace of play than those shooting higher numbers.

The first day of the girl's tournament was suspended last year "due to darkness." That was because there was a rain delay lasting approximately an hour and half. There is nothing that can be done to avoid weather delays. Eliminating, assumedly, the highest scoring golfer on each team is not the answer to improving slow play. The scores between a four and five player are in many circumstances interchangeable.

Under the new format, the top four players on the first and second place teams in their regional tournament advance to the state championship. The top four players from each team in the Regional, based on the scores in that event, must compose the team for the state tournament. If the boy or girl playing in the fifth spot all year long has a good day at the regional, or a top player has a difficult day, one of the top players is on the outside looking in for the state tournament. This is very problematic for many reasons, besides the fact that a team's higher ranked player heading into the regional tournament will not be afforded an opportunity to participate at the state championship. This format forces teammates to compete against each other in their regional tournament. This format forces a Coach to tell a player that they will not be participating in the state championships with their teammates because the rules have changed in an effort to speed up play. It would be devastating to a student-athlete who has been part of his or her team all year leading up to the postseason, only to be left off the team while their teammates compete at state and create the most memorable experiences of a high school golfer's career.

There is still time to correct this before the 2019 state tournament and avoid the many irreparable circumstances that will occur as a result of this change. The LCA girls won the state tournament last year for the first time in school history. They return all five golfers for this upcoming season. Under this format, if they were to make it through their regional again, one of their state champions will be left at home and forever lose an opportunity to defend a state title. It is hard to imagine a more unfair circumstance.

The fifth player on the roster is incredibly important to his or her team. There are countless success stories of a fifth player being crucial in their team's making the cut, securing their team's best finish in their school's history, securing a state title for their team, and winning a state championship individually.¹ In my sophomore year, our school had its best finish ever in the state

¹ Consider this: In 2007, Travis Thompson of Marshall County won the state tournament. It is one of the most amazing stories in Kentucky high school golf history. Travis was the fifth man on his team for the regional tournament. He finished in the top four on his team at the regional. He would have qualified for the state tournament under this new format. However, his coach could have substituted the person originally in front of him for the state tournament and Travis would not have competed in the tournament. Travis then earned a scholarship to play Division I golf. There are many stories like this from schools across the state. PGA tour player Josh Teater played as the fifth man for his team during his junior year. St. X won a historical championship when their 5th player finished in the top 5 of the entire tournament and secured the title.

tournament. We do not achieve that without our fifth man. It was a full team effort and remains one of our greatest memories from competing in high school golf in this state.

It has been said that this change has been in the works for a few years. This, however, is in direct contrast to the meeting minutes of this Board dating back five years. The first mention of reducing the size of the team from five to four, according to your minutes, appears to be November 14, 2018.

The Kentucky Golf Coaches Association (“KGCA”) collaborated with the KHSAA dating back to 2016. In late 2017, a high school postseason committee was formed. In January 2018, the KGCA sent out a postseason survey and more than 200 responses were received. In late January 2018, the KGCA met to review the responses and formulated three plans for consideration. On February 16, 2018, members of the KGCA met with Mr. Darren Bilberry at the KHSAA offices. In mid-September of 2018, members of the KGCA were informed during a state championship preview conference call that none of the KGCA proposals would be implemented. The KGCA never proposed reducing the team size from five to four and offered reasonable and informed improvements to the structure of the state tournament. *See* KGCA timeline of state tournament discussions attached as **Exhibit 1**.

The KGCA published a statement on their website in response to the decision:

The KGCA does not exist for the KHSAA, but instead was formed to have an intentional impact on the golfers, coaches and families of Kentucky high school golfers. We endeavor to do this by offering our scholarship program and by being the caretakers of the All State program. As such, we are deeply saddened by the recent actions by the KHSAA regarding the state golf tournament, as well as the way that those actions were brought about utilizing some misrepresentations by key individuals within that organization, whether by mistake or knowingly doing so.

The KGCA is committed to making sure our high school golfers have the best opportunities to shine as they have in the past. We have some exciting opportunities on the horizon for the upcoming year and beyond, so we ask that you stay tuned and keep the buzz about this going in a positive way. *See* <http://www.kygca.org/>.

The KGCA circulated a survey subsequent to the KHSAA announcing the format change and received responses from 87 member coaches. When asked if they supported the elimination of the fifth player at the state tournament, 94.25% voted **No**. When asked if pace of play at the state tournament was a larger issue than other high school golf tournaments, 92.94% said **No**. When asked if the decision to change to this new format was justified, 87.21% said **No**. *See* Postseason Play Changes Survey Results attached as **Exhibit 2**.

I personally spoke with high school coaches Kurt Averill (St. Mary-Paducah), Chris Griffin (McCracken County), Davis Boland (St. X), Tennyne Ohr, PGA Professional (Madison Central),

and all oppose this decision. They had spoken with several other coaches and players throughout the state, all of whom were perplexed and disappointed with this decision.

This decision sparked the attention of current and former PGA Tour players, The Golf Channel, and Golf Digest. The most decorated Kentucky golfers ever produced chastised this decision. Most notably, Justin Thomas voiced his opinion with respect to the change saying on Twitter, "Do the right thing here @KHSAA. This is a really bad decision," "A lot of great storylines comes from a 5 man on your team, like we had on ours at Saint X. Change it back and make this right!" Justin is currently ranked 5th in the official world golf rankings and is one of the faces of the PGA Tour.

Mike Thomas, PGA Professional and father of Justin Thomas, stated on Twitter: "Cut out 20% of players on a team?? Take away this experience and opportunity?? If it's because of slow play, enforce a faster play policy. Help us grow golf in KY. No one playing golf on this committee made this decision. #changeitback."

PGA Tour veteran, Champions Tour player and Golf Channel analyst, Steve Flesch, chimed in, saying "@KHSAA I'm wondering who in your ranks makes a decision like this. This is not growing the game or encouraging youth. It's a tone deaf change for absolutely NO valid reason. Totally idiotic to make a Region Champ and runner-up leave a man home. You have time to reverse this."

PGA Tour player Josh Teater, also tweeted his opposition regarding the change, "I was the 5th man my junior year! I just don't know any other sporting event where you change the rules in the finals. Keep the game the same @khsaa and rethink this decision."

I spoke directly with Emma Talley, current LPGA Tour player and one of the most decorated female amateur golfers of all time. Her resume includes three Kentucky state championships. Her most notable state tournament was in 2009, when she displayed the essence of integrity and the spirit of golf when she called a penalty on herself after her scorecard was signed, realizing she had made a mistake. If Emma had signed a correct scorecard (she scored a 6 on the 18th hole but inadvertently signed for a 5), she still would have won her second straight title by a comfortable margin. It was not until after her signing that she realized this error, and made it known to the tournament officials. This resulted in her disqualification. No one else knew of or was aware of this error, but Emma. She expressed her opposition to these rule changes to me. She supports requesting this Board to reconsider and is hopeful that you will.

I personally spoke with Russ Cochran and Case Cochran, who have a combined three Kentucky state tournament titles. Russ Cochran is a champion on the PGA Tour and longtime veteran. He also has multiple wins on the Champions Tour, including the Senior British Open. His son, Case, won back-to-back state tournaments and currently plays on the Mackenzie Tour (PGA Tour affiliate). They do not support the format change and are hopeful you will reconsider.

I spoke with Kent Bulle, former Kentucky high school golfer, collegiate golfer, and current web.com tour player. During his time on the web.com tour, Kent served on the player advisory council for four years. He adamantly opposes this format and has personally spoken to PGA Tour player Josh Teater, who has also expressed his opinion the matter. He would be willing to assist in efforts to improve high school golf.

I have spoken directly with David Jagers of Leachman Buick, and although the contract for sponsorship was recently extended, Mr. Jagers opposes this change and would like to see the format returned to five count four. He was never contacted with regard to this decision to offer his position.

I spoke directly with Jeff McGill, head PGA Professional at the host site Bowling Green Country Club. He, along with David Jagers, received a lot of negative reaction to this change and he opposes this new format. He, too, was never contacted to offer his opinion or provide his insight into this structure change. He never said in any fashion that he approved of this prior to its implementation.

At the spring KY-PGA section meeting held recently, this change was the first topic of discussion for all KY-PGA professionals across the state. The PGA of America has admonished this change and reached out to our KY-PGA Professionals to inquire about what is going on. A task force aimed at improving high school golf was formed under the umbrella of the KY-PGA section as a result of this change.

I spoke directly to Pete Garvey, President of the KY-PGA section and he discussed his opposition to the change with me. He led me to Ralph Landrum, PGA Professional and former tour player, who is leading the task force aimed at improving high school golf. There are many people in this state willing to offer their time and expertise to improve high school golf the right way.

