

# Shore Conference Basketball Tournament: Quality-Weighted Seeding Case Study (2025)

## Introduction

This document presents a new, data-driven approach to seeding and structuring the Shore Conference Boys Basketball Tournament, using a dynamic scoring model that rewards schedule strength, quality wins, and late-season performance—mirroring the logic behind the NCAA tournament but tailored to the Shore’s unique context.

## Rationale for Quality-Weighted Seeding

- Traditional methods (win-loss, Power Points, .500+ threshold) often misrepresent true team quality due to schedule disparities and late-season “gaming.”
- Quality-Weighted Seeding measures who you beat, when, and how—not just how many wins you rack up.
- Especially crucial in a conference with national/state powers (like St. Rose) and great teams in weaker divisions (like Keyport).

## 2025 Shore Conference Tournament — Official Seeds vs. Dynamic Seeds (Sample)

Official Seed	Team	Record	Power Points	Dynamic Seed	Rationale
1	Manasquan	17-3	23.6	2	Shore juggernaut, but St. Rose has better SoS, more signature wins late
2	CBA	16-3	22.8	3	State power, tough schedule, 1-2 signature wins
3	Red Bank	18-3	21.2	6	Strong record, lower SoS, few top-8 wins
4	St. Rose	15-7	20.8	1	National/ state schedule, late dominance
5	Central	20-2	20.3	4	High win total, key Shore wins

## Quality-Weighted Seeding Methodology

### A. Scoring Metrics

- Win vs. Top 32 SCT-caliber team: +4
- Close loss (<8 pts) vs. Top 32: +2
- Blowout win (>15 pts) vs. Top 32: +1
- Win vs. non-SCT qualifier: +0.5
- Loss to non-qualifier: -1
- Win/Loss vs. On3 National Top 250: +6/+2
- Out-of-conference win vs. NJ state power: +2
- February (late-season) game:  $\times 1.5$  multiplier

### B. How To Use It

1. Tally each team's full schedule (all games).
2. Score each result by opponent quality, date, margin, and location (if desired).
3. After first run, take the top 32 teams as provisional qualifiers.
4. Rescore: wins/losses vs. these top 32 count for full value, others as non-qualifier.
5. Rank by final dynamic score to get field and seeding.

### C. Notes

- "Signature" wins/losses = vs. state/nationally ranked teams or top 8 in SCT field.
- Coaches/committee can add narrative adjustments for major injuries or unique context.

## Bracket Structure: The Dynamic 32

- Top 32 teams make the tournament (no .500 cutoff; no play-in)
- Seeds 1–32 face off: 1 vs. 32, 2 vs. 31, ... 16 vs. 17
- Single elimination, 5 rounds

## Case Studies (Sample)

### **St. Rose**

- Elite schedule, several national/state powers
- Multiple wins vs. top 8 seeds, beat CBA, Manasquan
- Close losses to On3 Top 100 teams
- Late-season dominance
- Dynamic Score: Highest in field—#1 Seed

### **Manasquan**

- Excellent local record, Shore power
- One or two signature wins
- Losses only to top seeds (St. Rose, CBA)
- Dynamic Seed: 2

### CBA

- State/national schedule, strong Shore record
- Injuries during a few losses
- Top 4 dynamic score

### Keyport

- Excellent record in B Division
- Little to no wins vs. top 16 teams
- Dynamic Score: Likely low bubble/just inside top 32

## Full Official vs. Dynamic Seed Table

(Paste full 1–32 table when available, or leave as template for completion)

## Implementation & Recommendations

- Release the full rubric and dynamic scores to coaches/admins for transparency.
- Use committee review for ties, disputes, or injury-based exceptions.
- Consider “all-in” variants with byes if expanding to more than 32 teams.
- This model eliminates incentives to “shop” for wins and makes schedule ambition an asset.

## References & Resources

- Official SCT brackets: Shore Sports Insider
- Regular season results: Shore Sports Insider
- National rankings: On3 National HS Rankings
- Quality-Weighted Seeding theory: NCAA NET, KenPom.com, coach/committee best practices

## Appendix: Template for Dynamic Score Calculation

Team	Top 32 Wins (pre-Feb)	Feb Top 32 Wins	Blowout Top 32 (pre-Feb)	Feb Blowout Top 32	Non-SCT Wins (pre-Feb)	Feb Non-SCT Wins	Nat/State Power Wins	Total Score
St. Rose	$2 \times 4$	$3 \times 4 \times 1.5$	$1 \times 1$	$1 \times 1 \times 1.5$	$1 \times 0.5$	$3 \times 0.5 \times 1.5$	$3 \times 6$	
Total Points	8	18	1	1.5	0.5	2.25	18	49.25

## **Dynamic Scoring Rubric for Shore Conference Tournament**

- Win vs. projected Top 32 team: +4 points (e.g., any win against a team that, in the initial dynamic ranking, makes the 32-team field)
- Blowout win (>15 points) vs. projected Top 32 team: +1 bonus point (in addition to the +4 above)
- Win vs. non-SCT qualifier: +0.5 points
- Loss to non-SCT qualifier: -1 point
- Close loss (<8 points) to Top 32 team: +2 points (instead of zero for a regular loss)
- Win vs. NJ state power or nationally ranked opponent (On3 Top 250): +6 points
- Close loss (<8 points) to NJ state power/nationally ranked: +2 points (as above)
- February (late-season) games (from Feb 1 to SCT cutoff): Multiply point value for that game by 1.5 (e.g., a Feb win vs. Top 32 =  $4 \times 1.5 = 6$  points)
- Notable context (injury, key player missing, opponent missing best player): Scoring committee may adjust game value up or down by 0.5–1 point to reflect circumstances (transparency is key).
- Out-of-conference or non-public “signature” win (against a team ranked Top 20 in the state by reputable sources): +2 points

### **Reseeding After Field Selection**

Once the top 32 teams are chosen using the dynamic scoring system, follow these steps to reseed and build the fairest, most competitive bracket:

### **Initial Scoring and Field Selection**

- All Shore Conference teams are scored using the published dynamic rubric (for all games up to the SCT cutoff date).
- The top 32 teams by total dynamic score are selected for the tournament field.

### **Recalculate Scores for the Tournament Field: Process**

Now that the field is set, recalculate each qualifying team’s dynamic score as follows:

- Wins/losses vs. other field teams (i.e., any team in the top 32):
- Win: +4 points
- Close loss (<8 pts): +2 points
- Blowout win (>15 pts): +1 bonus point
- Wins vs. teams not in the field: +0.5 points
- Losses to teams not in the field: -1 point
- Other rubric rules remain: State/national power wins, February multiplier, injury/context adjustments, etc.

### **Final Seeding Calculation**

- Sum each team’s recalculated dynamic score (with field-based adjustments).
- Rank all 32 teams by their final score—this is your official tournament seeding.

### **Tie-Breakers (if needed)**

- If two or more teams are tied in final dynamic score, break ties in this order:
  1. Head-to-head result
  2. Most wins vs. teams seeded above them
  3. Best point differential in games vs. other field teams
  4. Committee/coach review (with written rationale for transparency)

### **Bracket Placement**

- Standard 32-team bracket:
- 1 vs. 32, 2 vs. 31, ..., 16 vs. 17 (no play-in)

### **Transparency and Communication**

- Publish both the initial dynamic scores (used for field selection) and the final reseeded scores (used for seeding and bracket placement).
- Document any injury/context-based score adjustments clearly for the community.

### **Best Practice:**

- Provide all seeding logic and final dynamic scores to coaches and community for review.
- Use the rubric and steps above for every season for consistency and transparency.