

TENNIS

TOURNAMENT DATES

Divisional Tournaments

Class AA, A & B-C..... May 13-28

State Tournaments

Class B-C..... May 23-25

Class AA, A..... May 23-24

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

- (1) The MHSA will promote, provide for and control all interschool tennis activities among the member schools. USTA rules will govern play.
- (2) Participants will wear the following school-approved traditional tennis attire which is appropriately sized (uniform to include top and bottom garments): shirts will be full-length with finished edges with collars, traditional crewneck, v-neck or mock-turtle neck design. Well-fitting racer back tops, tank tops, and other appropriately fitted tops with a minimum two-inch strap will be allowed. Halter tops and spaghetti straps will not be permitted. Shorts and skirts will be worn at the waist. All skorts (a pair of compression shorts having a flap or panel across the front and back to resemble a skirt), as well as leggings, are legal bottom garments. The skort must be appropriately sized for the individual, worn as the manufacturer intended, and the flap or panel must be long enough to cover the compression shorts.

The upper portion of the tennis dress will be full-length with finished edges with collars, traditional crewneck, v-neck or mock-turtleneck design. The lower portion of the tennis dress must be appropriately sized for the individual, worn as the manufacturer intended, and the length of the dress must be long enough to cover the compression shorts.

Adornments on clothing or headwear will not advertise drugs or alcohol or contain offensive material as deemed inappropriate by the meet director or tournament manager. After the first violation of this rule, there will be a warning administered for the individual and the team with the uniform violation being corrected within five minutes before continuation of play is to resume. After the second violation, the individual forfeits the match and the team is deducted one (1) team point.

The meet director has the right to waive the uniform rule due to inclement weather; however, each participant must be dressed appropriately during all competition.

- (3) Montana shall be divided into three classifications for tennis.

A. Seventeen (17) schools comprising sixteen (16) teams are classified as Class AA. The schools are aligned in four divisions as follows:

Western

Butte
Missoula Big Sky
Missoula Hellgate
Missoula Sentinel

Northern

Flathead
(KalisPELL)
*Great Falls
/MSDB
Great Falls CMR
Glacier
(KalisPELL)

Eastern

Belgrade
Billings Senior
Billings Skyview
Billings West

Southern

Bozeman
Gallatin
(Bozeman)
Helena Capital
Helena

*Cooperative
Sponsorship

- B. Nineteen (19) schools comprising nineteen (19) teams are classified as Class A. The schools are aligned in four divisions as follows:

Southwest

Beaverhead Co.
(Dillon)
Butte Central
Corvallis
Hamilton
Stevensville

Northwest

Bigfork
*Browning
Columbia Falls
Libby
Polson
Ronan
Whitefish

Northeast

Custer Co.
(Miles City)
Dawson Co.
(Glendive)
Fergus
(Lewistown)
Havre

Southeast

Billings Central
East Helena
Hardin
Lockwood
(Billings)
Park
(Livingston)

* Jv Only

- C. Fifteen (15) schools comprising Fifteen (15) teams are classified as Class B-C for boys' tennis. The schools are aligned in three divisions as follows:

Southwest

Anaconda
Darby
Jefferson (Boulder)
Lone Peak (Big Sky)
Loyola Sacred Heart
(Missoula)
Valley Christian (Missoula)

Northwest

Chester-Joplin-Inverness
Choteau (2024)
St. Ignatius
Troy

Central

Conrad (2028)
Cut Bank (2027)
Great Falls Central (2026)
Simms (2025)
Terry

- D. Thirty (30) schools comprising Twenty-Nine (29) teams are classified as Class B-C for girls' tennis. The schools are aligned in six divisions as follows:

Southwest

Anaconda
Darby
Lone Peak (Big Sky)
Loyola Sacred Heart
(Missoula)
Valley Christian
(Missoula)

East

Baker
Forsyth
Poplar
Wolf Point

Southeast

Broadwater (Townsend)
Granite (Phillipsburg)
Jefferson (Boulder)
Red Lodge
Three Forks

Central

Conrad (2028)
Cut Bank (2027)
Great Falls Central (2026)
Simms (2025)
Terry

Northwest

Choteau (2024)
St. Ignatius
Superior
Troy

Northeast

Chester-Joplin-Inverness
Chinook
Fairfield
Fort Benton
Harlem

Every year a team from the Central Division will rotate to the Northwest Division for both boys and girls in B/C Tennis. The year of rotation listed to the right denotes the tennis season that school will rotate to the other division.