Todd Trimble, PGA Professional and four-time Kentucky PGA Teacher of the Year, opposes this change as it does not positively affect high school golf. He has taught countless Kentucky golfers who have competed in the state championships.

Through this endeavor, I was connected with Benji Marrs. Mr. Marrs and his wife played in a combined six KHSAA state golf championships. They both played collegiate golf and now have children who have experienced a combined three state golf championships. Mr. Marrs conducted extensive research on the format change and requested the records from the KHSAA board meetings. In his effort, he was unable to find a single state that conducts their state tournament consistent with this new format. His email correspondence with Mr. Chad Collins outlines many of the concerns over the substance of the decision and the procedure in its implementation. I strongly urge you to review his correspondence and consider the issues presented therein. See **Exhibit 3**.

In addition to Mr. Marrs' research and questioning of the rationale and the research conducted by the KHSAA in the implementation of the format change, Mr. Marrs created a spreadsheet showing when and how often the fifth player's score was counted for each team at the state tournament. Under this format, St. X would have prevailed in the men's state championship last year. It should be noted that there were only twelve scores from the fifth player in the boys tournament 90 or higher. Six of those scores were used by their team as a top 4 score. See **Exhibit 4** for boys and **Exhibit 5** for girls.

On March 7, 2018, the Kentucky House of Representatives, headed by Representative Stan Lee, of District 45, passed a resolution (HR 199) to encourage the KHSAA to "reconsider its bad decision to reduce the number of golfers from 5 to 4 who can play in the state tournament."

I sent an email to every men and women's college golf coach in the state of Kentucky to sense their reaction. The response was overwhelming. I corresponded via email with several coaches across the state and talked to multiple on the phone.

I talked on the phone with Coach Brian Craig, head coach of the University of Kentucky men's team. He was more than willing to discuss this with me and state his opposition, and offered his permission to be included in this.

Coach Mark Crabtree, head coach of the University of Louisville Men's team called me in response to my email to discuss his disapproval and opposition to this change. He stated that he was "deeply saddened" to hear of the format change and supports seeking reconsideration. He went on to suggest that the KHSAA has lost an understanding of the team aspect of golf. He remarked that any change that only affects one event does not make much sense.

I received an email response from Coach Golda Borst, head coach of the University of Kentucky Women's team. She supports play five count four and offered her opinion on the pace of play rationale saying that the number of teams should be reduced rather than removing a player from a team who has competed for each other all year. *See Exhibit 6.*

I spoke on the phone with Coach Courtney Trimble, head women's golf coach at the University of Louisville. She told me she would be glad to sign any petition seeking to request that the Board reconsider this decision and return to play five count four.

In a letter from Coach Matthew Martin, head men's golf coach at Morehead State University, he encourages the Board to reconsider this change and suggests that the Board include more people with backgrounds in golf in the decision making of these items. Coach Martin's letter expresses the sentiments of many involved in the game of golf with regard to this issue. *See Coach Martin's letter attached hereto as Exhibit 7.*

Coach Jason Cox, head coach at Brescia University for men and women, provided an email with his opinion on the format change. His email speaks to the unfairness our state's student-athletes are being exposed to as a result of this change and that eliminating the fifth player is not the solution to combat slow play. He also addresses the experiences that are being taken away from student-athletes whose only chance to compete in a state championship would be with their team. *See Email from Coach Jason Cox attached hereto as Exhibit 8.*

Coach Art Henry, head women's golf coach at Bellarmine University offered his thoughts in an email response. He suggests that pace of play is something that needs to be addressed with proper instruction and enforcement. He expressed his opposition to the format change and articulated several problems that will occur as a result. Coach Henry addressed the issue of injury or illness under these rules and the unfortunate consequences that will arise. These are issues that were brought up with every single person I have discussed this with over the last few months. His email is attached hereto as **Exhibit 9.**

Coach Velvet Milkman, head coach of Murray State University women said that she was extremely disappointed by the KHSAA's decision and thinks it needs to be changed. *See Email from Velvet Milkman attached hereto as Exhibit 10.*

Coach Ken Badylak, men's and women's golf coach at Kentucky Wesleyan, sent an email response stating that this decision is an injustice to the game and that it does not provide a positive student-athlete experience. He addresses pace of play and offers his time to volunteer to assist in improving post-season golf. *See* Email from Coach Badylak attached hereto as **Exhibit 11**.

Coach Steve Kennedy is the head coach of men's golf at Kentucky Christian University and the assistant coach for the women's team. Coach Missy Kennedy coaches the women's team and serves as an assistant on the men's side. They are both PGA members and parents to a middle school golfer. Their goal is to grow the game of golf in a positive way and they do not support this decision. *See* **Exhibit 12**.

Michael Camacho, a high school golf coach at Grant County, was a former fifth man who turned his state tournament experience into a college opportunity. These are the stories that are will be eliminated by this format change. *See* **Exhibit 13**.

Coach Tyus York, Transylvania's assistant golf coach was appalled by the KHSAA's decision and approved of his name being added to this list. *See* **Exhibit 14**.

Coach Nelson Scott, head women's golf coach at the University of Pikeville, provided his support to change the format back to five count four. *See* **Exhibit 15**.

I spoke on the phone with Taylor Riggs, head golf coach of the men's and women's programs at the University of the Cumberlands. He discussed the issue with current players and expressed their sincere concern with this change. He supports reconsideration of this rule and expressed that even with this change, the pace of play at the state tournament will not improve.

Coach Mike Grugan, Kentucky State University head coach, gave me permission to include his name in support of reversing this decision. *See* **Exhibit 16**.

Coach Kevin Auton, head men's golf coach at the University of Pikeville, is against this change and supports reconsideration. *See* **Exhibit 17**.

Over the past few months, I have not encountered a single person in the golf community who supports this decision. The overriding sentiment is that pace of play is an issue, but the state tournament is no different than any other event throughout the year. Changing the format for one tournament, especially the biggest tournament of the season, does not seem reasoned or well thought out.

We respectfully request that this decision be reconsidered and the format of the state tournament changed back to "five count four" in order to avoid the inevitable problems it will create. There are ways to improve high school golf and there are people involved at all levels of the game willing to volunteer their time to assist. This Board has an opportunity to facilitate a continued positive atmosphere for student-athletes competing in golf, while improving the game of golf as a whole. Consideration must be given to proposals such as those presented by the KGCA and the opinions of the people mentioned above must be sought out to ensure format changes are in the best interest of student-athletes. *See* KGCA proposal for post-season changes attached hereto as **Exhibit 18**.

Article V Section 3(d)(k) of the KHSAA Constitution states:

“[T]he Board of Control **shall**:

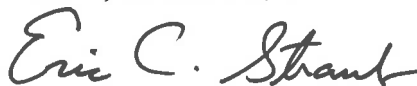
(k) have authority to reject any proposed change determined not to be in the best interest of the Association.” (emphasis added).

The changes to the format of the state golf tournament are not in the best interest of our student-athletes, and therefore, are not in the best interest of the KHSAA. It is not too late to reverse the implementation of this rule before the 2019 championships. We ask that you take advantage of the numerous qualified people willing to help improve pace of play in high school and grow the game in a positive manner. Many across the state would applaud returning to five count four and taking a closer look into ways to improve high school golf overall. We ask that you take advantage of this opportunity and set an example to other state high school athletic associations, and lead the charge to improve pace of play in golf, improve high school golf on a universal level, and grow the game.

We sincerely thank you for your time and your efforts for high school athletics. The most important aspect of this is providing a positive environment for all student-athletes and providing them opportunities to use their experiences after high school in their higher education and careers. We hope you will strongly consider the effect this change has on our student-athletes and that you will do the right thing for them.

Respectfully,

WHITLOW, ROBERTS, HOUSTON & STRAUB, PLLC



Eric C. Straub

estraub@whitlow-law.com

Timeline of State Tournament discussions

- 2016 KGA Meeting - Concern by KGA Board Members about High School golf led to discussions
- Following meeting, KGA President, Phil Ambruster, reached out to Chris Redle of KGA directly for more thoughts about concerns with HS golf raised at KGA Meeting
- Late 2017 - HS Postseason Committee Formed by KGCA
- January 2018 - HS Postseason survey sent with more than 200 responses received
- Late January 2018 - HS Postseason Committee met to review responses and formulate 3 plans to consider
- February 16, 2018 - Meeting with Darren Bilberry at KHSAA offices
- Late August 2018 - Information provided to Phil Ambruster (KGA President) and Brent Paladino about proposal
- September 5, 2018 - Meeting with Jerry Wyman about plan
- Mid-September, 2018 - In HS State Championship preview conference call, none of the recommendations for 2018 provided to Mr. Bilberry in February will be implemented as a result of plan for KHSAA for the event



Postseason Play Changes Survey Results

Results from survey of KGCA member coaches concerning KHSAA postseason changes. Responses were received from 87 member coaches for this survey.

