



Maryland State Football Committee Proposal for Open Playoff System

Purpose:

The members of the Maryland State Football Committee have coordinated a joint effort to examine the current structure of the Football Playoff System and are putting forth a unified proposal for change. The main reason for the proposed change is that Football is the only sport in the MPSSAA playoff system in which teams must earn their way into the playoffs. Since all teams do not make the post-season, the committee feels that we should strive to make changes that will make each school's chance of making the playoffs more equitable and comparable to all other sports offered by the MPSSAA.

Rationale:

These changes are imperative to maintain a competitive and fair playoff system. The goals are to maintain parts of the current system, to include the point system and the regional alignments, as well as increase local interest in playoff games. The main focus is to align with the playoff standards of other sports within the MPSSAA. In a recent survey of all Football Coaches and Athletic Directors in Maryland, 81% of schools reporting would like to see a change in the current playoff system.

Special Regional Alignment

The Football Committee, in order to organize an open tournament, and for equitable playoff opportunity, request the MPSSAA Classification Committee and MPSSAA Board of Control to adopt regional alignments as numerically balanced as possible.

Currently in some classifications, one region has 13 teams while another has only 7. The football committee believes it is important for competitive parity and equity that all regions are as numerically balanced as possible so each school has an equal opportunity to advance into their respective regional playoff.

Proposed Change:

This committee, after consulting with directors from each region, and with the support of Football coaches and Athletic Directors across the State, feels that best option for the future of the Football playoff system is to move to an open format playoff structure. In this proposal, Football will continue to operate in four classifications, however provide every school with a greater opportunity to experience post season participation consistent with the open tournament philosophy for all sports.

Seeding

In this proposal, following the completion of week 9, the Football Committee will meet just as they would at the conclusion of the 10 game regular season. At this meeting the playoff brackets will include the top eight teams from each region who have elected to play, seeded 1 through 8. Teams in each region ranked 9 or higher will be seeded in an open bracket.

Per the MPSSAA Handbook pg 26 .07-S-(2) A member MPSSAA school may decide whether or not to participate in the tournament.

Pending approval from the MPSSAA Finance Committee, all gate revenue collected from first round playoff games, as well as all open bracket games, will be turned in to the respective school's District treasurer. The District treasurer will then redistribute those funds equally to all schools in the district to make up for the possible loss of home game gate revenue previously budgeted for in a 10 game schedule.

