

NABA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

2023 PLAYOFF and TIEBREAKER RULES

The following Playoff and Tiebreaker Rules only apply when determining eligibility/qualifying for playoff games. Tiebreaker rules have always been difficult. This is especially true when several teams have the same or tied record and are worthy to advance to the playoffs; yet, due to limits on fields and time to complete the tournament, not every team with tied records can be assured a playoff spot. The only way to “guarantee” a playoff spot is to remain undefeated.

It is our sincere belief that the following set of tiebreakers is the fairest, because the focus is on win-loss percentages first, head-to-head competition second, and the “best defensive teams in a given situation”, with least runs allowed, next.

There are also four key principles to which we consistently adhere:

- 1) As a general rule, a tiebreaker between teams with the same win-loss percentage should be determined by “head-to-head” since it is the best determinant of which of the teams in question is the better team;
- 2) Based on fairness, where teams with the same win-loss percentage are vying for the final playoff spot (usually the runner-up spot or a “wild-card”), and those 2 teams have not played one another, then the best defensive team with the average least runs allowed will be used.
- 3) If a head-to-head meeting did occur but that game ended in a tie, and the least runs allowed for each team is the same, the team with the highest average winning margin in pool play is the pool winner;
- 4) If a forfeit occurs in pool play, the forfeit win will count towards the tiebreaker for win-loss percentage, and the head-to-head determinants. However, forfeit wins will not count towards the tiebreaker for average least runs allowed, nor highest average winning margin in pool play. If a team forfeits a game during pool play, the NABA reserves the right to exclude the team forfeiting the game from the playoffs. NABA reserves these rights in order to protect teams against forfeiting teams gaining an unfair advantage in playoff games.

DETERMINATION OF POOL WINNERS, RUNNERS-UP, AND PLAYOFF SEEDING

A Pool Winner is the team with the best win-loss percentage within a pool. However, if more than one team in a pool has the same win-loss percentage, then you must revert to the tie-breaker(s) below. All examples assume a three game or more pool schedule.

Determining the Pool Winner/Runner-Up

There are three basic scenarios: A) A tiebreaker involving two teams with the same win-loss percentage; and B) A tiebreaker involving three teams with the same win-loss percentage, and a tiebreaker involving four or more team with the same win-loss percentage.

A) Pool Winner, Runner-up and Playoff Seeding: Two teams with the same win-loss percentage:

In the event two (2) teams in the same pool finish with the same win-loss percentage, the order of tiebreakers is as follows:

- 1) Head-to-Head. (The team that beat the other is the Pool Winner.)

2) Average Least Runs Allowed. (If head-to-head did occur, but that game ended in a tie, then the team with the fewest runs allowed in pool play is the Pool Winner.) Average Least Runs Allowed is the total runs allowed divided by the number of games played. For the purposes of the remaining examples, this will be referred to as “Least Runs Allowed” (assume the same number of games played by the teams involved in the tiebreaker examples).

3) Highest Average Winning Margin in pool play. (If head-to-head did occur, but that game ended in a tie, and, the Least Runs Allowed for each team was the same, then the team with the Highest Average Winning Margin in pool play is the Pool Winner.) (For situations where two teams in the same pool with the same win-loss percentage did not play each other, see (C)(1) below.) Average Winning Margin is the following: The difference between the total runs scored and total runs allowed, divided by the number of games played.

4) Coin Flip. (All coin flips must take place in the presence of a Tournament Protest Committee Member.)

The foregoing will be referred to as the “Two Team Tiebreaker” and/or “Tiebreaker A”. The team that is not the Pool Winner is the Runner-up.

B) Pool Winner, Runner-up and Playoff Seeding: Three teams with the same win-loss percentage:

In the event three (3) teams in the same pool finish with the same win-loss percentage, the order of tiebreakers is as follows:

1) If one team beats the other 2 teams, it is the Pool Winner. Then proceed to the “Two Team Tiebreaker” to determine the Runner-up as to the remaining two teams starting with head-to-head.

2) If all 3 teams involved in the tiebreaker beat one another, then the team with the least runs allowed among the three involved during all pool play games advances first or is seeded first. The two teams that remain, proceed to the Two Team Tiebreaker rule.

3) Even though head to head is used to break ties with the same record, it will not be used if the 3 teams involved in the tiebreaker have not all played against each other an equal number of times. Average least runs allowed will be used to break a 3 - team tiebreaker where all 3 teams have not all played against each other an equal number of times. The team with the least runs allowed among the three involved during pool play games advance first or is seeded first. The two teams that remain, proceed to the Two Team Tiebreaker rule.

C) Pool Winner, Runner-up and Playoff Seeding: Four or more teams with the same win-loss percentage:

1) Tiebreakers for four (4) or more teams which are tied will be determined only by utilizing average least runs allowed. Unless one team has played and won against all other teams, the team with the lowest average least runs allowed will advance first or is seeded first. Once we have eliminated down to three (3) teams, we will refer to the three-team tiebreaker rule. Once we have eliminated down to two (2) teams we will refer to the two (2) team tiebreaker rule.

(Update 1/23)