1. Do you support the elimination of the regional 5th scoring player at the state tournament from qualifying teams?

Yes 5.75%

No 94.25%

2. Which scenario would you prefer as a result of regional tournaments qualifying for state tournament?

A. 2 Teams of 5 players/3 Individuals 89.75%

B. 2 teams of 4 players/4 Individuals 10.71%

3. Is pace of play at the state tournament a larger issue than it is in other tournaments?

Yes 7.06%

No 92.94%

EXHIBIT

2

No 92.94%

4. Was action to reduce the number of participants at the state tournament justified in your opinion?

Yes 12.79%

No 87.21%

5. Do you support a yearly rotation of which gender goes first at the state tournament that has been followed for the last ten years ? The gender that goes first needs to miss three days of school and the gender that goes second only needs to miss 2 days.

Yes 97.70%

No 2.30%

Eric Straub

From: Benji Marrs <benji@bimgroup.us>
Sent: Friday, May 03, 2019 8:25 AM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: FW: Open Records Request: KHSAA Regional & State Championship Golf

FYI....

Benji Marrs | Senior Benefit Strategist
Bim Group | [website](#)
1151 Red Mile Road, Lexington, KY 40504
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 BimGroup



UBA
Partner Firm



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Benji Marrs <bamsr2049@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Apr 9, 2019 at 12:23 PM
Subject: Re: Open Records Request: KHSAA Regional & State Championship Golf
To: Collins, Chad <ccollins@khsaa.org>
CC: Julian Tackett <jtackett@khsaa.org>, missy marrs <missyhmarrs@gmail.com>, <Donna.bumps@muhlenburg.kyschools.us>, <pete.galloway@ksba.org>, Butch Cope <bcope@khsaa.org>, Joe Angolia <jangolia@khsaa.org>

Mr. Collins,

Thank you for the information provided in response to my open records request. Again, to reiterate, I'm deeply concerned regarding the KHSAA decision to change the Golf State Championship from play 5 count 4 at both the Regional Qualifier and then State Championship to playing 4 counting 4 after qualifying at Regionals with a team of 5 counting 4. Through my experience as a high school and collegiate player in Kentucky and through much recent research, I have never encountered and cannot find any other golf championship that models this formula at the high school or collegiate level.

In my quest to better understand the rationale for the KHSAA adopting this unprecedented formula, I made the aforementioned request. Through my research and examination of the information you provided which demonstrates the KHSAA Board of Control decision is in direct contrast to what was recommended by the KY Golf Coaches Association (KGCA) in cooperation with the KPGA, I've also spoken directly to and/or communicated with numerous Kentucky based high school & collegiate coaches, KHSAA tournament officials, KPGA professional players, parents, educators/administrators, athletic directors, state legislators, KHSAA S

Championship site hosts, and many others to understand who (if anyone) supports this decision and why?

To date, I have yet to find anyone (not a single person) outside the KHSAA officials and Board of Control who took part in making the decision that (1) supports the decision in its current form (2) understands the rationale for the decision as publicly offered or (3) believes this decision supports the mission/vision of the KHSAA.

Therefore, I have additional questions to follow up from your response to my open records request. My follow up questions correspond to the numerical listing on my original request and your response.

1. The surveys and responses you provided did not ask any questions pertaining to pace of play, quality/strength of field, or opinions regarding the suggested formatting when pace of play and quality/strength of field were cited publicly as rationale for the changes. **Did the KHSAA officially ask any schools, coaches, officials, or players questions pertaining to those rationales or for their opinions regarding the suggested changes? If so, what were the responses and where can I access them?**
 - a. Perhaps you've seen the recent KGCA survey conducted within the past 3 weeks. 87 statewide golf coaches responded. 94.25% do not support the elimination of the 5th player after region at the state championship and 92.94% do not believe Pace of Play was an issue at the State Championship. Additionally, the email sent out by Chris Redle, official at the 2018 State Championship, during the 2018 girls state championship confirmed to all that pace of play was not an issue. The first day was delayed because of extreme weather conditions- not uncommon for golf. Chris also confirmed pace of play was appropriately monitored. Some warnings were issued. However, no penalties were issued.
2. I asked for an appropriate contact list for the Board of Control and Golf Committees, specifically email, for which they could be contacted. You responded that no such lists exists. Therefore I have included Board of Control President Bumps and President Elect Galloway in this email in hopes they may be able to assist in providing appropriate contacts to open dialogue with the multitude of individuals, associations, and professionals deeply concerned by their changes to the State Championship formulas. I hope the email I found online is appropriate for this purpose.
3. Same as #2.
4. In your response to my request, you stated "To that end, a copy of the Agendas (for both Full Board and the Work Session) will be provided for the October 2018, November 2018, January 2019, and February 2019 meetings along with all links and attachments that were available to the Board of Control."
 - a. From the October 24, 2018 KHSAA Committee Board Meeting agenda section 6.2 Discussion of Performance Standards, Region Golf Advancement...
 - i. It is mentioned staff will gather information from various states to review. No such information was provided to me and is not available online. **Is this information available and will it be provided to me?**
 - ii. Staff was recommended to bring performance standard language to the January meeting. No such information was provided to me and is not available online. **Is this information available and will it be provided to me?**
 - b. From the October 24, 2018 KHSAA Committee Board Meeting agenda section 6.3 Golf Alignment Alternative and Format, a "Key to this discussion is the advancement formula for the state tournament. Samples can be found at"
 - i. The web link provided at the end of the above statement, within the agenda, is not active. No such information was provided to me and is not available online. **Is this information available and will it be provided to me?**

- ii. From the same section, under recommendations, the staff was instructed to bring data back to the Board of Control for review and consideration at the January meeting.
 - 1. No such information was provided to me and is not available online. **Is this information available and will it be provided to me?**
- c. From the November 14, 2018 KHSAA Committee Board Meeting agenda Section 5.3, it is stated that the Staff is recommending the number of members who play on a qualifying state team be reduced to four from five. It is stated, "This will have a direct impact on the pace of play..."
 - i. This is a definitive statement that isn't necessarily true. Pace of play is pre-determined by the rules officials, is communicated to players/coaches, and is officiated at the individual player level. Timing is continuously monitored and players are warned and then penalized if they do not maintain pace of play. **What information was provided to the Board of Control to support the definitive statement that removing the 5th player at state will have a direct impact on pace of play?**
- d. In my open records request, I requested any information used in consideration to make this decision. The only recommended Post-Season Plan you provided back was the plan provided by KGCA in conjunction with the KGA-PGA, INC. **Is this the only model the Board of Controls considered?**
 - i. **If so, why did the Board of Control deviate so far from their recommendation?**

I reached out to LCA's Athletic Director, Terry Johnson, to understand the school's opinion on this issue. Mr. Johnson indicated LCA provided a letter on behalf of himself, Coach Geldhof (boys golf coach), and Coach Frye (girls golf coach), to the KHSAA to voice their opposition to the proposed changes prior to the Board of Control vote. **Was this letter not considered? Were any other such letters provided by other schools? Were they considered?**

I have previously communicated that this change directly impacts my daughter, Mary Keene Marrs- Freshman @ LCA. She is one of the 5 members of the 2018 KHSAA State Championship Team. All 5 girls contributed at least one score. One year after qualifying for state in 2017 for the first time in nearly a decade, the LCA girls team won the state title for the first time in School history! All five girls return this Fall as four seniors and one sophomore. **The Board of Control decision has denied them the ability to defend their state title should they qualify as a team out of Regionals in 2019. This is a decision seemingly made without any considerations of the input provided by coaches, golf committees, or KY golf's foremost authorities on the sport. It seems to have been a decision made on false narrative regarding pace of play and quality of players coming from the regional qualifying 5th spot.** Applying the new rules to last year's results negatively impacts the majority of boys' and girls' teams, weakens the field, increases the scores, and even dramatically changes the outcomes of the championship qualifiers and even the boy's winner. (if interested, I am more than happy to provide an Excel spreadsheet which lists every school who qualified for the state championship, their 5th players & scores, and how the change impacts each school and player.)

