

KHSAA Rationale for the Proposed Change

The primary motivation for the change is the **reduction of available tennis facilities** in Lexington.

- **Facility Loss:** The University of Kentucky (UK), which has hosted the tournament for decades, replaced 8 outdoor recreational courts with a parking structure, reducing their available courts by nearly 50%.
- **Competing Interests:** Existing tennis spaces are increasingly being repurposed for other activities, such as pickleball.
- **Logistical Pressures:** The KHSAA is currently the only state attempting to host full 64-person brackets for both genders in both singles and doubles at a single site. This format is difficult to maintain during inclement weather due to a lack of sufficient indoor backup courts.
- **Impact of Team Format:** The previous expansion to 64 competitors was tied to how team championships were decided; however, recent changes in seeding and team formats have made a larger initial field less necessary for the final site.

Kentucky High School Tennis Coaches Association (KYHSTCA) does not believe we have a facility issue that requires this proposed change. The minimum courts required for a 64 Singles & 64 Doubles tournament for both Boy's and Girl's require a minimum of 24 courts (12 per Boy's site and 12 per Girl's site or in close proximity).

The Coaches Association proposal suggests maintaining the 64-players Singles & Doubles format in Lexington by utilizing Shillito Park (8 courts) and Lexington Christian Academy (6 courts) for a total of 14 courts as one site and the UK Hilary J Boone Tennis Center's 9 outdoor courts and 4 Indoor courts for a total of 13 courts, as the second site. This would provide 27 total courts, enough to complete the first day of a 64-player brackets in approximately 10 hours (8 AM to 6 PM) weather permitting.

Here is the math for one site:

Day 1 at each Site you only need a minimum of 12 Courts per site		
Day 1		
	Entries (remaining)	Matches to Play
RD 1 - Singles	64	32
RD 1 - Doubles	64	32
RD 2 - Singles	32	16
RD 2 - Doubles	32	16
Total Matches Day 1		96
Avg Match Time for RD 1 & RD 2 (1.25 or 75 mins)*		1.25
Total Match Hours		120
Minimum # of Courts		12
Total Hours to Complete the 96 Matches for Day 1		10

*Average Match Time for Day 1 is based on the following match scheduling times used in the past:

	60	Minutes for 1/3 of the Matches
	75	Minutes for 1/3 of the Matches
	90	Minutes for 1/3 of the Matches
	Avgverage Match Time:	75 Minutes or 1.25 Hours

Day 1 Match Schedule based on Minimum and actual number of courts at each site:

Minimum 12 Courts	Required Running	Shillito (8) + LCA (6)	14 Total Courts	UK (9 Outdoor) UK (4 Indoor)
Total	Match Start	Match End	Total	Total
12	8:00 AM	9:15 AM	14	13
24	9:15 AM	10:30 AM	28	26
36	10:30 AM	11:45 AM	42	39
48	11:45 AM	1:00 PM	56	52
60	1:00 PM	2:15 PM	70	65
72	2:15 PM	3:30 PM	84	78
84	3:30 PM	4:45 PM	96	91
96	4:45 PM	6:00 PM		96

**Courts are only
5 mins Apart**

Now that we have addressed normal facilities issue, we will discuss our indoor backup facilities.

The Kentucky High School Tennis Coaches Association (KYHSTCA) has developed a comprehensive "Weather Backup" proposal to address inclement weather during the State Tennis Tournament. This plan focuses on maintaining a 64-entrant bracket by utilizing regional indoor facilities as backup.

Weather Issues - Backup Indoor Tennis Courts				
	# of Indoor Courts used in the Past UK	Minimum Number Indoor Courts	Est Miles From UK	
Lexington Tennis Club	10	10* - Requested 12	4	
Bluegrass Racquet Club	3 or 4	5*	7	
EKU - Adams Tennis Center	0	4	27	
Total	17 - 18	25		

*19 Courts Confirmed
Available as of 1-14 @ Noon

In the past we have had 17 to 20 backup courts. We believe we can have a minimum of 24 indoor backup courts as we have spoken with Lexington Tennis Club to see if they can increase the number of available courts from 10 to 12 and we have also spoken to Bluegrass Racquet Club and he was willing to give us all 5 of his courts. The only one we have not spoken to (left messages) at the time of this writing is Adam Cohen EKU Tennis Coach, but we have used that facility in the past and these 4 courts would get us to 24 or 25 courts. You can see the estimated miles from UK to each facility based on Google maps.

Overview of the Proposed Format

The KHSAA Board of Control is evaluating a "satellite" format, similar to those used in high school golf and swimming.

