



# 2024-25 Esports Series Terms and Conditions

In accordance with Section 1.450 of the IHSA Constitution, the Board of Directors has approved the Terms and Conditions governing the 2024-25 IHSA esports Tournament Series.

## I. SCHOOL CLASSIFICATION

Competition in the IHSA esports Tournament Series will be a one class tournament.

## II. DATES AND SITES

### A. Individual Tournament Series Dates and Sites:

1. The sectional tournament shall be on Saturday of Week 42 in the IHSA Standardized Calendar. In the event that the number of entries in a given game requires preliminary rounds to be played, those shall be played on Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday of Week 42 in the IHSA Standardized Calendar. Participating schools will schedule a date and time to play the online match. If the schools involved cannot agree on a date and time to play, the IHSA office will determine when the match will be played. Tournament sites and school assignments will be posted online.

2. The state final shall be held on Saturday of Week 43 in the IHSA Standardized Calendar.

## III. ONLINE ENTRIES, WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES, AND ELIGIBILITY

The policy for Original Entry Deadlines, Late Entries and Late Withdrawals shall be the policies and procedures regarding entry for all IHSA-sponsored sport/activities included in the 2024-25 Entry Policies and Procedures.

### A. Online Entries

All member schools must enter their school into the state series competition through the IHSA School Center on the IHSA Website at [www.ihsa.org](http://www.ihsa.org). The deadline for entry is **February 1, 2025**. The 2024-25 Entry Policies and Procedures outlining the online entry procedures for all IHSA-sponsored tournaments can be found in the Schools Center on the IHSA website.

### B. Late Entries

Any attempt to enter a sport or activity online after the established deadlines will be denied. Schools that wish to enter after the deadline will be considered late. To be considered for late entry, the Principal/Official Representative must contact the IHSA administrative officer in charge of that sport or activity. The penalty for late entry shall be a payment of \$100.00 for that sport/activity by the school.

### C. Breach of Contract By-law 6.041 (Withdrawal Procedure)

To withdraw without penalty, the Principal must notify the IHSA Office, in writing, of the school's withdrawal from esports prior to the seeding meeting date and/or the date the List of Participants is due for that sport. If a school withdraws after the seeding meeting date/List of Participants due date and/or does not show up for competition, the school will be charged a **\$500.00** penalty. If applicable, the school may be charged for any additional financial loss sustained by the offended school(s) or the Association as a result of such breach.

### D. Eligibility

All member schools in good standing may enter an individual(s) or a team under the provisions of IHSA By-law 4.071. The principal is the official representative of his/her school in all interscholastic activities, and the responsibility for seeing that all students from his/her school entered in esports contests are eligible under the rules shall rest with the principal. All correspondence with the IHSA Office must be conducted through the principal or official representative of the school.

In each contest in which a school is represented, the principal shall have an adult present, preferably a member of the faculty, who shall supervise and be responsible for the conduct of the participants and other persons from the school. A school's failure to comply with this provision shall result in disqualifications of its students.

### E. On-Line List of Participants

*List of Participants* Deadline: Each school must complete the On-Line *List of Participants* by the deadline date of April 4<sup>th</sup>. The entry is submitted online at [IHSA.org](http://IHSA.org) through the Schools Center. A school's online entries will be released to the Sectional Managers at least one week prior to the Sectional Contest. It is recommended that each school print a copy of its online entry to bring to the sectional site. If a school does not submit the On-line *List of Participants* by the deadline, coaches/advisers and/or participants from the school are subject to penalties that could include, but are not limited to, being ruled ineligible to compete in the State Series and/or charged **\$500.00**. Schools shall be permitted to enter a student in only one contest/game. A school can receive confirmation of receipt of Online List of Participants by logging into their School Center site on the IHSA website and going to the Activity Tracker. The Activity Tracker will show "Completed", if the school checked the button indicating the report is finished. If the submitter doesn't indicate "Completed", then the school must go back into the *List of Participants* and check the button on the Online List of Participants indicating completion.