- (4) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall play in any Association tennis contest until he/she has a

minimum of **eight (8)** days of tennis practice of at least one practice session per day on **eight (8)** different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable game.

The initial **eight (8)** practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHS A practice that satisfies the language above in (4), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team/C squad) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of an association sanctioned contest does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a contest that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a contest that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a contest does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial **eight (8)** days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional **four (4)** days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHS A post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHS A sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

- (5) The tennis seasons for both boys and girls officially close with the end of the state tournament for the classification of the school concerned.
- (6) Twelve (12) dates of competition will be the maximum number per individual tennis player excluding Association sponsored tournaments. A two-day tournament counts as two days of competition towards the season limitations.
- (7) For an athlete to be eligible to compete in the postseason meet he/she must compete in at least two (2) Association-sanctioned meets during the regular tennis season. A medical waiver from a certified physician stating that an athlete has sustained an injury preventing him/her from competing until that time will be accepted as a condition to be exempt from this rule. The high school for which the student will participate must file a request with the MHS A Executive Director for consideration of a waiver of this rule.
- (8) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any match or tournament, but once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered into the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

- (9) Wilson is the official ball and tennis supplier of the Montana High School Association. The Wilson US Open ball is the ball used for all MHS A state tennis meets. The MHS A recommends the use of this ball for all regular season events.
- (10) The MHS A prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

II - RULES FOR DIVISIONAL TOURNAMENTS

- (1) All entries to the divisional meet shall be forwarded to the divisional meet manager one week in advance of the divisional tournament.
- (2) Schools within these divisions from each of three classifications wishing to qualify participants into state competition may enter up to eight singles participants (four boys and four girls) and four doubles (two boys teams and two girls teams) in a divisional playoff at their respective sites. Class A may enter three boys' and three girls' teams in doubles competition. Class AA may enter four boys' and four girls' teams in doubles competition.
- (3) Events will be boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles. Both boys and girls shall be allowed to enter one event only, either singles or doubles, but not both.
- (4) Both the divisional and state tournaments in all classes shall be organized so that they are double elimination from the first round through semi-finals, in both singles and doubles. The only exception to this would be in the divisional play where the divisional manager may set up pro-sets on the first round as single elimination. This would be in a situation where there is an unusually large number of entries in the divisional tournament.
- (5) Care should be given to scheduling each player or team on a variety of courts in order to equalize playing conditions. Care should be taken to avoid, when possible, early round matchups of contestants from the same school.
- (6) Each division will be charged with the responsibility of determining the divisional tournament seeding criteria. Suggested criteria for seeding entries could include the following: past record in previous state high school meets, divisional meets, head to head competition with most recent matches carrying the most weight, and record against common opponents.
- (7) Because of injury, illness or other emergency situations, one boy or one girl, who was named as an alternate before the start of competition, may be used as a substitute before or during the divisional meet for doubles play only. This substitute can only be placed at the beginning of a match. This substitute shall not be a qualifier from any other tennis event.
- (8) Each division is responsible for selecting a site and manager for its divisional tournament. In case of foul weather, the tournament will be held on the Monday following the regular, scheduled time of the divisional meet.

- (9) The top four singles players and the top four doubles teams from each divisional tournament in Classes AA and A will advance to the state tournament.

For the state B-C girls' meet – qualifying numbers will depend on the number of teams in the division for a 32-player singles bracket and a 32-team doubles bracket at state. If a school does not field a team, then a qualifying spot is taken from the division and a wildcard will be awarded at random draw. Additional contestants rotations are listed under the official pairings section.

For the state B-C boys' meet - qualifying numbers will depend on the number of teams in the division for a 16-player singles bracket and a 16 doubles team bracket at state. If a team is not fielded, then a qualifying spot is taken from the division and a wildcard will be awarded at random draw. Additional contestants rotations are listed under the official pairings section.

- (10) Scoring in Class A divisional tournaments will be: 1st-10 points; 2nd-7 points; 3rd-4 points; and 4th-2 points.

Scoring in Class AA divisional tournaments will be: 1st-7 points; 2nd-5 points; 3rd-3 points; 4th-1 point.