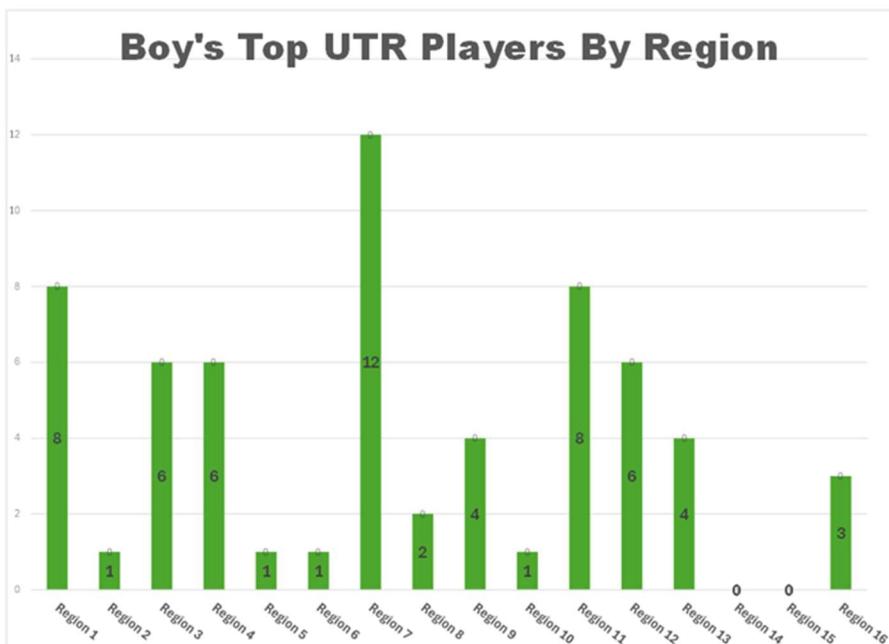
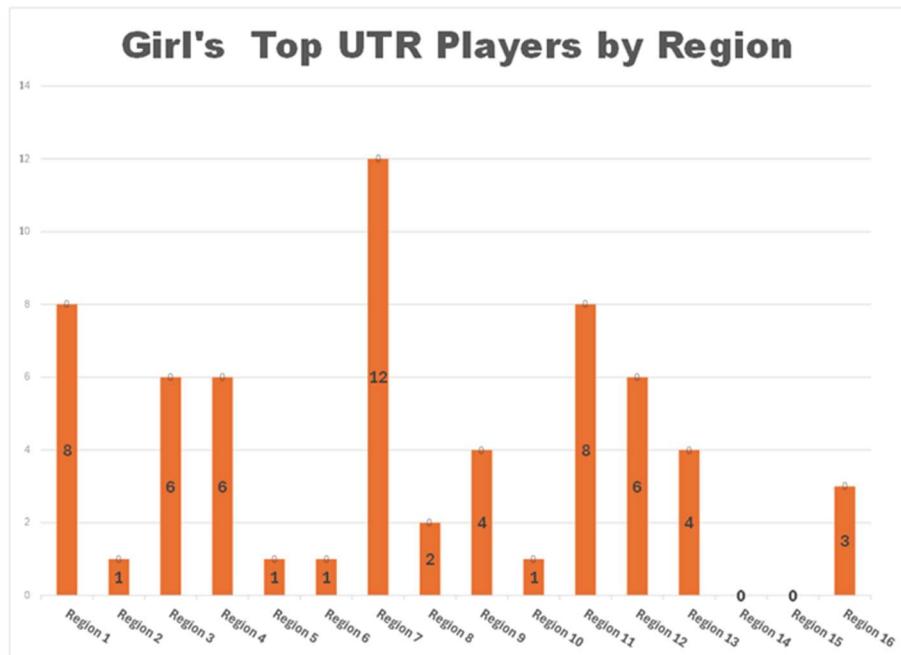
- **First-Round Satellite Venues:** Competitors advancing from regional tournaments (champions, runners-up, and semifinalists) would first compete at one of **four satellite sites**. Each site would host four regions (e.g., Regions 1-4 at one site, 5-8 at another).
- **Advancement Criteria:** Each satellite site will feature 16-entrant brackets. Players must win **two matches** to advance to the final round. This format is designed to be completed in a single day at facilities with at least eight courts.
- **Final Round in Lexington:** The final round would be reduced to a **16-entrant event** for each division, held in Lexington.
- **Seeding:** Players will be seeded (up to eight places) prior to the satellite events and then **re-seeded** by a committee for the final 16-person event in Lexington.
- **Team Tournament:** No changes are proposed for the Team Tennis Tournament; the 16 regional champions will still advance directly to Lexington.

Our Coaches has several concerns with the First Round Satellite format here is a summary of their concerns and comments:

What is your greatest concern(s) about having the new First Round played at four satellite venues?

- **Equity and Competition:** The grouping of strong regions (especially 5-8 and 9-12) will lead to highly-qualified players eliminating each other early, making the final 16 less representative of the state's best talent and disadvantaging players from those stronger regions. Conversely, players from weaker regions may advance more easily.

This is one of the biggest concern Coaches had with the First Round Satellite format as it was not fair and equitable for players in the stronger Regions 5-8 and Regions 9-12. Here is a chart for the Top Rating Players by Region (using their Universal Tennis Rating). UTR (Universal Tennis Rating) is a global, objective tennis rating system that measures a player's skill on a single scale from 1.00 to 16.50, regardless of age, gender, or location, based on match results and the competitiveness of opponents. It uses an algorithm to analyze the past 12 months of matches, giving more weight to matches against higher-rated players and considering the percentage of games won, to provide a real-time view of your current ability.