## IV. HOST FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

### A. Sectional Host Allowance

Sectional hosts shall pay all local expenses and shall receive a guarantee of \$200.00.

### B. Admission Fees

In the State Tournament Series, ticket prices have been established by the IHSA Board of Directors. If ticketed, all state series esports events shall follow the established ticketing procedures outlined by IHSA Policy.

### C. Rights Fees for TV and Radio

See the IHSA web site ([www.ihsa.org](http://www.ihsa.org)) for the fees to be charged by Local Managers and/or the IHSA for television and cable broadcasts and radio originations. The Policy regarding media requirements for each Local Manager is contained in these Terms and Conditions.

## V. TOURNAMENT ASSIGNMENTS

Schools will be assigned geographically to one of eight (8) IHSA sectional tournaments. These assignments will appear online after the February entry deadline. Assignments are made



according to the IHSA Grouping Policy #18. The number of competing schools, travel distance, geographical location and the number of entries shall be primary factors in the determination of number and boundary lines for these sectionals.

## VI. TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE AND TIME SCHEDULES

### A. Events Dependent upon Entries

1. Competition in all games shall be held at the Sectional contests in all events in which there are at least two entries.

2. At State Final contests there shall be competition in all games which have qualifiers from the Sectional Tournaments.

3. All tournament brackets will be double-elimination and created according to templates provided by the IHSA.

### B. Contest Management

1. Designation of manager: At all state series events, the IHSA shall designate an event/contest manager who shall assume entire responsibility for the event/contest.

2. Sectional Contest Managers Meeting: The IHSA Office shall conduct a meeting for Sectional contest managers. Specific instructions for event/contest management shall be the subject of the meeting. Dates and times of the meeting will be sent to Sectional managers.

3. Authority of Contest Manager and Contest personnel:

a. **Sectional Contests:** The Contest Manager shall be authorized to conduct the contest under the provisions of these Terms and Conditions. If a situation develops in which there is an apparent unfairness to a contestant, and which is determined to be the result of an administrative or judge's error, the manager shall consult with Contest personnel and determine the manner in which the situation shall be resolved. However, managers shall not have the authority to advance students affected by unfairness to the succeeding contest. Resolution of such matters must be within the framework of each individual contest. In addition, the manager shall be responsible to resolve questions of rules interpretation, to arbitrate disputes and to apply penalties for violations of contest rules. In all cases, the manager shall consult with Contest personnel prior to making a decision in any such matter. Decisions of the contest manager in all cases herein described shall be final. The authority and responsibility of the contest manager and Contest personnel shall end when results are announced at the contest awards assembly. Any question relative to contest rules or any aspect of the contest, which arises following the announcement of results, shall be referred directly by the principal of the school involved to the IHSA Office. The IHSA Office will give consideration to questions relative to administrative and/or clerical matters only and will do so only through the end of the first Monday following the completion of the contest involved. In compliance with IHSA By-law 6.033, protests or challenges relative to the decision of any judge will not be considered.

b. **State Final Contest:** The State Final Contest personnel shall be authorized to conduct the contest under the provisions of these Terms and Conditions. If a situation develops in which there is an apparent unfairness to a contestant, and which is determined to be the result of an administrative or judge's error, the State Final Contest personnel shall determine the manner in which the situation shall be resolved. In addition, the State Final Contest personnel shall be responsible to resolve questions of rules interpretation, to arbitrate disputes and to

apply penalties for violations of contest rules. Decisions of the State Final Contest Manager in all cases herein described shall be final.

### C. Time Schedules

1. **Sectional Tournaments:** Sectional time schedules will be determined by the local event/contest manager and shall be communicated to assigned schools. The local manager shall also monitor the early rounds of any game that requires preliminary rounds to be played online in advance of the sectional date.