My wife and I played in a combined 6 KHSAA state championships. Our son & daughter have played in a combined 3 KHSAA State Championships between the two of them. This being said, we have a strong desire to see this tournament succeed and benefit our student athlete golfers across the state! Based on the information provided to me by the KHSAA, as well as the commentary voiced by national media (the foremost authorities on competition golf relating to this decision), the statewide outcry by parents, players, coaches, and teachers on social media to

reverse this decision, and importantly, the results from the recent KGCA survey, **I ask, what can be done to have this decision be reconsidered?**

There are many viable solutions to enhance the tournament while maintaining the integrity of vision and mission of the KHSAA. I offer my support and assistance to bring people together who can use their expertise to formulate a decision which maintains the integrity of the Championship and the vision of the KHSAA. Unfortunately, the new Championship formula accomplishes neither. **In the immediate future, I ask for re-consideration as there are too many irreparable consequences resulting from the changes in their current form.** It is not too late reverse the decision and work towards a more viable option. I would appreciate any and every opportunity to continue this discussion and to work towards that viable solution. I'm confident it can be accomplished in short order. **What options are available to me?**

Thank you,
Benji Marrs
859-536-8442
Bamsr2049@gmail.com
Benji@bingroup.us

On Mon, Mar 11, 2019 at 4:39 PM Benji Marrs <bamsr2049@gmail.com> wrote:

Greetings Mr. Collins,

Thank you for the response to my open records request. Per the response, it was indicated the records would be released upon receipt of \$18.95 invoiced for 111 pages and postage. \$18.95 and a copy of the invoice was mailed to your attention on Monday March 4. As of today, March 11, those records have not been received. Could you confirm receipt of the invoiced \$18.95 as well as confirm when the requested documents will be delivered?

I sincerely appreciate your attention to this matter.

Also, although not part of the open records request, I did request that my email be emailed to the Board of Controls members. Can you confirm if this action was taken?

Again, I am reaching out with the utmost sincerity and concern for the future integrity of the KHSAA Golf State Championship as I, and many others, believe the proposed changes work against the vision statement and mission of the KHSAA. I welcome any and all opportunities to discuss the changes, their impact, and encourage reconsideration with expediency as the best course of action for our KHSAA student athletes.

Thank you,
Benji Marrs

On Tue, Feb 26, 2019 at 2:24 PM Benji Marrs <bamsr2049@gmail.com> wrote:

Greetings Commissioner Tackett, Mr. Collins, & KHSAA representatives:

I am reaching out for an open records request (see attached) in response to the recent KHSAA decision to revise the parameters for qualifying in and then subsequently playing in the KHSAA golf state championship. I'm certainly

disappointed in the decision, particularly as it most certainly **NEGATIVELY** impacts a multitude of kids (players), coaches, parents, and schools without any guaranteed or truly positive predicative outcomes balanced against. Amongst the thousands of concerns expressed for the decision within 72 hours of release from directly impacted kids, coaches, parents, professionals, et al... - including nationally published & televised opposition opinions aimed directly at the KHSAA decision from the foremost authorities pertaining to competition golf: The Golf Channel, Golf World, Golf Digest & GolfWeek, as well as KY's most notable PGA Professionals: Justin Thomas, Robert Damron, Steve Flish, Josh Teater & many others, I've yet to hear from or read any opinions in support of the decision as a positive change reflecting the best interest of our KY student athletes spread across the state.

From Commissioner Tackett's public release, the commentary lists several rationales for the decision which are disputable.

1. "In the end, there is strong feeling on the Board that these changes will strengthen the competition pool at the state championship event...."
 - a. When applying the newly elected changes to the 2018 State Championship, in particular removal of the 5th player from state competition, you will discover the majority of team scores go up. 9 or 10 (depending on how you factor Madison Central's 5th player) of the 12 boys teams making the first day cut used at least 1 score from their 5th player out of regional as a top 4 score at state. 4 teams used their 5th player score both days! Of those teams not making the cut, 6 of 12 teams used their 5th player score at least once. 7 out of 11 teams from the girls championship which made the cut used their 5th player score at least once. 3 teams used their 5th player score both days.
 - b. Following is a specific example of how the 2019 change favors perennial "Elite" boys team Saint X and would have rewarded them as 2018 State Champions instead of Taylor County:
 1. 2 boys playing for Taylor County tied for 4th/5th at their regional qualifier. The new rules would force the Taylor County coach to decide which boy gets to compete at state and which one doesn't continue with his team to state. This new rule places the Taylor County coach, the players, and the school in a terrible position to decide between the two. At state, both boys played great and one even finished top 20 overall individually. However, one boy played exceptionally well day 1 and one boy played exceptionally well day 2. The combination of their scores won Taylor County the state championship. Regardless which player the Coach decided to leave at home and remove from the team at State, while having to count either boy's 2 day total score, Saint X wins the championship instead of Taylor County.
 2. Saint X's number 5 player's score was not used either day.
2. The LCA girls team won the state title for the first time in school history. The 5 teammates all return next year as 4 seniors and 1 sophomore. Should they once again make their team top 5 and qualify through regionals for state, the KHSAA rule change has made it impossible for them to defend their state title. Additionally, the KHSAA

decision has placed their coach and school in an unenviable position of telling 1 girl she will not return to defend her title despite her previous contributions. All 5 girls posted at least one score which was used to win the 2018 state tournament.

3. The majority of the highest scores on day 1 from both the boys and girls championships, correlating to the number of 5 positions being eliminated- 22 or 24, were NOT posted by the 5th team player out of Regionals!
2. ".....and give more students throughout the state an opportunity to qualify...."
 - a. Under the new provisions, both state championship field sizes have shrunk making this statement an impossibility.
2. " while at the same time addressing long standing concerns over pace of play"
 - a. Confirming with the KHSAA State Championship head official, Chris Redle, who was responsible for overseeing pace-of-pay on behalf of KHSAA, and while myself personally attending & witnessing both the boys and girls 2018 state championships, there were no pace of play penalties issued. There were warnings, yet with no penalties issued. This means every player who was warned was able to reestablish their pace of play position. The officials confirm there were NO issues with pace-of-play.
 - b. Pace of play is set in advance by the tournament officials and monitored by those officials. If there are pace-of-play issues, the tournament officials are to blame. While anecdotally it sounds logical to a golf novice to say that by eliminating high scores, or a higher playing position, pace-of-play will get faster. That is not the case. Factually, the average girls' scores are significantly higher than the boys' scores. However, the girls finished in under 4 ½ hours which is faster than the boys. The girls did not complete play on the first day of the 2018 championship. This was due to weather conditions- significant rain delays- and had nothing to do with pace-of-play. Regional championships throughout the state actually faced worse conditions subsequently having to postpone several tournament dates and at least one regional tournament was completed over two days. Again, pace-of-play, a USGA interpretable rule, was not a factor. Weather was the culprit.
 - c. At the state championship, players tee off dual tee boxes #1 & #10 simultaneously, in groups of three, and every 9 minutes. 6 individuals are teeing off every 9 minutes throughout the day as scheduled and exactly on time barring weather delays. Regardless of playing ability, for every 6 individuals which are eliminated from tournament play, you are shortening the total playing time that day by 9 minutes. 12 players equals 18 minutes, 18 players equals 27 minutes, etc.... And the same is true for adding players to the field.
 - d. The notion that eliminating the 5th player from competition will change pace-of-play is a significant driver to the opposition being expressed by the national golf media and foremost authorities on the subject. It's a false narrative.

Commissioner Tackett went on to state that every concern was listened to and a wide variety of data was used to make the consideration. In addition to the statistical facts I presented above, there are many more I can provide which draw no conclusion to support the Board's decision and actually reveal an adverse impact to the majority of teams and players. Additionally, the change creates safety concerns which do not seem to have been addressed. Therefore, in order to help myself and others understand the decision, I am requesting the following information under the KY Open Records Request Act (formal request attached):

- The entire list of questions and results from the KHSAA Golf surveys used in the decision making process related to the changes voted on February 19, 2019 relating to the KHSAA Golf Regional qualifiers and State Championship and any information needed to interpret those results,
- List of 2018/2019 Golf Advisory Committee members and their contact information including email for addressing information related to KHSAA golf matters,
- List of 2018/2019 Board of Control members and their contact information including email for addressing information related to KHSAA golf matters,
- Facts, statistics, analytic data, opinions, presentations, meeting minutes, and any and all correspondence shared or exchanged by and between members of the Board of Controls, members of the Golf Advisory Committee, KHSAA members, and/or other individuals which was used or may have been used in considering the changes approved on February 19, 2019 related to the KHSAA Golf Regional qualifiers and/or State Championship and also applicable to other alternatives also considered but not approved related to the KHSAA Golf Regional qualifiers and State Championship,
- List of schools and their representatives acknowledging support of the KHSAA Golf Regional qualifiers and State Championship changes as approved on February 19, 2019 and a list of schools and their representatives acknowledging opposition of the KHSAA Golf Regional qualifiers and State Championship changes as approved on February 19, 2019.