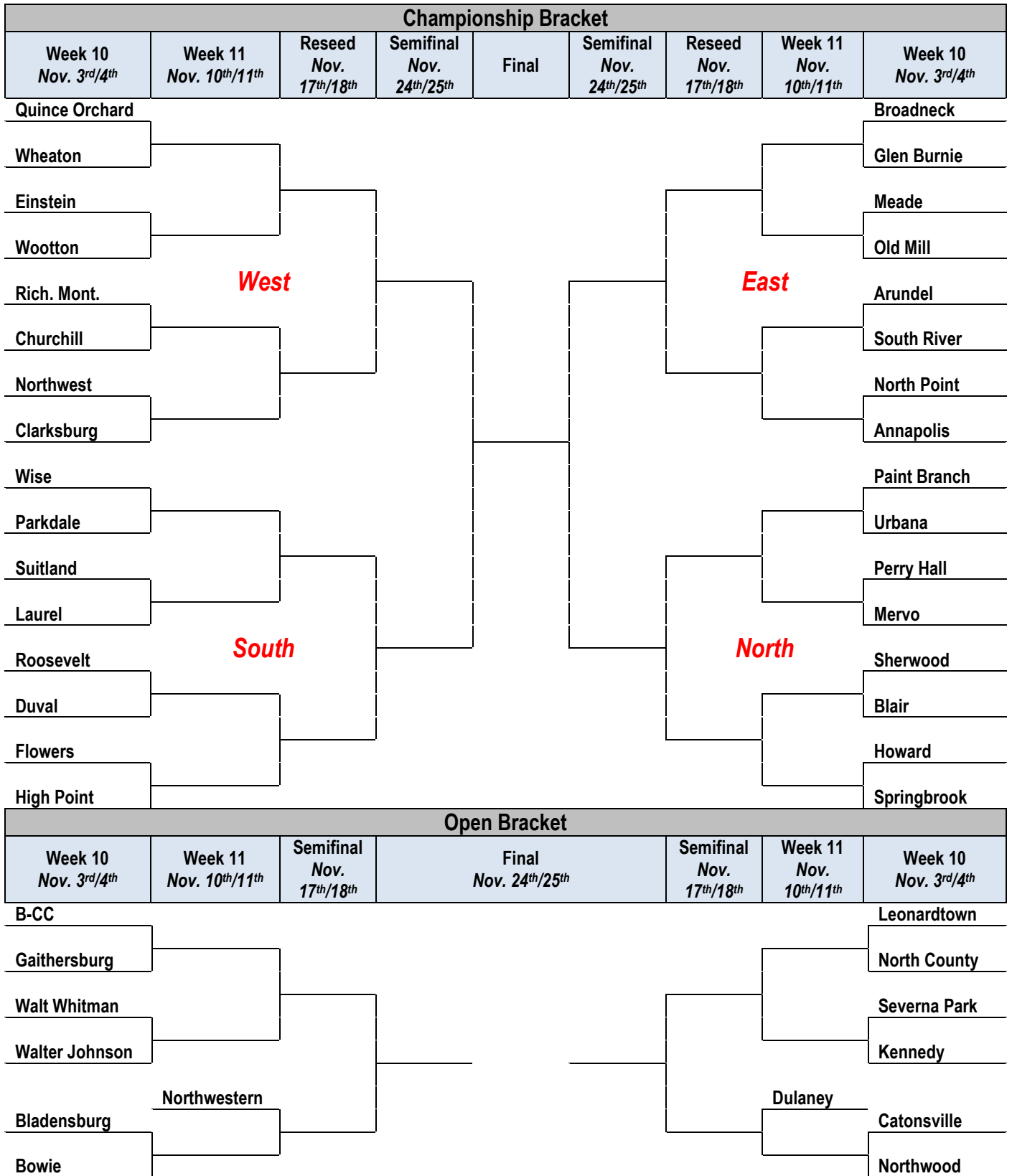
The second round games in the open format will be treated as first round games from the current system in that the gate revenue collected will be sent to the MPSSAA. Home sites will be given tickets and reconciliation forms for record keeping.

After the second round, teams will be re-seeded 1-8 based on the week 9 point total. From this point a State Quarterfinal bracket will be formed and played through the final State Championship game.