2. **State Final:** The state final shall be a one-day event using the following schedule:

7:45-8:30 a.m. Registration/Check-in

8:30-8:45 a.m. Coaches Meeting

8:45-9:00 a.m. Final instructions to teams by coaches

9:00 a.m. Preliminary round competition in **all** Games begins  
Play will be continuous through competition finals

Competition Finals begins

Awards after conclusion of final championship match

**NOTE:** Any changes to the state final schedule shall be communicated by the IHSA Office to all participating schools.

## VII. ADVANCEMENT OF WINNERS

### A. Sectional to State Finals

1. **Team Game:** A team game shall be any game played involving more than two students from one school playing against another school. In team games, the first and second place finishers from each sectional shall advance to the state finals.

2. **Individual/Small Group Game:** An individual or small group game shall be any game played involving two or less students from one school playing against student(s) from another school. In individual/small group games, the first and second place finishers from each sectional shall advance to the state finals.

## VIII. TOURNAMENT RULES

### A. Events

Schools may enter participants in the following contests:

1. Team Game: one team comprising of more than two (2) students
  - a. Mario Kart 8 Deluxe: one four-person team (roster maximum: seven [7])
  - b. Super Smash Bros. Crew Battle: one five-person team (roster maximum: nine [9])
  - c. Rocket League: one three-person team (roster maximum: five [5])
2. Individual Game: two individual entries
  - a. Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Singles
  - b. EA Sports FC
  - c. EA Sports Madden NFL
3. Small Group Games: a minimum of one entry for each competition offered; additional entries may be



allowed based on specific game guidelines developed by the advisory committee

**B. Student Entries**

A student may only be entered in one competition for the state series. No duplicate entries allowed.

**C. Game Rules**

Specific rules for each selected game can be found in the Game Summary for each game. Game Summaries are found at the end of the Terms and Conditions.

**D. Uniforms**

School uniforms must be worn during competition. School uniforms can only have the school's name and/or logo and the student's name on them. Any sponsorship the school has secured cannot be displayed on the uniforms.

**E. Protests**

Any coach may challenge a participant's compliance with the rules by filing a protest in writing by using the "IHSAs Protest Form" and submitting the written protest to the tournament manager. Only coaches may file such a protest or challenge. Any question relative to contest rules or any aspect of the contest which arises following the announcement of results shall be referred directly by the principal/IHSA official representative of the school(s) involved to the IHSA office. The IHSA office will give consideration to questions relative to administrative and/or clerical matters only and will do so only through the end of the first Monday following the completion of the contest involved. In compliance with IHSA By-law 6.033, protests or challenges relative to the decision of a tournament manager will not be considered. The Report of Winners will be completed by the Sectional Managers and shall be considered the official qualifiers for the state finals. If applicable, entry fees for qualifiers shall be paid upon arrival at the Sectional and State Final sites. Qualifiers for whom fees are not paid as prescribed shall not be permitted to participate.

**F. Late Discovery of Violations**

If a violation is discovered after the close of the contest in which the violation occurred, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The contestant(s) or school shall be disqualified and advancement to the next succeeding contest shall be denied if the violation is reported to the IHSA office prior to the next contest. If the violation is not reported until after the next contest, no action shall be taken, and the matter shall be considered closed.

2. If the violation is reported to the IHSA office prior to the next succeeding contest, and the contestants(s) are disqualified, the rankings of the other contestants in the event shall be revised upwards. The revised contestants(s) shall be advanced on the basis of the revised rankings.

3. If the disqualified contestant(s) or school has won any awards, such awards shall be returned to the IHSA office. Awards shall be redistributed on the basis of the revised rankings.

**G. Advancement of Next Qualifier**

In the event a qualified student is unable to advance to the succeeding contest the next qualifier shall advance. The highest-placing contestant from the qualifier's last qualifying contest in the same event that has not yet been offered the opportunity to advance shall be designated as the next qualifier to advance. It is the responsibility of the principal/IHSA official representative

or coach to notify the IHSA office no later than the Wednesday preceding the state finals. After that date, no additional qualifier will be considered. The IHSA office will officially inform the school's administration/coach that they will replace a qualifier.