If any of the above information may be found online, please direct me to where it may be found. I would welcome any additional feedback regarding the information above. My purpose in reaching out and making this request is not an attempt to undermine or show disrespect for the KHSAA board or decisions. However, I (and many others) find the decision to be a significant setback for high school golf and presents a substantial negative impact in contrast to what has been publicly presented. I am appealing to you as a parent of 2 KHSAA State Championship participants- Andrew ('18) & Mary Keene ('17, '18), a husband of a 3 time KHSAA State championship participant Missy Hart ('92, '93, '94), and on behalf of myself as a 3 time KHSAA State Championship participant ('91, '92, '93) to provide a forum to further explore the information and reconsider the decision with expediency. In any way I can help to advance the KHSAA mission to serve our statewide golfers in the best way possible and in an effort to grow the game for all, I offer my support. However, this decision in one I cannot support as it creates widespread detriment to the majority of those involved and the future integrity of the KHSAA State Golf Championship. I appreciate your consideration and look forward to reviewing the requested information.

I request this email be forwarded to your Board of Control members as I have not found their contact information (emails) listed on the KHSAA website and welcome their feedback.

Thank you for your consideration!
Sincerely,
Benji Marrs
859-536-8442

BOYS

| Finish | Team | 5th Player* | Score Day 1 | Score Day 2 | Team top 4 score? | | Ind. Finish | Notes |
|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|-------|-------------|--|
| | | | | | Day 1 | Day 2 | | |
| 1st | Taylor County | H. Mason | 75 | 77 | N | Y | T20 | These two players tied for 4th at regional. Ther |
| | Taylor County | L. Peterson | 73 | 82 | Y | N | T30 | |
| 2nd | Saint X | B. Williams | 85 | 81 | N | N | T66 | This 5th player shot the 2nd lowest score of the |
| 3rd | LCA | A. Bassel | 84 | 71 | N | Y | T30 | |
| 4th | Madison Central | C. Travis | 77 | 78 | Y | Y | T30 | These two players tied for 4th at regional. Ther |
| | Madison Central | H. Virgin | 80 | 85 | N | N | T63 | |
| 5th | Ballard | C. Burch | 76 | 85 | Y | Y | T52 | the day 1 |
| 6th | Montgomery County | K. Amburgery | 78 | 87 | Y | N | T63 | Tie day 2 |
| 7th | Covington Catholic | L. Hammon | 80 | 84 | Y | Y | T61 | |
| 8th | Highlands | B. Walz | 83 | 85 | Y | Y | T70 | This is a substitute player for the 5th player out |
| 9th | Wayne County | R. Dobbs | 89 | 92 | N | N | T79 | |
| 10th | Marshall County | T. Wall | 88 | 91 | Y | Y | T78 | Tie day 1 |
| 11th | Grant County | B. Spencer | 89 | 89 | Y | Y | T77 | |
| 12th | Davies County | B. Whistle | 84 | 90 | Y | N | T75 | |
| Average: | | | 82 | 84 | | | | |

The following teams did not make the cut:

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------------|-----|--|---|--|--|---------------------|
| 13th | Bowling Green | B. Stewart | 87 | | Y | | | |
| 14th | South Warren | T. Hudson | 92 | | Y | | | |
| 15th | Estill County | C. Click | 90 | | Y | | | |
| T16th | Central Hardin | G. Ashlock | 84 | | Y | | | |
| T16th | Rockcastle County | E. McKinney | 88 | | N | | | |
| T18th | Campbellsville | C. Harris | 103 | | N | | | |
| T18th | Owensboro Catholic | J. Payne | 91 | | Y | | | Another Teammate DQ |
| T18th | McCracken County | P. Wray | 90 | | Y | | | |
| 21st | Ryle | D. Bailey | 94 | | N | | | Tied |
| 22nd | West Carter | T. Callahan | 98 | | N | | | |
| 23rd | Larue County | K. Puckett | 96 | | N | | | |
| 24th | Pikeville | D. Ratliff | 100 | | Y | | | |

*5th Player is defined as the player with the 5th highest score on their team out of regional qualifying

10 of 12 teams making the cut used their 5th player score at least once, dependent on how you count Madison Central.

7 of 12 5th player scores counted in top 4.



7 of 12 teams NOT making the cut used their 5th player score at least once.

17 of 24 teams (71%) of teams used a 5th player score.

Six 5th player individuals used their score both days, dependent on how you count Madison Central

Only 12 of 36 5th player scores were 90 or higher. 6 of those scores were used by their team as a top 4 score.

Girls

| Finish | Team | 5th Player* | Score Day 1 | Score Day 2 | Team top 4 score? | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|-------|
| | | | | | Day 1 | Day 2 |
| 1st | LCA | D. Gibbs | 90 | 82 | N | Y |
| 2nd | Sacred Heart | E. Warner | 79 | 87 | Y | Y |
| 3rd | Madison Central | K. Taylor | 94 | 103 | N | N |
| 4th | Marshall County | K. Luksie | 91 | 94 | N | Y |
| 5th | Scott County | E. Spencer | 90 | 90 | Y | Y |
| 6th | Green County | M. Vaughn | 104 | 111 | N | N |
| 7th | South Warren | A. Cline | 96 | 94 | N | Y |
| 8th | Shelby County | M. Elder | 101 | 99 | N | N |
| 9th | North Hardin | G. Childers | 115 | 108 | N | N |
| 10th | McCracken County | C. Beatty | 98 | 85 | N | Y |
| 11th | Ryle | G. Grant | 106 | 126 | Y | Y |
| Average: | | | 76 | 77 | | |

The following teams did not make the cut:

| | | | | | |
|-------|---------------------------|------------|-----|--|---|
| 12th | Notre Dame | H. Rice | 99 | | N |
| 13th | Pulaski County | M. Dudley | 122 | | N |
| 14th | George Rogers Clark | J. Lisle | 109 | | N |
| 15th | Rock Castle County | R. Lykins | 110 | | N |
| T16th | Davies County | E. Clark | 103 | | Y |
| T16th | Central Hardin | A. Herrin | 103 | | Y |
| T18th | Madsonville North Hopkins | R. Carver | 101 | | N |
| T18th | Boyd County | K. Ramey | WD | | |
| T18th | Ashland Blazer | S. Stroth | 144 | | N |
| 21st | Powell County | M. Ruse | 156 | | N |
| 22nd | Hazard | A. Thacker | 120 | | Y |

*5th Player is defined as the player with the 5th highest score on their team out of regional qualifying

7 of 12 teams making the cut used their 5th player score at least once, dependent on how you count Madisor
 3 of 12 teams NOT making the cut used their 5th player score at least once.



Eric Straub

From: Borst, Golda <goldaborst@uky.edu>
Sent: Friday, April 05, 2019 9:58 AM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: RE: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Hi Eric,

I am so very sorry for the delay in this reply and really appreciate you reaching out to me about this issue. I hope that I am not too late in giving you my thoughts on the new format of our High School Championship.

I believe the Board of Control should have kept the old format of playing five players and counting the low four since that is what the teams are used to from the regular season. The State Championship is also about the experience for the players and the team. I don't think it's right to leave the fifth player home after they may have been an integral part of the team throughout the whole season.

If pace of play is the issue then I would recommend limiting the amount of teams in the field to make sure the quality of golf is better which will help pace of play overall.

I hope this helps and please let me know if you need any additional thoughts from me.

Best,

Golda Borst
Women's Golf Coach
University of Kentucky

From: Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 28, 2019 6:53 PM
To: Borst, Golda <goldaborst@uky.edu>
Subject: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Dear Coach Borst:

My name is Eric Straub. I am an attorney in Paducah, Kentucky. I played high school golf in Kentucky and my collegiate golf at Missouri State University. I am writing to you because of the recent KHSAA decision to change the Kentucky state golf championships from five players (count four) to four players and count four. This has sparked some discussions since the changes were announced.

I have been talking to current high school coaches, current and former PGA and LPGA tour players, and current high school golfers about attempting to persuade the Board to reconsider.

I know the Kentucky high school state tournament is not a premier destination for college coaches. However, I think that if you support Kentucky high school golf playing the same format players will play in college, your input or support could assist in our effort to persuade the KHSAA Board of Control. The Commissioner has stated that these changes were implemented to address pace of play concerns. I, along with others, do not believe this is the best way to address pace of play in high school golf. There should be revisions to the rules that address pace of play throughout the entire season. Revisions to the state tournament need to be assisted with input from high school coaches, college coaches,



TO: Members of the KHSAA Board of Control
FROM: Matthew Martin, Head Men's Golf Coach at Morehead State

My name is Matthew Martin and I am the head men's golf coach at Morehead State University. I am writing to express my concern over the decision to change the format for the KHSAA golf championship. There are countless issues with this format. Every single person I know in the golf world agrees that limiting the team members to four is absolutely not the answer. This year at our conference championship, we had the opportunity to bring six players as opposed to five. Five of the eleven teams (for various reasons) actually substituted a sixth player in to the line-up. Under the new rules for the state championship, what happens to a team when one of the four players gets sick or injured?