The four events are boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles. To determine team champions in the divisional tournaments, two (2) advancement points will be given to those players advancing on the winner's bracket and one (1) advancement point for those advancing on the consolation brackets, one point also for defaults, forfeits and disqualifications. Byes receive two (2) points on the winners' side of the bracket if the individuals win their next match and one (1) point if the player who receives the bye wins the next round on the consolation side of the bracket.

To determine team champions in B-C divisional tournaments, two (2) advancement points will be given to those players advancing on the winner's bracket and one (1) advancement point for those advancing on the consolation brackets, one point also for defaults, forfeits and disqualifications. Byes receive two (2) points on the winners' side of the bracket if the player who receives the bye wins the next round and one (1) point if the player who receives the bye wins the next round on the consolation side of the bracket. Scoring in the divisional B-C tournaments will be 1st-10 points; 2nd - 7 points; 3rd - 4 points; 4th - 2 points.

- (11) The MHSA method of breaking ties at divisional tournaments shall be the USTA Set (7-point) tie breaker (same as twelve point tiebreaker used in previous years).

SINGLES: A, having served the first game of the set, serves the first point from the right court; B serves point 2 and 3 (left and right), A serves points 4 and 5 (left and right), B serves point 6 (left and after they change ends, point 7 (right); A serves points 8 and 9 (left and right); B serves point 10 and 11 (left and right), and A serves point 12 (left). A player who reaches 7 points during these first 12 points wins the game and set. If the score has reached 6 points all, the players change ends and continue in the same pattern until one player established a margin of two points, which gives that player the game and set. Note that the players change ends every six points, and that player who serves the 1st point of one of these 6-point segments also serves the first point of the next one (from right court). For a following set the players change ends, and B serves the first game.

DOUBLES follows the same partners preserving their serving sequence. Assume A-B versus C-D, with A having served the first game of the set. A serves the first point (right); C serves points 2 and 3 (left and right); B serves points 4 and 5 (left and right); D serves point 6 (left) and the teams change ends. D serves point 7 (right); A serves points 8 and 9 (left and right); C serves points 10 and 11 (left and right); B serves point 12 (left). A team that wins 7 points during these first 12 points wins the game and set. If the score has reached 6

points all, the teams change ends. B then serves point 13, (right) and they continue until one team establishes a two-point margin and thus wins the game and set. As in singles, they change ends for one game to start a following set, with team C-D to serve first.

- (12) Competitors' conduct:

A. All tennis players in MHSA sanctioned tournaments shall be penalized one team point (on the first infraction) and removed from further play (on second infraction) for any unsportsmanlike conduct on site after a match or before the next match or at the end of the tournament. Any contestant disqualified in an individual tournament competition is not entitled to any points earned in the tournament. All advancement points and placement points are negated. All vacancies created in the tournament pairing shall be scored as forfeits. During the match, players are under the point penalty system of the USTA. Warnings of this rule shall be written in pretournament letters and given to all players at the pretournament meeting.

B. Each tennis court should have a site director and that director should be in charge of administering the penalty system above for violation/abuse of any equipment or facilities, abusive language, abusive gestures, and other obnoxious, offensive behavior.

C. Unsportsmanlike conduct on the tournament site includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: throwing rackets or any equipment, swearing, intentionally hitting game balls out of the court, being abusive to tournament officials, and fighting.

- (13) School coaches should be identified by coaches' badges issued by tournament management.

- (14) Competition at all AA divisional tournaments is to be conducted on the basis that all matches will be the best of three sets except during inclement weather.

- (15) During competition at all AA divisional tournaments players shall be limited to three full matches or five abbreviated matches per day.

- (16) During competition at all Class A divisional tournaments players shall be limited to four full matches per day. There is no match limit per day for shortened matches.

- (17) During competition at Class B-C Divisional Tennis Meets, players will be limited to 3 full matches per day unless players have played less than 6 hours, then 4 matches would be allowed. There is no match limit per day for shortened matches.

- (18) Inclement Weather Format:

Best of 3 sets. Sets 1 & 2 regular but each set will be shortened by starting at 2 games each. Set 3 - 10 point match tiebreaker - first to 10 points but win by 2. A 120 second set break, if split sets. Once a round has started, the scoring format will be the same whether the round is finished inside or outside. If indoor courts are being used as part of the regular scheduled play (not because of weather issues), scoring will be the same as the outdoor format; Tournament Director can modify to no add scoring if needed.

