



OUR STUDENTS, OUR TEAMS . . . OUR FUTURE.

2025 AIA State Football

ADMINISTRATOR/HEAD COACH TOURNAMENT GUIDE

Schedule, Rules, Regulations, Instructions

Information Subject to Change

Director of Athletics - Football

Dan Nero

Phone: 602-385-3820

dnero@aiaonline.org



OUR STUDENTS, OUR TEAMS . . . OUR FUTURE.

Table of Contents

2025 AIA State Football Administrator/Coach Tournament Guide

Topic	Page Number(s)
School Conference Alignments	3
Emergency Action Plan/ Required Medical Personnel Requirement Link	3
Media Policy Link	3
State Football Playoff Brackets/Rosters/Qualifying Criteria	3-4
Event Budget and Score Reporting	5
Bracket Show Information	5
Admission Information	5
AIA Programs and Souvenirs	5-6
Competing Team Instructions	6-7
Game Ball Distribution/ Game Tie Breaking Procedures	6
Participating Team Uniforms Expectations	7
Sideline Expectations and Limitations	7
Control of Spectator Expectations/ Signs/Artificial Noisemaker Expectations	7-8
Football Venue Restrictions/ Drones Prohibited	8
Championship Game Information/75 Minute Pre-game Meeting/ Trophy Presentation Expectations	8
Spiritline/Bands	9
Stadium Policies - ASU	9

Information for spectators including admission pricing, the digital ticketing process, programs, souvenirs, venue information & schedules: <https://azpreps365.com/championships/football>

Media information, including policies, credential requests, broadcasting & media rights agreements: <https://aiaonline.org/host-media-info>

ADA Compliance information: <https://aiaonline.org/files/14160/committees-ada-compliance.pdf>

Emergency personnel required protocols & information related to AIA postseason competitions: <https://aiaonline.org/files/17188/qmp.pdf>

School conference/ division/ section alignments:

11-man: <https://aiaonline.org/alignments/2024/activities/football>

8-man: <https://aiaonline.org/alignments/2024/activities/football-8>

2025 Football State Tournament Information and Brackets

For accurate information regarding the AIA State Football tournament schedules as well as locations, including addresses, of all neutral state football game sites, please go to the link below: <http://www.azpreps365.com/championships/football>

For AIA State Tournament Brackets, click on the AIA link below from AZPreps365.com: <https://azpreps365.com/brackets/football>

All rules as stated in the National Federation Rules Book for this sport, along with the AIA Constitution & Bylaws as well as these tournament instructions apply.

Note: Playoff games are subject to time and date changes and/or venue relocation. Factors include, but are not limited to: location of high seed, contractual obligations, broadcast commitments, seating capacity, and travel considerations of participating schools.

Note: All schools must input their 2025 team photos and current roster of players that will participate in the AIA State Football Playoffs into the MaxPreps website through the school login system. This will be included in the 2025 AIA State Football commemorative program that is available to spectators online. For instructions to input your team photo and current roster go to the following link: <https://www.aiaonline.org/files/17485/maxpreps-rosters-how-to.pdf>

Playoff Qualifying Criteria– Football

Open Division (12-team bracket): To qualify, a school must have played a minimum of eight (8) games. Following the regular season, the top four (4) ranked teams from the 6A Conference, based on AIA rankings powered by MaxPreps, will be placed onto the state tournament bracket for the quarterfinal round. 6A Conference teams ranked Nos. 5-12 will play a first-round game. First-round winning teams will advance to the Open Division quarterfinals to face the four top-ranked teams, while the first-round losing teams will be placed in the 6A state tournament bracket quarterfinals. The state tournament bracket will be seeded according to individual AIA ranking of the teams. The state tournament will consist of four (4) rounds and be single elimination starting in the quarterfinal round.

- Open: Top 12 teams from 6A Conference

2025 AIA State Football Administrator/Coach Tournament Guide

6A (12-team bracket): In order to qualify, a school must have played a minimum of eight (8) games. After qualifying teams are added to the Open Division state tournament bracket and removed from the conference rankings, teams ranked Nos. 13-20 will play a first-round game. First round winning teams will advance to the 6A Conference quarterfinals to face teams that lost in the Open Division first round. The state tournament bracket will be re-seeded according to individual AIA ranking of the teams and first-round results. The state tournament will consist of four (4) rounds and be single elimination.