For the 2019-20 season, 8 of our 10 golfers at MSU will be from the state of Kentucky. Dating back to my years as an assistant coach at Transylvania, the state tournament has always been the best recruiting opportunity to watch and compare golfers throughout the state. With the format change to only four players for each school, I will have less opportunity to see how future recruits perform on the biggest stage in the state.

Junior golf in Kentucky has been strong since my days playing in the early 2000s. My best memories as a high school golfer are from the two state championships I was a competitor (2000 and 2001). I was the 4th or 5th player for the majority of those seasons and under the new proposal, there is a good possibility I may have missed out on my fondest memory of placing 4th as a team at the 2001 state championship. Limiting the opportunity for future golfers will eventually make the quality of golf weaker and force me to look more frequently outside of Kentucky to recruit.

Pace-of-play is a problem across the board in golf, but new USGA rules changes have already started to help. I urge you to include more people with backgrounds in golf in the decision making process. There are many possible, common sense solutions to a new format. Playing all season one way and then changing for the biggest tournament of the year is certainly not one of them. I look forward to recruiting at future state championships where the format resembles what we see in college: play five, count four.



Eric Straub

From: Cox, Jason <Jason.Cox@brescia.edu>
Sent: Thursday, May 02, 2019 8:20 PM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Brescia University Golf

This serves as my letter of opposition to the proposed rule change for the KY High School State Championships for both young Men and Women from five players to four. This effort to increase the pace of play is simply wrong on many levels.

Being a college coach of both young Men and Women at Brescia University we have played in many tournaments where our 5 player have gone out first and others where our 1 player has gone out first.

There has been no measurable difference in the "worst" player vs the "best" player going out first or playing faster. Whether we are playing in a tournament, Conference Preview, or Conference Championship there has been no difference in these times on our 5 player vs our 1 player, men or women.

I have been fortunate the last two seasons on our Men's side to win our Conference Championship and advance to the NAIA National Championship. I cannot imagine as a Coach telling one of my top 5 players that he could not go due to a new rule that is supposed to speed up the pace of play. To diminish the experience of a player that puts in the time and effort to help their team advance to a team championship is simply unfair to that player, team, or institution is not practical and this rule does not have a place in our game.

As Coaches at every level our job is reasonably simple. We are there to help guide and teach our players how to be better not only on the golf course but off the course as young men and women. This simple initiative allows us as Coaches to be stewards of the game, helping grow a game that makes them not only better golfers, but better people. And to rob young players of this opportunity is simply unacceptable. In talking with friends, coaches, and professionals around the game we love, I have yet to talk with someone who is in favor of taking kids out of competition. Please reverse this ruling and let them play. Thank you for your consideration.

Jason Cox

Brescia University Golf

270-315-9438



Eric Straub

From: Art Henry <ahenry@bellarmine.edu>
Sent: Sunday, March 03, 2019 10:56 AM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Re: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Eric, thanks for your email and good luck with your efforts to have the KHSAA change their policy regarding play 5 count 4.

Like you I played in the Ky. State high school tournament and college golf at Bellarmine.

I have coached the Bellarmine Women's team for the last 15 years.

First let me agree with almost everyone in the golf business that slow play is a substantial detriment to the game. (And personally I would start with instructing/empowering high school coaches to require their golfers to play 9 holes in two hours or less!)

As another aside, virtually every year I'll have a freshman golfer who I have to convince that a 'two minute' pre shot routine is just not going to work here at Bellarmine.

But to speak specifically to the KHSAA policy of playing 4 counting 4, I won't even address the slow play issue.

The most short sighted aspect of this suggestion is how it could negatively affect the teams involved.

Again using my experience at Bellarmine, there are @15 teams competing yearly in our Conference Championship.

Every year AT LEAST one of the teams will only finish with four of their players. DQs, almost always an incorrect scorecard, illness, or injury will keep one of their players on the sidelines.

Of course with play 5 count 4 these teams can still compete.

Given that scenario with the KHSAA proposal that team would be automatically eliminated!

Just imagine a competing team have their #1 player sprain a wrist hitting from the rough on the 35th hole and having to withdraw because of injury.

Again this has nothing to do with slow play, but it certainly is a consequence to the play 4, count 4 proposal.

Eric, again good luck with the KHSAA.

I would be more than happy to address slow play, because it drives me crazy, but my guess is that you are inundated with suggestions.

I just wanted to offer a different thought that could hopefully make a difference.

Thanks

Art Henry

Bellarmino University

Women's Golf

On Feb 28, 2019, at 6:18 PM, Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com> wrote:

[EXTERNAL]

Dear Coach Henry:

My name is Eric Straub. I am an attorney in Paducah, Kentucky. I played high school golf in Kentucky and my collegiate golf at Missouri State University. I am writing to you because of the recent KHSAA decision to change the Kentucky state golf championships from five players (count four) to four players and count four. This has sparked some discussions since the changes were announced.

I have been talking to current high school coaches, current and former PGA and LPGA tour players, and current high school golfers about attempting to persuade the Board to reconsider.



Eric Straub

From: Velvet Milkman <vmilkman@murraystate.edu>
Sent: Saturday, March 02, 2019 11:11 PM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Re: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Eric,

Thank you for reaching out and being proactive on this manner. I am extremely disappointed in the decision by the KHSAA and think it needs to be changed. I will be glad to sign any document that you have that supports that this decision be reversed. Let me know how I can help.

Thanks - Velvet

Velvet Milkman
Women's Golf Coach
Senior Woman Administrator
Murray State University
217 Stewart Stadium
Murray, KY 42071
270-809-5408 - Office
270-293-0576 - Cell
270-809-6812 - Fax
www.GoRacers.com

On Thu, Feb 28, 2019 at 6:05 PM Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com> wrote:

Dear Coach Velvet:

My name is Eric Straub. I am an attorney in Paducah, Kentucky. I played high school golf in Kentucky and my collegiate golf at Missouri State University. I am writing to you because of the recent KHSAA decision to change the Kentucky state golf championships from five players (count four) to four players and count four. This has sparked some discussions since the changes were announced.

I have been talking to current high school coaches, current and former PGA and LPGA tour players, and current high school golfers about attempting to persuade the Board to reconsider. I have also talked to Todd Trimble about this and he is in full support.

I know the Kentucky high school state tournament is not a premier destination for college coaches. However, I think that if you support Kentucky high school golf playing the same format players will play

Eric Straub

From: Ken Badylak <ken.badylak@kwc.edu>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2019 2:33 PM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: RE: KHSAA High School State Golf Tournament Format Changes

Eric,

This decision to alter the State Tournament is an injustice for the game of golf. This is not growing the game nor is it providing a positive student-athlete experience. Team sports can teach young men and women valuable lessons. Team golf is one of the most unique in sports. Being a part of the team is the highlight for so many young people.

If this is a pace of play issue, Kentucky needs to address that in the summer/off season. They can take a page from Indiana and have rules sessions for their coaches in the off-season. It is upon the leaders of the program to set the tone. Time par can easily be put on scorecards and be a visual resource for the players. Again it is upon the leaders of the game to educate the importance of playing golf in a efficient manner. Take a page from the USGA, pace of play is set-up prior to teeing off. If you have not set-up the course properly than pace will be slow and it must be accepted.

I spent five years (2013-2017) on the NCAA Division II men's golf National Committee. We were entrusted to care for the game and our championships. I can say in my term we never restricted opportunities, in fact we let opportunities grow. As conferences began to sponsor golf they were entitle to apply for an automatic berth into the NCAA Tournament. As the ability level saw a significant drop-off with the formation of new leagues, they still played by the rules set forth at the beginning of the season and became a conference champion, earning a spot in the post season. Although some schools within the same region did not like that a nationally ranked team might be left out, they understand it was part of the rules. We also expanded the travel roster for men's golf, as well as allowing substitutions in the National Championship in the upcoming season.

Part of the beauty with team golf is picking-up a teammate. Showing that teams have depth and ability will determine the correct champion. I am all for being progressive and trying to adapt to the way the game is moving, but this is a step backwards. Most college coaches recruit in the summer or at the end of the fall, leaving the State Tournament as our best option to see players perform. If the State finds it easy to erase a player for college consideration, I feel it is unjust treatment. We want to know how players preform under pressure or in a environment where they are uncomfortable. Personally, I like to see a player make a mistake and see how they respond. This could be my one chance to see a player compete.

I would volunteer my services to the State to assist in any manner regarding post-season golf. I feel gathering information from peers would be a beneficial practice.

Feel free to contact me anytime if you have questions.