1. In the event a qualified student(s) is unable to advance to the succeeding contest their school's principal/IHSA official representative must notify the IHSA of the student(s) withdrawal. If their coach contacts the contest manager of the withdrawal, the contest manager shall direct them to have their principal/IHSA official representative notify the IHSA, and the IHSA will begin the process of contacting the next qualifier eligible to advance.

2. Any advancing qualifier(s) due to a withdrawal shall be treated from that point forward as qualified contestants, and if they are, for any reason, unable to advance to the succeeding contest, the process shall be repeated with the next highest-placing contestant(s) until an alternate qualifier who is able to advance is found.

**H. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

Managers and officials have the strictest instructions to disqualify any participant, coach and/or other person guilty or profane or indecent language or of gross unsportsmanlike conduct. IHSA By-laws 2.040, 3.141, 6.011 and 6.012 give the Board of Directors complete authority to penalize a school for any unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of the principal, the coach, athletes, or any member of the faculty or Board of Education or any other official representative of any participating school.

**I. Pre-Match Procedures**

1. All participants shall report to their competition room at the first call.

2. A second and final call will be made 3 minutes after the first call. Failure to report to the appropriate competition room 5 minutes after the first call will result in forfeiture of the match. Tardiness due to extenuating circumstances may be reviewed by the games committee at the request of the coach. Decisions of the games committee are final.

3. All participants will have up to 5 minutes to warm up for their match. The 5-minute warm up time begins at the first call to report for the match.

**J. Controllers**

Participants may bring their own controllers that are limited to the following:

1. PC Games: First-party and third-party controllers with back paddles.

2. Console Games: First-party and third-party controllers with all extraneous paddles, macro switches, and any other programmable buttons are physically removed. Turbo buttons and functions are not permitted.

**K. Tournament Assignments and Seeding**

1. Bracket assignments for the first-level tournament in each game of the state series will be a random draw. For individual games, participants from the same school will be assigned to opposite halves of the bracket. First-level brackets will be drawn and posted publicly on the Tuesday before the first-level tournament of the state series.

2. If 20% of the participants in a bracket withdraw prior to the start of the first-level tournament, the bracket will be redrawn.

3. Bracket assignments for the state finals will be a random draw with the following parameters:



a. A sectional champion will not be paired against another sectional champion in the first round.

b. The two qualifiers from each sectional will be assigned to opposite halves of the bracket.

#### L. Coaching

During matches, only individuals wearing an official coach's pass are permitted to provide coaching and instruction to participants according to the times outline in the rules of each event.

### IX. TOURNAMENT POLICIES

#### A. State Final Passes

Each school will receive passes for all qualifiers and up to 4 passes for coaches. Only people with passes will be allowed in the competition area.

#### B. Damage to Property or Equipment

If contestants or people from any school entered in a state series are found guilty of carelessness or maliciously breaking, damaging or destroying property or equipment belonging to the host site, such school shall be held responsible for costs incurred in replacing or repairing such property or equipment.

#### C. Media Requirements

##### 1. Provide Space:

Space shall be set aside to provide for news media representatives covering the state series whether they are from newspapers, internet sites, radio stations, commercial television stations and/or cable television stations, according to the IHSA Policies regarding News Media credentials and working assignments for IHSA state series.

##### 2. Radio and TV:

It is the responsibility of the Local Manager to accept applications, approve requests to originate, collect proper rights fees payment (where required) and make cancellation refund for television and/or radio play-by-play originations, according to the IHSA Television and/or IHSA Radio Broadcast Policy.

a. Television Rights Fees for all levels of competition below the State Final level shall be paid to the host school and shall become part of the revenue to be shared by the member school(s) and the Association according to the financial terms stipulated in these Terms and Conditions.

b. Radio Broadcast Rights Fees are not required for any level of competition in this series (except State Final). Local Managers shall permit radio play-by-play originations of the competition.

c. Television and/or Radio Stations which do not apply in advance, or which do not pay required rights fees prior to the start of competition in each respective level in this state series shall not be given credentials nor allowed access to the facility to originate. Sponsors of the originations for television and radio shall be only those so stipulated in the respective IHSA Television and Broadcast policies.