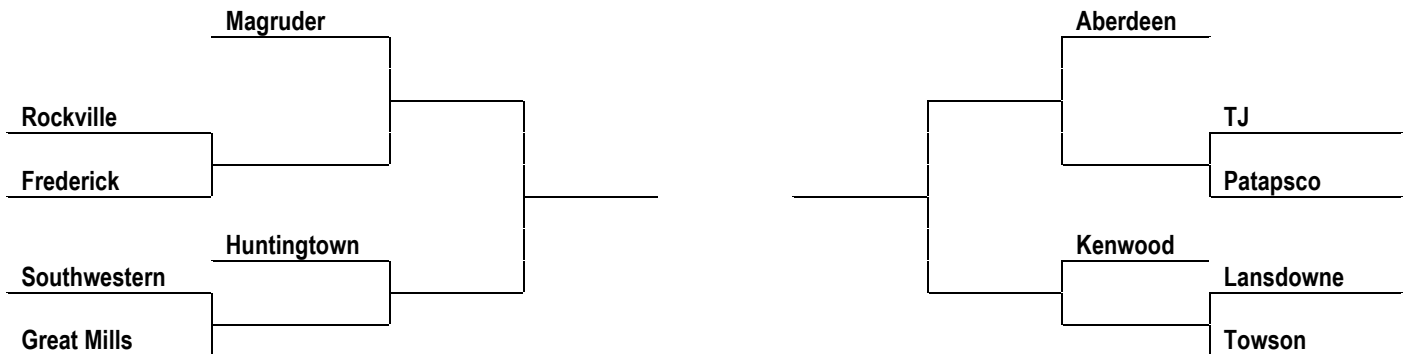
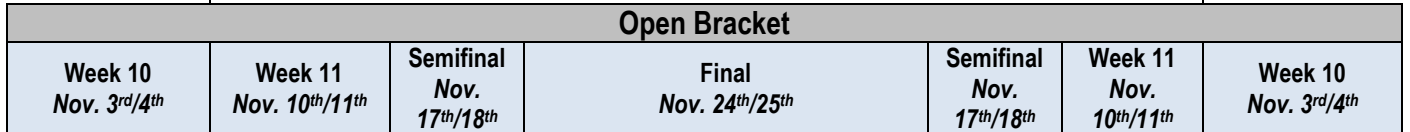
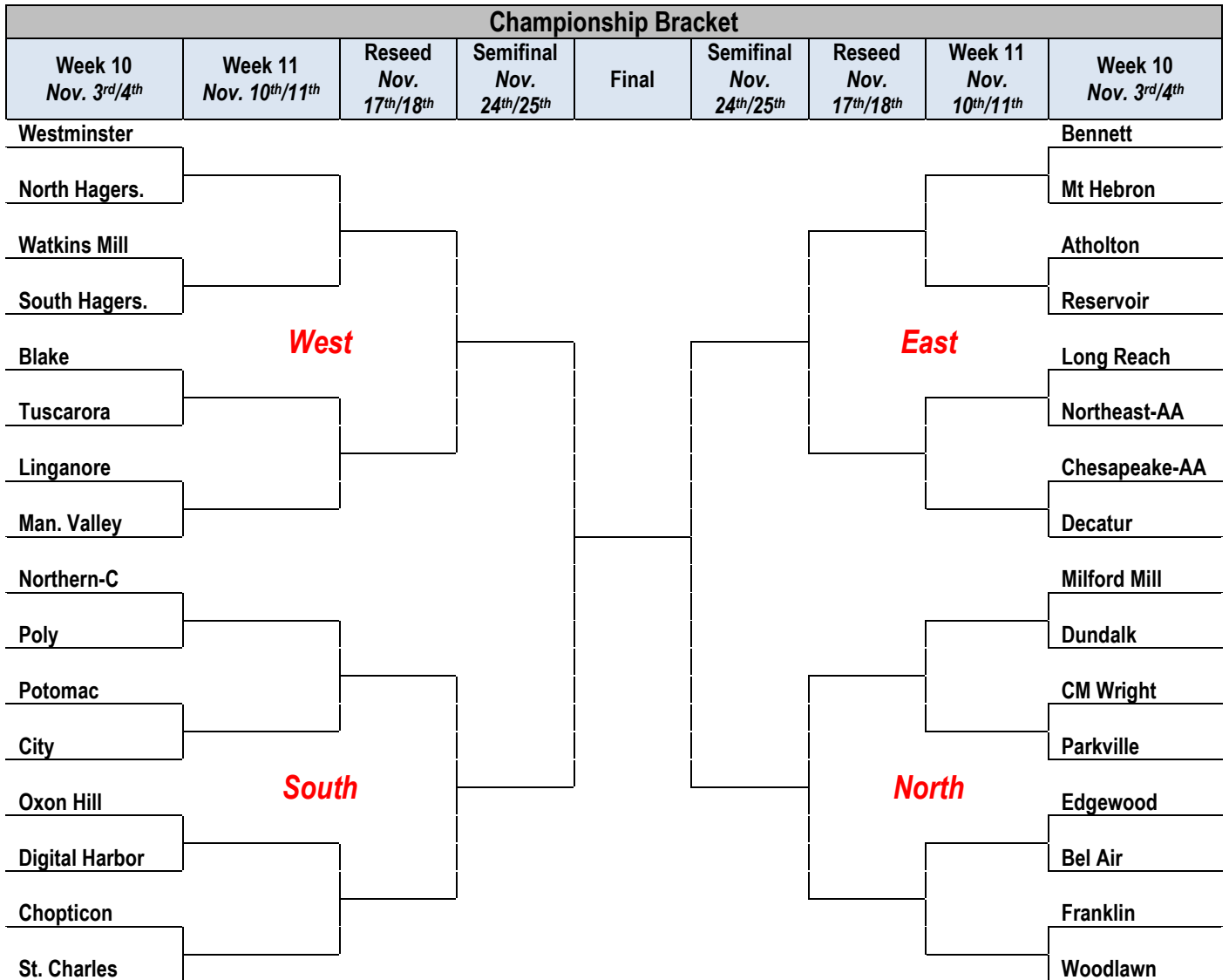
Breakdown of Open Playoff Format