All my best,

Ken

Ken Badylak
Men's & Women's Golf Coach
Assistant Director of Athletic Communications



Eric Straub

From: Missy Kennedy <mkennedy@kcu.edu>
Sent: Friday, March 01, 2019 4:57 PM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Re: KHSAA State Golf Championships

You have me and my husbands full support! As PGA members, college coaches and parents to a middle school golfer our goal is to grow the game of golf in a positive way. For sure keep us in the loop as we do not support the KHSAA decision.

Thank you!!!!

On Fri, Mar 1, 2019 at 3:30 PM Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com> wrote:

Coach Kennedy:

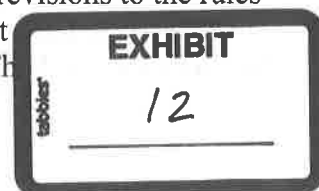
I first want to apologize and let you know that I did not intentionally leave you out of my emails to Kentucky college coaches. I am copying my email below. I heard back from Coach Scott of the University of Pikeville stating your support. Thank you for that. I will keep you in the loop as we move forward. Good luck as you begin the spring season.

Eric

My name is Eric Straub. I am an attorney in Paducah, Kentucky. I played high school golf in Kentucky and my collegiate golf at Missouri State University. I am writing to you because of the recent KHSAA decision to change the Kentucky state golf championships from five players (count four) to four players and count four. This has sparked some discussions since the changes were announced.

I have been talking to current high school coaches, current and former PGA and LPGA tour players, and current high school golfers about attempting to persuade the Board to reconsider.

I know the Kentucky high school state tournament is not a premier destination for college coaches. However, I think that if you support Kentucky high school golf playing the same format players will play in college, your input or support could assist in our effort to persuade the KHSAA Board of Control. The Commissioner has stated that these changes were implemented to address pace of play concerns. I, along with others, do not believe this is the best way to address pace of play in high school golf. There should be revisions to the rules that address pace of play throughout the entire season. Revisions to the state tournament with input from high school coaches, college coaches, and current and former players. Th



Eric Straub

From: Camacho, Michael <michael.camacho@grant.kyschools.us>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2019 1:20 PM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Re: KY Golf School Task Force

From a person on this task force who is a HS golf coach, I want to thank you for taking action in attempting to get the board of control to possibly reconsider their decision. An overwhelming amount of coaches do not support this change. I am willing to assist you in any way that I can. I am a former 5 man who turned his state tourney performance into a college opportunity and this fight is personal to me. Appreciate you doing your part.

Michael Camacho
Grant Co Golf

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From: Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2019 2:06:10 PM
To: rlandrum@pga.com; Karen Henderson; Peter Garvey; Brent Paladino; CRAIG HEIBERT; Danny Baron
Cc: Fernando Molina; Camacho, Michael; Mackenzie Moir; 'Tennye Ohr'
Subject: RE: KY Golf School Task Force

Hello everyone,

I apologize for my delayed response. I have been busy as of late and have continued to consider what I might be able to bring to the table. My name is Eric Straub. I am a former Kentucky high school golfer. I continued my golf career at Missouri State University. Upon the completion of my undergraduate studies I attended the University of Kentucky College of Law. I now practice in Paducah, KY in the areas of Trusts & Estates, estate planning, and real estate. I mention this because I am currently not involved in the game in such capacities as the likes of the other members of this task force.

However, I continue to love the game and still play in several amateur events each year. I want to help improve the quality of high school golf in our state. As you all know, the game of golf teaches invaluable lessons that carry over into an individual's life. Hard work, discipline, integrity, honesty, sportsmanship, and accountability are some of the things that come to mind. I consider myself indebted to the game and am sure that I would not be in the position I am today without having played in high school and college. Golf has given me so many incredible opportunities. I want to ensure that kids in our state have the same opportunities for success.

I became involved in this when the announcement was made that the Kentucky high school state golf tournament was changing the format from 5 players take 4 scores to 4 players take 4 scores, with the regional tournament and invitational tournaments remaining at 5/4. I contacted countless coaches across the state coaching high school and college, former and current players, current and former PGA Tour and LPGA tour players, PGA professionals, parents of current high school golfers, etc. I received a resounding negative response to the change and believe that this remains an important issue with regard to growing the game. I have no dog in this fight other than a love for golf and a love for team golf. I have been working for a couple months on getting added to the KHSAA Board of Control May meeting agenda and am still awaiting a response. I simply want to speak with the Board about reconsidering this decision and request that they involve people like you in the decision-making process. These efforts are ongoing.

Eric Straub

From: Tyrus York <tyork@transy.edu>
Sent: Friday, March 01, 2019 2:48 PM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Re: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Hi Eric

Thank you for reaching out to me. Like you, I am appalled by the KHSAA's decision.

We have just started our spring season so time may be difficult for me to come by. But please keep me in the loop and let me know how I can be of any assistance.

Tyrus

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 28, 2019, at 7:25 PM, Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com> wrote:

Dear Coach York:

My name is Eric Straub. I am an attorney in Paducah, Kentucky. I played high school golf in Kentucky and my collegiate golf at Missouri State University. I am writing to you because of the recent KHSAA decision to change the Kentucky state golf championships from five players (count four) to four players and count four. This has sparked some discussions since the changes were announced.

I have been talking to current high school coaches, current and former PGA and LPGA tour players, and current high school golfers about attempting to persuade the Board to reconsider.

I know the Kentucky high school state tournament is not a premier destination for college coaches. However, I think that if you support Kentucky high school golf playing the same format players will play in college, your input or support could assist in our effort to persuade the KHSAA Board of Control. The Commissioner has stated that these changes were implemented to address pace of play concerns. I, along with others, do not believe this is the best way to address pace of play in high school golf. There should be revisions to the rules that address pace of play throughout the entire season. Revisions to the state tournament need to be assisted with input from high school coaches, college coaches, and current and former players. The KHSAA staff and its Commissioner did not consult with any of these people in deciding upon this change. The people who will be negatively impacted are our state's high school golfers.

We are trying to get on the agenda for the next KHSAA Board of Control meeting. Your input or signature on this cause would be very persuasive in attempting to convince the Board to open a dialogue about how best to revise the state tournament.

I appreciate your time and consideration. If you would like to talk to me, please call me at 270-210-9304 or email me. Good luck to you and your team this spring!

Thanks,
Eric Straub



Eric Straub

From: Scott, Nelson R <nscott@Upike.edu>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2019 7:12 PM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Re: KHSAA High School State Golf Tournament Format Changes

You have my full support! We are heading out in the morning to our conference championship till May 1.

Nelson Scott
Women's Golf Coach
University of Pikeville
606-213-6164 mobile
nelsonscott@upike.edu

On Apr 26, 2019, at 2:37 PM, Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com> wrote:

Coaches,

I realize that all of you are either just wrapping up your conference tournament, currently competing, or preparing to start, and that this is the busiest time of your year. With the May 7 KHSAA Board of Control meeting rapidly approaching, I wanted to reach out again. I originally requested letters on your school's letterhead stating your opinion on the rule change and asking the Board to reconsider. If you just want to reply to this email with you sentiments I will compile those. I have only received one email response. In order to persuade the Board we will likely need more than that. Your influence will go a long way. Thank you for taking the time to look at this and preparing a statement.

Congrats to all of you who succeeded in your conference tournaments , and good luck to everyone currently competing or gearing up. I appreciate all you all do for your players and the game of golf.

If you are headed to the NCAA's, best of luck!

Fairways and greens,
Eric

From: Eric Straub
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2019 2:47 PM
To: 'brian.craig@uky.edu' <brian.craig@uky.edu>; 'markc@GoCards.com' <markc@GoCards.com>; 'courtney@GoCards.com' <courtney@GoCards.com>; 'whitney@GoCards.com' <whitney@GoCards.com>; 'Velvet Milkman' <vmilkman@murraystate.edu>; 'William Matthew Martin' <wmmartin2@moreheadstate.edu>; 'Mike.Grugin@kysu.edu' <Mike.Grugin@kysu.edu>; 'Ken Badylak' <ken.badylak@kwc.edu>; 'Art Henry' <ahenry@bellarmine.edu>; 'Cox, Jason' <Jason.Cox@brescia.edu>; 'kevinauton@upike.edu' <kevinauton@upike.edu>; 'mkennedy@kcu.edu' <mkennedy@kcu.edu>; 'skennedy@kcu.edu' <skennedy@kcu.edu>; 'taylor.riggs@ucumberland.edu' <taylor.riggs@ucumberland.edu>; 'bsergent@unionky.edu' <bsergent@unionky.edu>; 'conor.sutton@unionky.edu' <conor.sutton@unionky.edu>; 'Tyrus York' <tyork@transy.edu>; 'Scott, Nelson R' <nscott@Upike.edu>
Subject: KHSAA High School State Golf Tournament Format Changes

Greetings Coaches:

Eric Straub

From: Grugin, Mike <Mike.Grugin@kysu.edu>
Sent: Friday, March 01, 2019 6:37 AM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Re: KHSAA State Golf Championships

I would be happy to sign a statement. The problem is with the administration of the KHSAA.

