



REPORT OF THE NCAA DIVISION III
MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER COMMITTEES
FEBRUARY 12, 2020, MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative Items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative Items.

- **Date formula change.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the Championships Committee approve a change to the date formula for the NCAA Division III Men's and Women's Soccer Championships as outlined below.

First Round: Weekend before Thanksgiving (Saturday).

Second Round: Weekend before Thanksgiving (Sunday).

Third Round: Weekend after Thanksgiving weekend (Saturday).

Quarterfinal: Weekend after Thanksgiving weekend (Sunday).

Semifinals: Two weekends after Thanksgiving weekend (Saturday).

Finals: Two weekends after Thanksgiving weekend (Sunday).

- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2021.

This effective date would provide enough time for institutions and conferences to schedule accordingly based on the changes to the overall calendar.

The NCAA Division III Men's Soccer Committee and the NCAA Division III Women's Soccer Committee will work with championship hosts to ensure the change to the championship dates can be accommodated before the effective date being approved.

- (3) Rationale. The men's and women's committees are requesting to move selections and the start of the NCAA Tournament back one week in the championship segment.

Currently, Division III has the earliest selection date (date formula) of all divisions. The NCAA statistics staff reports that teams complete an average of 16.99 (men) and 16.86 (women) matches during the regular season, which is far fewer than the maximum number of 20 matches allowed due to an early selection date. Pushing selections back a week will allow teams to provide more recovery time and/or complete

more matches, thereby protecting student-athlete health and safety and also helping the sport committees evaluate criteria for selections.

Schools that do attempt to play more than 17 games a season must play more midweek games resulting in missed class time and less recovery time throughout the season. It was stated in the February 2015 NCAA Sports Science Soccer Summit that additional weeks in the regular season are necessary to improve student-athlete health and well-being by spreading available matches over a longer period.

- Division I has a total of 12 weekends of competition dates, including conference tournaments, leading up to the NCAA Tournament.
- Division II has at least 11 weekends of competition dates, including conference tournaments, leading up to the NCAA Tournament. Based on the calendar year, Division II could have 12 weekends of competition dates.
- Division III allows only 10 weekends of competition dates, including conference tournaments, leading up to the NCAA Tournament. Based on the calendar year, Division III could have 11 weekends of competition dates.

Division III is permitted to play up to 20 regular-season contests, as well as conference championship tournament games over 10 weekends. This means that in order to play 20 games, they must be scheduled over a nine-week period, reserving open dates for conference tournament competition.

Moving the championship start date one week later will allow a minimum of 11 weekends to conduct regular-season matches and conference tournament play. Providing an additional week/weekend that would also allow an institution more flexibility in scheduling and the opportunity to schedule fewer midweek matches, which would reduce missed class time and offer student-athletes a more optimal recovery time between matches.

Head coaches, athletic directors, and commissioners were surveyed on these topics, and 58% of respondents supported moving the selection date a week later; 26% said to reduce the number of games; and 16% said to make no change. When asked about recovery time, 75% of respondents were concerned about the lack of it in the current format.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. This proposal is cost neutral with the potential to provide cost savings due to the number of teams having more time to make travel arrangements.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Having an extra week in the regular season will have multiple positive impacts on the student-athletes. By providing more time to schedule regular-season contests, there will be fewer midweek contests, leading to a reduction in missed class time. It will also provide more opportunity for rest/recovery midweek, thus decreasing the risk of injury from playing matches in the shorter timeframe.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Review 2019 joint meeting report.** The committees approved the 2019 joint meeting report as presented.
2. **Governance update.** The committees received an update from a member of the governance staff on the following topics: name, image, and likeness and its impact on Division III; concussion settlement provisions; and an NCAA Convention review.
3. **Academic and membership affairs update.** The committees received an update from a member of the academic and membership affairs staff on the following topics: name, image, and likeness and a detailed Convention review.
4. **United Soccer Coaches.** The committees met with the United Soccer Coaches College programs director and discussed several topics, including the Sports Science Institute study on acclimatization and soccer student-athlete recovery recommendations; and adding dates of competition to the spring.
5. **Officials.** The committees discussed the timeline for official assignments at the championships; the preliminary-round official being assigned as head official for the entire weekend; yellow/red card reporting concerns; and clarifying the games committee's decision-making authority regarding inclement weather.
6. **Review of 2019 preliminary rounds.** The committees discussed items related to the preliminary rounds of the 2019 men's and women's championships.