- All schools play a nine game regular season.
- All schools are guaranteed a 10th game by virtue of the first round of the playoffs.
- The current point system will be used to determine final week 9 point average.
- Classifications and regional alignments as approved by the Classifications Committee and Board of Control will be utilized.
- At the conclusion of Week 9, the Football Committee will utilize the final regular season (9 weeks) points to determine the top 8 teams in each region that have elected to play.
- Regional Playoffs will start with top 8 teams in each region and conclude with the top two teams in each region being awarded regional co-championships.
- After the first two rounds of the playoffs the final eight teams will be reseeded according to total points average.
- To account for the loss of a potential week 10 game; all District gates from week 10, and all gates from the Open Bracket games will be sent to the respective District treasurer to be equally redistributed to each school in the district.
- All schools who do not make the top eight in their region will be seeded into a 16-line bracket.
- In the open bracket, teams will play the week 10, 11, 12 and 13 tournament at the home site of the higher seed based on week 9 points.
- The Open Bracket creates a competitive equity opportunity for programs who struggled to win games and allows for further development of the student-athletes comparable to other sports.
- The Open Bracket will provide opportunities for success for many schools by matching comparable skill level schools at the end of the season.

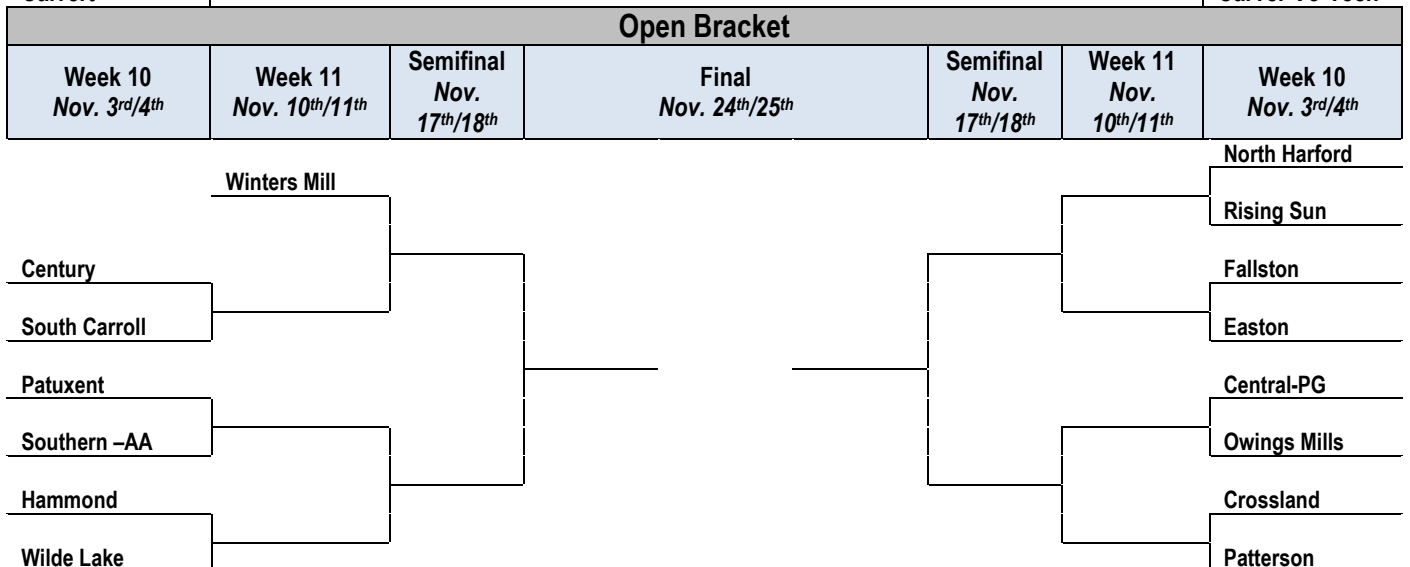
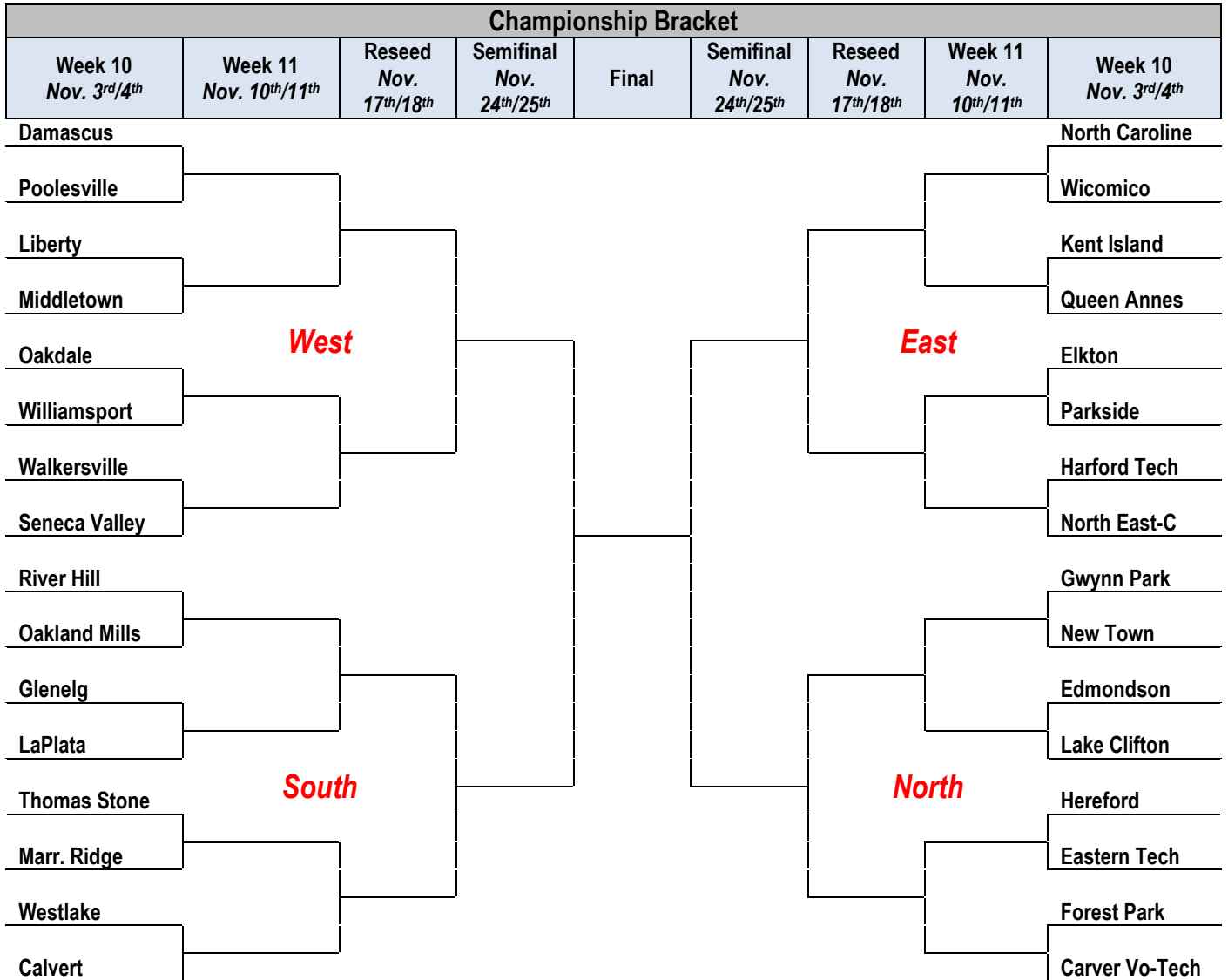
What 2017 would have looked like: 4A



What 2017 would have looked like: 3A



What 2017 would have looked like: 2A



What 2017 would have looked like: 1A

