



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I MEN'S SOCCER COMMITTEE
JANUARY 28-30, 2019, MEETING**

KEY ITEMS.

- **Finals format review.** The NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Committee continues to explore ways to enhance the finals experience (with student-athlete well-being and increased attendance the main goals) and to improve the championship format.

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative items.

a. Automatic qualification.

- (1) Recommendation. That the following 24 conferences receive automatic qualification for the 2019 NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Championship: America East Conference; American Athletic Conference, Atlantic 10 Conference; Atlantic Coast Conference; Atlantic Sun Conference; Big East Conference; Big South Conference; Big Ten Conference; Big West Conference; Colonial Athletic Association; Conference USA; Horizon League; The Ivy League; Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference; Mid-American Conference; Missouri Valley Conference; Northeast Conference; Pac-12 Conference; Patriot League; Southern Conference; The Summit League; Sun Belt Conference, West Coast Conference; and Western Athletic Conference.
- (2) Effective date. Immediate.
- (3) Rationale. All eligible conferences are being recommended.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

b. Selection criteria.

- (1) Recommendation. Move the three secondary selection criteria to join the existing primary selection criteria so that all of the criteria are primary.

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- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2019.
- (3) Rationale. The committee believes the current secondary selection criteria [results against teams already selected (including automatic qualifiers with an RPI of 1-75), late-season performance in last eight games (strength and results), and strength and results against conference opponents] are just as important in comparing teams and should be used as primary criteria rather than used only when primary criteria cannot determine a decision.

Primary Selection Criteria (not necessarily in priority order):

- Won-lost record;
- Strength of schedule; and
- Eligibility and availability of student-athletes for NCAA championships.
- Adjusted Rating Percentage Index (RPI), which includes:
 - Won-lost-tied record (25 percent).
 - Opponents' strength of schedule (50 percent).
 - Opponents' opponents' strength of schedule (25 percent).
 - Bonus/penalty system (see below).
- Head-to-head competition.
- Results versus common opponents.
- Strength and results against nonconference opponents.
 - *Results against teams already selected (including automatic qualifiers with an RPI of 1-75).*
 - *Late-season performance in last eight games (strength and results).*
 - *Strength and results against conference opponents.*

SECONDARY FACTORS

~~If the evaluation of the criteria listed above does not result in a decision by the committee, then the secondary factors will be reviewed.~~

- ~~• *Results against teams already selected (including automatic qualifiers with an RPI of 1-75).*~~
- ~~• *Late-season performance in last eight games (strength and results).*~~
- ~~• *Strength and results against conference opponents.*~~

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.
- c. Format and date formula change.**

- (1) Recommendation. To conduct the semifinals and final on separate weekends, keeping the semifinals on their current weekend but conducting them on campus sites, and then moving the championship match to the next weekend at a predetermined site.
- (2) Effective date. 2022 championships to coincide with the new bid cycle.
- (3) Rationale. Currently, the semifinals are played on Friday and the final is played on Sunday of the same weekend. The Men's Soccer Committee has analyzed numerous formats over the past four to five years and believes playing the semifinals on campus sites (on the current weekend) and then moving the final to the following weekend would give the student-athletes the proper rest and recovery time and potentially increase attendance at all three matches.

The committee also sees an upside for marketing the championship match due to having the entire week to build up to the final, rather than having to market and promote two matches on Friday and then experience the quick turnaround for the final on Sunday. The committee believes focusing on one match could be very beneficial for the championship overall.

The committee realizes the challenges with this recommendation but feels the benefits the student-athletes receive would far outweigh those challenges. (See Attachment A for a summary of factors the committee considered in making its recommendation).

- (4) Estimated budget impact. The NCAA travel department estimates that there would not be any significant travel cost increase with this format. The only scenario for which there would be a budget impact is if a semifinal host does not meet the required lighting levels for broadcast purposes. In that case the committee would recommend allowing for hosting within a 30-mile radius. If that is not possible, the lower-ranked team would then be offered to host if they had suitable lighting. After all of those options are exhausted, then there would be a cost to championship operations to bring in supplemental lighting, which is estimated between \$8,000 to \$32,000. The NCAA's broadcast partner has concerns regarding this proposal due to increased production costs, and detailed information will be made available to the Competition Oversight Committee during its meeting. The committee estimates that production costs resulting from the two separate semifinal sites would be no more than \$200,000 and could be much less given the broadcast infrastructure some institutions already have.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Providing the additional rest and recovery time will positively impact student-athletes well-being and enhance the championship experience by creating the opportunity for student-athletes to compete at their

highest level.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Review agenda and meeting schedule.** The committee reviewed the agenda and meeting schedule and made no adjustments.
2. **2018 committee meeting report.** The committee approved the 2018 meeting report as submitted.
3. **Review of 2018 championship.**
 - a. **Preliminary-round feedback.** The committee reviewed evaluations from various constituents and noted items to be discussed further during the meeting. The committee plans on clarifying where fans can be located behind each goal. Regarding lodging, the committee emphasized that schools submitting bids to host preliminary rounds must have a hotel contract.
 - b. **Operational items.** The committee agreed that the site representative, tournament director and head game official should consider before each match which goal will be used for the penalty kick shootout if necessary, with the head official making the final determination. The committee also confirmed there is no issue in allowing fans to sit behind the goals if seating is available at the facility.”
 - c. **Misconduct.** The committee reviewed the potential misconducts that occurred during the championship and made a recommendation on further action.
 - d. **Men's College Cup – Santa Barbara, California.** The committee believes improvements can be made for when the College Cup returns to Santa Barbara in 2020. The committee noted that coaches want to be in different hotels from their opponents, and members asked staff to explore whether this is feasible. The committee also wants to see more interest in and promotion of the championship by reaching out to the state soccer association, clubs, and coaches and potentially find ways to have former College Cup players attend. The committee also wants to use social media more to promote the championship.
4. **Officiating.**
 - a. **2018 recap.** The NCAA national coordinator of soccer officials joined the group via teleconference to review postseason officiating. The committee was pleased with the overall improvement in officiating but acknowledged that continued education and training/mentoring are necessary. The officiating subcommittee will review recommendations for 2019. The committee commented on ways to improve the evaluation

tools that assignors use. Staff will have the national coordinator explore ways to improve that area.