- 6A: Four (4) teams returning from the Open Division and teams ranked Nos. 13-20

5A, 4A (24-team bracket): In order to qualify, a school must have played a minimum of eight (8) games. Based on the overall AIA rankings powered by MaxPreps, the top 24 teams will advance to the state tournament with the top eight (8) teams receiving a first-round bye. The state tournaments will consist of five (5) rounds and be single elimination.

- 5A, 4A: Teams ranked 1-24

3A (16-team bracket): In order to qualify, a school must have played a minimum of eight (8) games. The top team in each region based on standings will receive an automatic berth to the state tournament bracket. The remaining teams in the top 16 based on the overall AIA rankings powered by MaxPreps will advance to the state tournament. The state tournament bracket will be seeded according to the overall ranking of the 16 teams. The state tournament will consist of four (4) rounds and be single elimination.

- 3A: Five (5) region winners and 11 at-large qualifiers

2A (24-team bracket): To qualify, a school must have played a minimum of eight (8) games. The winner of each of the five (5) region crossover Week 10 games between top-seeded region teams (based on region standings) will receive an automatic bid at least to the first round of the state tournament if ranked outside the top 24. After the week 10 games, the top eight (8) teams based on AIA rankings powered by MaxPreps will receive a first-round bye. The state tournament bracket will be seeded according to the overall AIA rankings powered by MaxPreps. The state tournament will consist of five (5) rounds and be single elimination.

- 2A: Five (5) automatic bids and the 19 at-large qualifiers

1A (12-team bracket): To qualify, a school must have played a minimum of six (6) games. Based on region standings, the top team in each region will earn an automatic bid to the state tournament. The remainder of the state tournament bracket will be filled and seeded according to the AIA rankings powered by MaxPreps. The top four (4) ranked teams will receive first-round byes. The state tournament will consist of four (4) rounds and be single elimination.

- 1A: Four (4) automatic bids and eight (8) at-large qualifiers based on ranking

SITE ADMINISTRATOR HOST SITE GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

SITE AIA BUDGETS

TBD

SCORE REPORTING

Post-Season Results- immediately at the conclusion of the game:

Two hours prior to the start of your state tournament game, an email will be sent to the visiting and host school athletic director, as well as the host high school venue (if a neutral site) with a score reporting link. **At the conclusion of the game, any of the three mentioned above may click on the score reporting link to be taken to the scores portion of their admin (upon logging into the system) to enter the game result. The goal is to have the result reported and posted immediately at the conclusion of the game.**

AIA State Football Media Bracket Shows

On Saturday, Nov 1 (1A/2A/3A) and Saturday Nov 8 (4A/5A/6A/Open) the AIA State Bracket Show will be held as part of the AZPreps365 Radio Show. Check AZPreps365 for more information.

Admission Information

Ticket sales for all AIA state championship events will be conducted digitally. Spectators can only attend events in the postseason by ordering their tickets online through the association's official partner GoFan. [Click here](#) to access GoFan's site and from there you will be able to select your championship event or download the free app and search for AIA events.

FREE ADMISSION:

AIA Passes Only

Children five (5) or under

Players in uniform entering with their School Board approved FB Coaching staff

School Board Approved Varsity Football Staff

Team Support Staff

Twenty Spirit Line (in uniform) with their Sponsor(s)

Band members (in uniform) with their Sponsor(s)

All AIA tournament workers

Media with proper AIA credentials

AIA Lifetime Pass Holder and One Guest

AIA Complimentary Pass and One Guest

Arizona Football Officials Association (AzFOA) Pass Holder (self only)

Photo ID required for AIA Pass Holder and all AIA Complimentary Passes

PROGRAMS AND SOUVENIRS

PepWear is the official supplier for AIA Programs and Souvenirs.

State tournament programs will be provided, free of charge, in PDF files for users to download, when available. Please note that hi-res programs may be best suited for desktop downloads and

low-res programs may be best suited for mobile and tablet device downloads. Please see the following link for state tournament programs downloads:

<http://www.azpreps365.com/programs/football>

Sale or distribution of AIA State Tournament related game programs, t-shirts or any other souvenirs by any individual or company other than the PepWear at any AIA State Tournament playoff site or game is prohibited.