##### 3. Administrative Detail:

Reporting information to the news media and/or the IHSA Office, as stipulated in instructions to Local Managers shall be the responsibility of each Local Manager and is required.

#### D. Tobacco/Liquid Nicotine Products

The use of tobacco or liquid nicotine products in any competition area, either during a practice or while a contest is in progress, or affiliated property of any IHSA state series contest by any coach, player, any other person connected with a team,

or fan shall be prohibited. State series hosts are required to make all state series contest sites and any affiliated property, including parking lots, fan accommodation areas, and other school or event venue property, tobacco/liquid nicotine free zones on the date or dates of any IHSA event being held at the site.

#### E. Use of Inhalers

A student with asthma may possess and use his/her medication during an IHSA competition, while under the supervision of school personnel, provided the school meets the outlined procedures of self-administration in the Illinois School Code.

#### F. Alcoholic Beverages and IHSA State Series Events

The possession, distribution, sale and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages are prohibited at the site and on any affiliated property of any IHSA state series contest. State series hosts are required to make all state series contest sites and any affiliated property, including parking lots, fan accommodation areas, and other school or event venue property, alcohol free zones on the date or dates of any IHSA event being held at the site. Violation of this policy by an event host will subject the host to a penalty for violation of IHSA By-law 2.020. Such penalty may include but not necessarily be limited to prohibition against subsequent event hosting assignments. Violation of this policy by a non-hosting member school will subject the school to penalty for violation of IHSA By-law 2.020. Patrons of any IHSA state series contest determined to be in violation of this policy will be removed from the premise, and law enforcement officials will be called as warranted. No ticket refunds will be granted in such cases.

#### G. Prayer at IHSA State Series Contests

Prayer at an IHSA state series contest that takes place over the public address system is prohibited.

#### H. Special Report Forms and SAWA Forms

Special report forms have been developed to facilitate schools reporting any matter concerning high school programs that merit the attention of the high school principal. These forms can be used for reporting any incidents or problems with a competitor, coach, director or spectator. The forms may also be used to report errors in applying rules or any phase of judging in which a judge should immediately attempt to improve. The SAWA Report form should be used for reporting any instances where a coach, director, participant, judge or spectator has done an exemplary job of Sporting A Winning Attitude. These forms can be found on the IHSA Web Site at [www.ihsa.org](http://www.ihsa.org).

#### I. AED

Host schools must have an AED available and on site at all IHSA post-season contests.

### X. AWARDS

#### A. Sectional Tournament

1. **Team Game:** Medals will be awarded to the first, second, third, and fourth place teams. A plaque will be awarded to the school winner in the Sectional Team Game.

2. **Individual/Small Group Games:** Medals will be awarded to the first, second, third, and fourth place finishers in each individual/small group game.



## **B. State Finals Tournament**

1. **Team Game:** Medals will be awarded to the first, second, third, and fourth place teams. A plaque will be awarded to the school winner in the State Finals Team Game.

2. **Individual/Small Group Games:** Medals will be awarded to the first, second, third, and fourth place finishers in each individual/small group game. A plaque will be awarded to the school winner in each state finals individual/small group game.

## **C. Awards Ceremonies**

At all tournaments when participants are receiving awards, they shall wear their school's official uniform. No extra clothing, hats, caps, signs, or other adornment shall be worn or carried at the awards ceremony. If a contestant fails to wear his/her official school warm-up or uniform, he/she shall not be allowed to participate in the awards ceremony.

# **XI. OFFICIALS**

## **A. Games Committee**

Each tournament manager shall appoint a committee of at least five individuals, one of which shall be the manager, who shall serve as a Games Committee for each sectional and state final tournaments. The Games Committee has the authority to resolve any situation that arises during the tournament that is not specifically covered in these Terms and Conditions. The decision of the Games Committee shall be final.