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From: Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2019 7:28:44 AM
To: Grugin, Mike
Subject: Re: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Thank you for your response and input. I also think there are several issues with the tournament that need to be addressed. I think the main issue here is having the right people included to address the changes. The KHSAA did not even deliberate over the revisions proposed by the Kentucky Golf Coaches Association in conjunction with the KGA-PGA, which aimed to cure some of the issues you present.

Our goal is to open the discussion back up and make appropriate changes. The newly implemented format change is not the solution.

Thank you for your comments. Perhaps you would be willing to sign a letter or a statement for our presentation to the board.

Thanks,

Eric C. Straub, Esq.
Whitlow, Roberts, Houston & Straub, PLLC
Associate
estraub@whitlow-law.com
300 Broadway | Post Office Box 995
Phone: 270-443-4516
Cell: 270-210-9304
Fax: 270-443-4571
www.whitlow-law.com

On Feb 28, 2019, at 6:31 PM, Grugin, Mike <Mike.Grugin@kysu.edu> wrote:

Eric I feel like this is much ado about nothing. I have coached high school golf in Kentucky before becoming Kentucky State's coach. I also played high school golf in Kentucky. changes need to be made. This change surprised me because it was the least of the

Teams in some areas qualify for the state tournament each year when they should never be in the tournament. Other teams who finish third and fourth in the best regions sit home. I believe that there needs to be a minimum score that must be met in order for any team to qualify. I think that this change will have limited success.

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From: Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 28, 2019 7:16:44 PM

To: Grugin, Mike

Subject: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Dear Coach Grugin:

My name is Eric Straub. I am an attorney in Paducah, Kentucky. I played high school golf in Kentucky and my collegiate golf at Missouri State University. I am writing to you because of the recent KHSAA decision to change the Kentucky state golf championships from five players (count four) to four players and count four. This has sparked some discussions since the changes were announced.

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I appreciate your time and consideration. If you would like to talk to me, please call me at 270-210-9304 or email me. Good luck to you and your team this spring!

Thanks,
Eric Straub

<image001.png>

Eric C. Straub, Esq.
Associate

estraub@whitlow-law.com

300 Broadway | Post Office Box 995
Paducah, Kentucky 42002-0995
Phone 270-443-4516
Cell 270-210-9304
Fax 270-443-4571

Eric Straub

From: Auton, Kevin <kevinauton@Upike.edu>
Sent: Thursday, February 28, 2019 6:29 PM
To: Eric Straub
Subject: Re: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Thank you for this effort! I think it's a terrible decision and am actually dumbfounded that this was even considered. I have already been very vocal on social media in regards to my feelings. You can count on me to stand with you for your fight!!

Coach Kevin Auton
606-791-0079

From: Eric Straub <estraub@whitlow-law.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 28, 2019 7:20:49 PM
To: Auton, Kevin
Subject: KHSAA State Golf Championships

Dear Coach Auton:

My name is Eric Straub. I am an attorney in Paducah, Kentucky. I played high school golf in Kentucky and my collegiate golf at Missouri State University. I am writing to you because of the recent KHSAA decision to change the Kentucky state golf championships from five players (count four) to four players and count four. This has sparked some discussions since the changes were announced.

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I appreciate your time and consideration. If you would like to talk to me, please call me at 270-210-9304 or email me. Good luck to you and your team this spring!

Thanks,
Eric Straub



High School Postseason Plan

*no mention of going
from 5 to 4 in
this plan*

The KGCA in conjunction with KGA-PGA, Inc. has met to develop the following revised High School Postseason plan. Dates reflected in this proposal relate to the scheduled 2019 Postseason dates previously published.

Regional Championships

- Each Regional Championship would take place between Monday, September 23 and Saturday, September 28.
- Regional Managers would work with host facilities and member schools to develop Regional Championship date.
- The Top 5 Teams would advance to the 1st Round State Tournament Site.
- The Top 15 Individuals not otherwise on qualifying teams would advance to the 1st Round State Tournament Site.
- If at least four (4) players from the same school advance as Individuals, those players may still compete at the next level as a team.

1st Round State Championship Sites

- Six (6) 1st Round State Tournament Sites will consist of advancing teams and individuals from two (2) Regional Championships.
- Regional Managers from each Regional Championship advancing to the 1st Round State Championship Site will work with two (2) Certified Rules Officials provided by KGA-PGA.
- The Boys 1st Round State Championship will take place on Monday, September 30, and the Girls 1st Round State Championship will take place on Tuesday, October 1.
- The Top 4 Teams would advance to the Final Round State Tournament Site (Bowling Green CC).
- The Top 6 Individuals not otherwise on qualifying teams would advance to the Final Round State Tournament Site (Bowling Green CC).
- If at least four (4) players from the same school advance as Individuals, those players may still compete at the next level as a team.

Final Round State Championship

- The Boys KHSAA State Championship will take place on Tuesday-Wednesday, October 8-9, and the Girls KHSAA State Championship will take place on Friday-Saturday, October 12-13.
- KGA-PGA, Inc. will work with the KHSAA to manage the Final Round State Championship.
- The Top 12 Teams (and ties) would advance to the 2nd day of the Final Round State Tournament.
- The Top 20 Individuals (and ties) not otherwise on qualifying teams would advance to the 2nd day of the Final Round State Tournament.
- Individuals from the same school will be paired in consecutive tee times.
- Coaches with more than one participant at the Final Round State Championship will be provided the opportunity to purchase a designated cart at the fee determined by the host facility.

EXHIBIT

tabbies

18

Additional Considerations

- With the Postseason potentially starting one week earlier, we recommend the first date for Regular Season competition be moved from Friday, August 2 to Monday, July 29.
- Regional Managers should be assigned to a 3-year term with the potential of working with Host Schools each year for the Regional Championships.'
- KHSAA would need to align 12 Regions for Boys and Girls golf while equalizing participation in each Region.
- Geographically arrange three (3) pods consisting of four (4) Regions in each pod to create a 3-year rotation for paired Regions at each 1st Round State Championship site. For example...
 - In 2019, Region "A" will be paired with Region "B" and Region "C" will be paired with Region "D"
 - In 2020, Region "A" will be paired with Region "C" and Region "B" will be paired with Region "D"
 - In 2021, Region "A" will be paired with Region "D" and Region "B" will be paired with Region "C"
- KGA-PGA, Inc. will commit to utilizing their Tournament Management software for each 1st Round State Championship Site as well as the Final Round State Championship Site.
- KGA-PGA, Inc. will commit to scheduling two (2) Certified Rules Officials at each 1st Round State Championship Site with eight (8) Certified Rules Officials and GHK staff at the Final Round State Championship Site.

Key Benefits for Revised Postseason Plan

- A total of at least 60 teams will advance out of the Regional Championship round (compared to 22/24 teams currently).
- A total of 180 Individuals will advance out of the Regional Championship round (compared to 44/36 currently).
- The Final Round Championship Site will consist of 24 teams and 36 Individuals for Boys and Girls.
- Each Region gains flexibility with scheduling their Regional Championship date.
- The level of competition at the Final Round State Championship site should improve significantly with the additional round of competition.
- A total of three (3) additional dates will be available for High School Invitationals during the Regular Season (4 additional dates added to start Regular Season, and one date lost on final weekend of current schedule).



Stan Lee @KYStanLee · 3/12/19



Happy to report that the House of Representatives just passed HR 199, my resolution to encourage the KHSAA to reconsider its recent bad decision to reduce the number of golfers from 5 to 4 who can play in the state tournament. Retweet for your support of this resolution.



Stan Lee @KYStanLee · 3/7/19

What a terrific group of young ladies, and pretty good golfers too. It was my privilege to honor them on the House floor today.



You Retweeted



Mike Thomas @mthomaslo... · 2/21/19



Replying to @GolfCentral

Cut out 20% of players on a team?? Take away this experience and opportunity?? If it's because of slow play, enforce a faster play policy. Help us grow golf in



Replying to @KentBulle

To call the opinions of professional golfers "just noise" is very disheartening. As well as Limiting kids chances to grow as a person and player through the game of golf.



You Retweeted



Robert Damron ✓ @RobertD... · 3/1/19 ✓

Replying to @KentBulle

I'm with Kent! Don't be stubborn. You can still change this



You Retweeted



Kent Bulle ✓ @KentBulle · 3/1/19 ✓

It's not too late to fix this. Anything that turns away or limits the opportunities for junior golfers, I'm am very opposed. Let them play! Needs to be 5 count 4.



Golf Central ✓ @Golf... · 2/21/19

Kentucky High School Athletic

Association commissioner Julian