COMPETING TEAM INSTRUCTIONS

- Official rules shall be those of the current National Federation Football Rule Book, the AIA Constitution and Bylaws, and these tournament instructions.
- At least five officials shall be assigned to all post-season football contests.
- The game officials are responsible for the conduct of the game as prescribed by AIA adopted playing rules.
- 25/40 second field level clocks will be in use at any sites that have this equipment available.
- For all AIA State Football **Semifinals and Finals**, AIA assigned officials will operate the game clock, 25/40 second clock (if 25/40 clock is in place), and supply the chain crew and ball runners.
- The National Federation Playoff System shall be used to resolve a tie game in all state playoffs, including the state championship games. (See AIA policy/procedure; article 24.1.3)
- The AIA policy/procedure; article 24.1.5 (Football Speed-up Rule) will be used anytime a team is ahead of an opponent by 42 or more points. Regular timing rules shall apply in the last two minutes of the game.
- **Teams must use a Wilson ball that has the “National Federation of State High School Associations” stamp on it. Note: Every school team that makes the AIA State Football playoffs will receive a complimentary Wilson Collegiate Style GST F1003B game football so that all AIA State Football Playoff games can meet the AIA sponsorship agreement with Wilson.**
- **At all game sites, each participating team shall provide an AIA approved (i.e. Wilson) game ball to the game officials for use during the tournament game.**
- If available, dressing rooms will be assigned by the Site Director; however, all players must provide their own towels and locks.
- A **school board approved coach** shall be in attendance during all pre-game warm-up sessions.
- In the First Rd. and Quarterfinal games, it will be the responsibility of each participating school to provide ball runners to assist the officials in exchanging footballs during the game. For liability reasons, the ball runner must be of high school age or older.
- **No pre-game entrance tunnels (inflatable or other) permitted at Neutral Site State Playoff games.**

Please Note: No pre-game practice is allowed at any neutral game site by any team for 7 days prior to the game. Teams playing at college sites may use college hash marks and college goal posts.

Uniforms

- The home (high seed) team shall wear their dark jerseys, and the visiting team shall wear light jerseys.
- The visiting team is responsible for avoiding similarity of colors; however, if there is doubt, the referee may require the home team to change. (See N.F. Football Rule Book, Rule 1-5-1-c-4, page 17). When games are played on a neutral site, the AIA recommends the high seed team bring two different color sets of jerseys.

Coaching Staff/Sideline Spectators

Only school board approved members of participating schools' football coaching or training staff will be permitted in the team box. All others on the sideline must have Site Administrator or AIA permission.

- **All individuals on the field sidelines for AIA State Tournament games must be of high school age or older due to AIA insurance liability.**

Participating Schools: Administrator Control of Spectator Responsibility

The National Federation of High School Associations disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances.

School administrators from the state tournament participating schools are assigned the following responsibility as AIA member school tournament participants:

16.3.4 Spectator Behavior – In the event that spectators, parents, or other non-school personnel initiate or use profanity in cheers or cheers having the intent of sounding profane, single out opposing players personally and/or heckle them by directing derogatory or profane statements or chants at them, use racist remarks, direct offensive cheers/chants at opposing cheering sections, or engage in physical conflict or other threatening or aggressive behavior with school personnel, officials, players, coaches, or other spectators, the school(s) involved shall utilize all available law enforcement resources to prosecute such offenders, and shall take all reasonable actions to help ensure that future similar incidents do not occur, such as temporarily or permanently prohibiting the offender(s) from attending future contests.

- **Artificial music, other than that played by AIA announcers at the football playoff sites, is prohibited within the stadium. The playing of music/amplified sound, etc. shall only be permitted from the press box, during pre-game, time-outs, intermission and post-game. Approved school bands will be permitted.**
- **Unsportsmanlike/derogatory signs are not permitted at any AIA state tournament venues under the administration of school site directors or AIA personnel.**
- **Air horns and noisemakers such as whistles deemed disruptive are not permitted at AIA events and will be confiscated.**
- **Disruptive/unsportsmanlike behavior by spectators will not be tolerated. Violators will be removed from the venue.**

FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY AT ALL STATE TOURNAMENT SITES, SPECTATORS ARE PROHIBITED FROM BEING ON THE TRACK OR PLAYING FIELD AT ANY TIME, INCLUDING AFTER THE GAME.