- b. **Evaluations.** The committee would like to figure out a better way to evaluate and train officials. The committee was pleased with the survey that went out to coaches after each round to evaluate the officials.
- c. **Selection criteria and process.** The committee reviewed the current selection criteria and process for officials and made no recommendations. The committee discussed ways to increase the number of officials in the overall pool who can work championships. Staff will continue to work with the national coordinator on ways to improve this system.

5. Selection process and evaluation of teams.

- a. **Selection weekend.** The committee agreed to continue arriving for the selection meeting on Saturday night and beginning the meeting at 8 a.m. on Sunday. Members also agreed to maintain the selection show at 1 p.m. Monday to allow teams playing Thursday more time to prepare. Members discussed working ahead on Sunday by starting to seed earlier if possible. The committee discussed the challenges with having two conference administrators on the committee when it comes time for them to leave the rooms due to one of their member schools being discussed. They would like staff to take a look at this and see what other sports do. A potential idea was to allow them to be in the room and answer factual questions but still not vote. The committee would like to look into a type of video conferencing (e.g., Facetime) for any committee member not physically at selections. They feel this would keep them engaged, as teleconferences tend to be difficult.
- b. **Regional alignment.** The committee prefers to maintain a 50/50 balance of administrators and coaches due to the nature of the sport (four coaches), due limited ability to watch matches and volume of teams. The committee is happy with the current regional alignment and keeping the evaluation regions as they are for the upcoming year. The committee will monitor this and make adjustments as needed next year.
- c. **Automatic-qualification conferences.** The committee reviewed the submitted automatic-qualification application forms and noted that the number of AQs will remain at 24 (see Action Item 2-a above).
- d. **Selection criteria and Rating Percentage Index (RPI).** The committee reviewed the RPI and discussed taking out the penalty (not bonus) for conference matches. The committee asked staff to provide what that model would look like and take action after reviewing. The committee also reviewed what other RPI formulas would look like. The committee also reviewed and approved the selections policies and procedures document for the upcoming season.

6. Site review/format/long-range planning.

- a. 2019 championship in Cary, North Carolina.** The committee discussed the outlook for the finals in Cary in 2019. The committee discussed the additional practice fields next to the stadium, which will shorten the window between matches from the usual 45 minutes to 30. The committee also commented on a few items that will need to be addressed once a site visit is conducted, primarily the concern with only two locker rooms.
- b. United Soccer Coaches.** The committee met with Rob Kehoe, the Division I representative from the USC, regarding various items relative to the committee. The conversation focused on format changes and ongoing discussions concerning the "21st Century Model," which is a concept to realign the college playing and practice season over two semesters.
- c. Championship format.** The committee discussed the current championship format and ultimately recommended conducting the semifinals at campus sites and moving the championship match to the following weekend at a predetermined site (see Action Item 2-c).

7. Pre-championship, host operations and site representative manuals. The committee will provide staff with the necessary updates.

8. Committee.

- a. National and regional advisory committee composition/vacancies.** The committee reviewed upcoming committee vacancies and staff will contact conferences whose RAC members' terms have expired in order to nominate replacements.
- b. Officiating subcommittee.** The committee agreed to maintain the officiating subcommittee and appointed Jeff Bacon (chair) and all other coaches to this group (as there are two open spots that will need to be filled that may include a coach). This group will serve for the coming year and will coordinate continuing education, evaluation and selection efforts.
- c. Committee chair.** Jeff Bacon, senior associate commissioner at the Mid-American Conference, was voted to be the chair of the committee.
- d. 2018-19 committee calendar.** Selections for 2019 will be November 16-18 in Indianapolis. The 2020 annual meeting will be February 10-12 in Indianapolis, with an effort to have at least a portion of the meeting held jointly with the Women's Soccer

Committee, as the joint meeting this year was beneficial. NCAA staff will coordinate the schedule and work accordingly if any adjustments are needed.

9. Other business

- **Division I Men's and Women's Soccer Committees joint session.** The committees shared their ideas on formats for each of their championships.

Committee Chair: Jeff Bacon, Mid-American Conference

Staff Liaison: Ryan Tressel, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Committee January 28-30, 2019, Meeting	
Attendees:	
Michael Noonan, Clemson University; Atlantic Coast Conference.	
D'Ann Keller, Saint Louis University; Atlantic 10 Conference.	
Eric Nichols, University of South Carolina, Columbia; Southeastern Conference.	
Chris Schneider, Big East Conference.	
Brett Surrency, Georgia State University; Sun Belt Conference.	
Mathes Mennell, University of North Carolina, Asheville; Big South Conference.	
Tom McIntosh, University of Tulsa; American Athletic Conference.	
Kimya Massey, Oregon State University; Pac-12 Conference.	
Absentees:	
None.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Ryan Cigich, National Coordinator for NCAA Soccer Officiating.	
Rob Kehoe, United Soccer Coaches Association.	
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:	
Ryan Tressel, Championships and Alliances.	
Alaina Keller, Championships and Alliances.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Tommie Barrett, Championships and Alliances.	
Matt Holmes, Championships and Alliances.	
Natalie Steger, Championships and Alliances.	
Sean Ward, Championships and Alliances.	