The decision of which format to use for shortened matches will be decided by the tournament manager in consultation with the MHSA.

- (19) Rest Time Between Matches: When players are involved in back to back matches, the MHSA will allow a minimum of 30 minute rest period and a maximum of 60 minute rest period for both singles and doubles competition. After the 30-minute rest period, the match will be allowed to begin if both the

players and coaches involved are ready to start the match. For consistency, the MHSA recommends a minimum of 30 minutes for all matches.

III - RULES FOR STATE TENNIS MEETS

- (1) Three state tennis meets will be held — one for Class AA, one for Class A, and one for Class B-C.

- (2) The state AA meet will utilize a 16-player bracket with contestants consisting of four qualifiers from each of the four divisions. The state A meet will utilize a 16-player bracket with contestants consisting of four qualifiers from each of four divisions advancing to the state tournament. For the state B-C meet, 32 individuals will qualify for girls' singles, 32 teams will qualify for girls' doubles, 16 teams will qualify for boys' singles and 16 teams will qualify for boys' doubles. State tournament managers will use a 32-player bracket in the girls competition and a 16-player bracket in the boys competition.

- (3) Scoring in the state tournaments will be as follows:
Class AA: 1st - 9 points, 2nd - 7 points, 3rd - 5 points and 4th - 3 points and 5th - 1 point
Class A: 1st - 10 points, 2nd - 7 points, 3rd - 5 points, 4th - 3 points and 5th - 1 point.
Class B-C: 1st - 10 points, 2nd - 7 points, 3rd - 5 points, 4th - 4 points, 5th - 3 points, and 6th - 1 point.

The four events are boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles. To determine team champions in the state tournaments, two (2) advancement points will be given to those players advancing on the winner's bracket and one (1) advancement point for those advancing on the consolation brackets, one point also for defaults, forfeits and disqualifications. Byes receive two (2) points if the player who receives the bye wins the next round.

- (4) The method of breaking ties at state tournaments shall be the USTA Set (7-point) tie breaker as outlined under II - Rules for Divisional Tournaments, (11).

- (5) Competition shall be conducted on the basis that all matches will be the best of three sets.

- (6) Because of injury, illness or other emergency situations, one boy or one girl, who was named as an alternate before the start of competition, may be used as a substitute before or during the state meet for doubles play only. This substitute can only be placed at the beginning of a match. This substitute can be the alternate that was listed for doubles at the divisional tournament or a team member that participated in the divisional tournament, as a singles **or** doubles team that did not qualify for state.

- (7) Entries to the State Tennis Meets will be certified by the division tournament manager. These entries must be reported no later than the Monday before the opening of the state tennis meet.

- (8) Competitors' conduct:

A. All tennis players in MHSA sanctioned tournaments shall be penalized one team point (on the first infraction) and removed from further play (on second infraction) for any unsportsmanlike conduct on site after a match or before the next match or at the end the tournament. Any contestant disqualified in an individual tournament competition is not entitled to any points earned in the tournament. All advancement points and placement points are negated. All vacancies created in the tournament pairing shall be scored as forfeits. During the match, players are under the point penalty system of warning, point, game, match. Warnings of this rule shall be written in pretournament letters and given to all players at the pretournament meeting.

B. Each tennis court should have a site director and that director should be in charge of administering the penalty system above for violation/abuse of any equipment or facilities, abusive language, abusive gestures, and other obnoxious, offensive behavior.

C. Unsportsmanlike conduct on the tournament site includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: throwing rackets or any equipment, swearing, intentionally hitting game balls out of the court, being abusive to tournament officials, fighting, and using alcohol and/or tobacco.

- (9) School coaches should be identified by coaches' badges issued by tournament management.

- (10) Competition at the state AA tournament is to be conducted on the basis that all matches will be the best of three sets except during inclement weather.

- (11) During competition at the state AA tournament players shall be limited to three full matches or five abbreviated matches per day.

- (12) During competition at all Class A state tournaments players shall be limited to four full matches per day. There is no match limit per day for shortened matches.