- **Diminished State Tournament Experience:** Many responders expressed concern that not playing the first round in Lexington takes away the "luster" and "reward" of qualifying for the state tournament, depriving most players of the full state experience and potentially impacting their motivation and scholarship opportunities. Concern was expressed that limiting players' opportunity to reach Lexington diminishes the special experience of the State Tournament and could reduce interest in the sport, especially for rural or lower-income students.
- **Venue Quality and Availability:** Concerns exist about ensuring the four satellite venues are neutral, have the required number of courts (such as 8 courts mentioned for the Eastern part of the state), and that the facilities chosen are high quality, potentially at colleges or private facilities, not just high schools.
- **Facility Concerns and Alternative Sites:** Several responses suggest exploring alternative locations to Lexington (like Bowling Green or Louisville) or utilizing more local high school/private club courts in the Lexington area to address facility issues instead of changing the format.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Maintaining the Current 64-Player Format

1. How will we manage coaching staff if matches are split between UK and Shillito/LCA?

- **Existing Precedent:** Boy's will be at one site and Girl's at the other site. So, most schools have already made progress in this area by utilizing assistant coaches to manage split-site requirements. In Kentucky, about two-thirds of our Head Coaches coach both the Boy's & Girl's teams, so they have at least one Assistant Coach to cover the other site.
- **Advanced Planning:** Providing schools with the schedule and plan well in advance allows them to make necessary accommodations for staffing.
- **Nature of the Sport:** Managing multiple sites is a common circumstance in competitive tennis, and coaches are generally prepared for these logistics.
- **Past Experience:** In the last few years, the location of courts for the same gender has been an issue. For example, Berea & EKU were 14 Miles and last year Sayre & LCA were 12 Miles, our proposal is using Shillito Park & LCA which is less than 2 Miles and less than 5 minutes apart.

2. Is the travel to Lexington a burden for rural or lower-income students compared to satellite sites?

- **The "State" Incentive:** Traveling to Lexington is viewed as a "reward" and a highlight of the season; taking this away could actually reduce interest in tennis for rural or lower-income students.
- **Satellite Travel Reality:** Satellite sites do not eliminate travel burdens. For example, a player in Section 1 traveling to a host site like McCracken County could still face a trip of over 249 miles and nearly 4 hours.

3. Won't a 64-player bracket take too long given the reduced courts at UK?

- **The 12-Court Minimum Solution:** You must have a minimum of 12 courts for each of the 2 sites to complete matches in about 10 hours (8 AM – 6 PM) with UK's 13 courts and with 14 courts at Shillito Park and LCA, these matches should be completed in less than 10 hours.
- **Efficiency Data:** This court configuration allows all 196 Day 1 matches to be completed in approximately 8.5 to 10 hours—a standard and manageable tournament day for USTA events.
- **Historical Precedent:** The average match time of 75 minutes used in past tournaments supports this timeline.

- **Playing Indoor vs Outdoor @ UK:** Using the 4 indoor courts at UK for the 1st 2 rounds is not an issue, but for Day 2 & Day 3 you want everyone playing on the same court surface and in the same environmental conditions, weather permitting.

4. How will we handle the cost of using community facilities like Shillito Park?

- **Low Overhead:** The cost to reserve Shillito Park is only \$5 per hour per court.
- **Association Support:** The KYHSTCA has explicitly offered to assist in organizing a method to help cover these or indoor backup expenses if they become an issue for the KHSAA.

5. What happens if it rains? Is the 64-player bracket still viable indoors?

- **Sufficient Indoor Capacity:** Our "Weather Backup" plan utilizes 24 indoor courts across four facilities (UK, EKU, Lexington Tennis Club, and Bluegrass Racquet Club).
- **Proven Timelines:** Utilizing these 24 courts allows all 192 (96 matches X 2 Sites) matches to be completed in 10 hours, excluding travel time to get to these indoor sites.
- **Centralization:** Keeping the indoor backup sites near Lexington/Richmond allows the tournament to remain centralized rather than scattered across the state to the 4 Satellite sites.

6. Why not just adopt the satellite model used by Golf and Swimming?

- **Competitive Difference:** Unlike golf or swimming, tennis relies on a head-to-head bracket system. Grouping "power" regions into one satellite site leads to the early elimination of the state's best talent. Golf you play the course (par & slope rating) and Swimming is virus the clock, whereas tennis you play an opponent and each opponent has different skill levels.
- **Seeding Integrity:** A 64-player statewide draw protects the integrity of the competition by ensuring top players don't meet until the later rounds in Lexington. One year KHSAA reduced the number of seeds from 16 to 8 and you had a top 4 seed vs what should have been an 9-16 seed (but due to this seeding change he was not seeded) defeating the seeded player from Ballard.