AIA RESTRICTIONS FOR ALL FOOTBALL PLAYOFF VENUES

- Including high school sites and stadiums

All spectators are reminded that the items listed below will not be permitted inside any AIA playoff game facility. There are no lockers available outside of the stadium in which to secure items not allowed inside the facility. Items may also not be held by stadium staff members or left unattended on stadium grounds.

- Alcohol
- Animals (except for service animals)
- Signs may not be displayed in a manner that obstructs other fans' views of the game or stadium scoreboards/advertising signage.
- **Amplified music/sounds in the stadium, other than from the Pressbox or approved School Bands.**
- Clothing deemed obscene or indecent
- Fireworks or sparklers
- Illegal drugs
- Smokeless Cigarettes
- Weapons - Included but not limited to firearms & knives

***Any item deemed inappropriate or hazardous by AIA Staff, high school administration or stadium security.**

- Unmanned aerial systems at AIA post season events: Per AIA Policy 24.10.5.1 - The use of unmanned aerial systems, often referred to as drones, is prohibited for any purpose by any person at all AIA post season events. This policy includes not only the restricted playing area of the venue(s), but also the physical confines of the entire stadium/field/arena structure. For the purpose of this policy, an unmanned aerial system is any aircraft without a human pilot on board.

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME PROCEDURES

- **Pre-game Meeting** – This will be a short “safety and protocols” meeting 75 minutes before the scheduled kick-off. **Required to attend: Participating Schools Admin, Head Coaches, Head Referee, AIA Site Admin, Security and/or PD at Site.**
- Event timelines, arrival instructions, pre-game procedures and halftime instructions for the championship game participating teams, spiritlines, and bands will be e-mailed to the competing schools on the Monday following the semi-final games.

TROPHY/BANNER PRESENTATIONS

The presentation of trophies and banners will be made on the field immediately after all championship games. **Participating team administrators and coaches must take steps to ensure that the field remains clear of all non-team-related individuals for this activity.** Please assist the Tournament Site Directors in keeping all fans off the game field and in the stadium seating areas.

SPIRITLINES & MARCHING BANDS

Spiritline and Marching Band specific information will be sent out by the site director, as needed, to participating schools before tournament games.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY STADIUM POLICIES

ASU Athletic Guests: To enhance public safety and make stadium access more efficient, Sun Devil Athletics adopted a **Clear Bag Policy**. Fans may bring in one (1) clear bag no larger than 12" x 6" x 12" or a 1-gallon plastic storage bag. Fans are limited to one clear bag per person, along with a small clutch or purse for privacy.

The following list of allowable and prohibited items is provided in order to enhance everyone's safety and experience while visiting our facilities. Should you bring any item that is not allowed into the facility to the gates, you will be asked to return the item to your car before entering the stadium. We apologize, in advance, for any inconvenience this may cause you. We hope you have an enjoyable experience attending an ASU Athletic event. If you have a question about an item not on this list, please call (480) 965-3933. Thank you for your cooperation.
Office of Athletic Operations & Facilities

ITEMS ALLOWED IN ASU ATHLETIC FACILITIES: (Subject to change without notice)

- Factory sealed or completely empty water bottles 44 ounces or smaller
- Banners and signs (at the discretion of Athletic Operations and Facilities staff) without poles
- Food (small, individual portions)
- Cameras in which the length of the lens is smaller than the width of the base unit (no flash photography)
- Clear Bags including fanny packs, back packs, and purses smaller than 12"x12"x12"
- Small personal size retractable umbrellas
- Seat cushions • Binoculars
- Empty personal misting devices
- Clear Diaper bags (Only if accompanied by a baby/infant)
- Blankets
- Cell phones/pagers
- Small umbrella strollers (must collapse to fit underneath seat)
- Video cameras

ITEMS PROHIBITED IN ASU ATHLETIC FACILITIES: (Subject to change without notice)

- Outside beverages/containers/cans
- Poles or hard objects
- Bags larger than 12"x12"x12"
- Weapons/knives • Animals (except guide dogs)
- Artificial Noisemakers
- Tripods
- Bats
- Large/golf umbrellas
- Glass containers
- Ice chests/coolers
- Alcohol
- Thermos Bottles