- (13) During competition at Class B-C State Tennis Meets, players will be limited to 3 full matches per day unless players have played less than 6 hours, then 4 matches would be allowed. There is no match limit per day for shortened matches.

- (14) Inclement Weather Format:

Best of 3 sets. Sets 1 & 2 regular but each set will be shortened by starting at 2 games each. Set 3 - 10 point match tiebreaker - first to 10 points but win by 2. A 120-second set break, if split sets. Once a round has started, the scoring format will be the same whether the round is finished inside or outside. If indoor courts are being used as part of the regular scheduled play (not because of weather issues), scoring will be the same as the outdoor format; Tournament Director can modify to no add scoring if needed.

The decision of which format to use for shortened matches will be decided by the tournament manager in consultation with the MHSA.

- (15) State AA Tennis Prices

The Executive Board has established the following minimum ticket prices for all State Tennis Meets.

	Adult	Student
Single-Session (Friday or Saturday)	\$ 11.00	\$ 9.00
All-Session (two days)	\$18.00	\$13.00

- (16) Each Class A school choosing to participate in their state tennis meet will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament by paying a maximum \$15 fee per participant.

- (17) Each Class B-C school choosing to participate in their state tennis meet will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament by paying a fee per participant. This fee will be set by the MHSA Executive Board when the state site is determined.

- (18) Rest Time Between Matches: When players are involved in back to back matches, the MHSA will allow a minimum of 30 minute rest period and a maximum of 60 minute rest period for both singles and doubles competition. After the 30 minute rest period, the match will be allowed to begin if both the players and coaches involved are ready to start the match. For consistency, the MHSA recommends a minimum of 30 minutes for all matches.

IV - OFFICIAL PAIRINGS AND BRACKETS FOR STATE TENNIS MEETS

- (1) The official pairings for the State AA Tennis Meet consist of three parts which will be released by the MHSA office after the divisional tournaments are completed.

<u>Bracket I</u>	<u>Bracket II</u>	<u>Bracket III</u>
1st East 4th South	1st East 4th West	1st East 4th North
2nd North 3rd West	2nd North 3rd South	2nd West 3rd South
2nd West 3rd North	2nd South 3rd North	2nd South 3rd West
1st South 4th East	1st West 4th East	4th East 1st North
1st West 4th North	1st North 4th South	1st West 4th South
2nd East 3rd South	2nd East 3rd West	2nd East 3rd North
2nd South 3rd East	2nd West 3rd East	2nd North 3rd East
1st North 4th West	1st South 4th North	1st South 4th West

- (2) The official pairings for the State A Tennis Meet (boys and girls) consist of three parts which will be released by the MHSA office after the divisional tournaments are completed.

<u>Bracket I</u>	<u>Bracket II</u>	<u>Bracket III</u>
1SE 4SW	1SE 4NW	1SE 4NE
2NW 3NE	2NE 3SW	2SW 3NW
2NE 3NW	2SW 3NE	2NW 3SW
4SE 1SW	4SE 1NW	4SE 1NE
1NW 4NE	1NE 4SW	1SW 4NW
2SW 3SE	2NW 3SE	2SE 3NE
2SE 3SW	3NW 2SE	3SE 2NE
4NW 1NE	4NE 1SW	4SW 1NW

- (3) The official pairings for State B-C Tennis will be distributed by the MHSA office after the completion of the divisional tournaments.

The following guidelines shall be used for qualifying into State B-C Tennis:

Girls State Meet Qualification Information:

- 32-Player Bracket for both Girls Singles and Girls Doubles
- Qualifying Singles Players = the # of teams in division
- Qualifying Doubles Teams = the # of teams in division
- The additional contestants each year to fill a 32-place bracket will be rotated among the six divisions. Rotation will be SW, E SE, C, NW, NE

- If a school does not field a team, then a qualifying spot is taken from the division and a wildcard will be awarded at random draw.

Boys State Meet Qualification Information:

- 16-player Bracket for both Boys Singles and Boys Doubles
- Qualifying Singles Players = the # of teams in division
- Qualifying Doubles Teams = the # of teams in division
- The additional contestants each year to fill a 16-place bracket will be rotated among the three divisions. Rotation will be Central, Southwest, then Northwest
- If a team is not fielded, then a qualifying spot is taken from the division and a wildcard will be awarded at random draw.