The committees discussed dual-gender sites and continue to prefer avoiding when at all possible. The committees will allow limited flexibility to move away from the assigned gender preference by year in certain instances where it would help bracketing for both genders.

The committees also discussed the competition field dimensions. Committee members noted the improvement in accurate dimensions but still had some concerns. The committees will continue to give preference to fields that meet the minimum requirements. Additionally, the committees discussed requesting more information from the bidding process, asking hosts to provide a backup turf option to their bids. The request will include field size, distance from campus/main facility, and financial costs (if applicable). Information will be gathered in 2020 and preference will be given to sites with a suitable backup option.

In reviewing practice at the championship site, the committees identified the following protocol changes that would apply to preliminary sites: The length of practice for all rounds of the tournament will be changed to 60 minutes; in all rounds, a minimum of 15 minutes of access to the competition field will be given to all teams; the practice field must be the same

surface as the scheduled competition field; and all teams, including the host, must practice on the same field.

- 7. Review of 2019 championship finals and 2019 championship finals planning.** The committees discussed the 2019 championship finals conducted at UNCG Soccer Stadium in Greensboro, North Carolina.

The committees noted changes to be made to the pregame protocol for the semifinals, which features four games. Prior to game one, 60 minutes (clock)/50 minutes (warm-up) will be provided. A minimum of 40 minutes (clock)/30 minutes (warm-up) will be provided for the remaining games.

The committees agreed that a film exchange policy should be added to the postseason tournament manuals to ensure that expectations are consistent at each site/round. Each team will be required to provide its most recent game prior to selections to all three opponents in its pod by Tuesday at 5 p.m. At each site, the host institution must film each game and provide game film to all teams in the pod throughout the weekend (regardless of results). All advancing teams will again provide the most recent contest to teams in the next pod by 5 p.m. Tuesday of the given week. (Schools are not required to include film of a shootout.)

The committees reviewed site evaluations and noted the concern over the change in locker rooms on day two for the men's championship. The committees agreed to alter the banquet speeches to a Q&A session with one representative from each team on stage together. Additional minor details were discussed and will be reviewed with UNCG for improvements to the 2020 championships in Greensboro.

- 8. Championship bids.** The committee began its review of the current four-year championship bid cycle (2022-2025) and noted initial interest to staff. The committee will finalize its recommendations based on feedback of availability and in accordance with the timeline.
- 9. Proposals.** The committees reviewed the rules proposals that have been submitted and provided input on several. Additionally, the committees discussed and made proposals on a variety of topics, including selection criteria, regular-season extension, increase in ranking percentages (men's), and a focus on improving yellow/red card reporting.
- 10. Future annual meeting dates.** The 2021 annual meeting will be February 9-11. The committees agreed to remain at this later date as it helped the group by providing more time between trips to the soccer coaches convention/NCAA Convention and the annual meeting.

Committee Chairs: Justin Serpone, Amherst College
Sean Sullivan, Catholic University

Staff Liaisons: Kevin Alcox, Championships and Alliances
Morgan DeSpain, Championships and Alliances

Division III Men's and Women's Soccer Committees February 12, 2020, Meeting	
Attendees:	
Ken Andrews, Middle Atlantic Conferences.	
Beverly Biancur, North Carolina Wesleyan College	
Kevin Brenner, Elmira College.	
Marc Colwell, Illinois Institute of Technology.	
Frank Marino, California Lutheran University.	
Wendy McManus, Elmhurst College.	
Michael Mooney, State University of New York at Geneseo.	
Joe Mooney, University of Wisconsin-Superior.	
Jason Murphy, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.	
Justin Newell, Kenyon College	
Justin Serpone, Amherst College.	
Sean Sullivan, Catholic University.	
Girish Thakar, Westminster College (Pennsylvania).	
Jon Waters, University of Lynchburg	
Absentees:	
Nicolle Wood, Salem State University.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Rob Kehoe, Director of College Soccer Programs, United Soccer Coaches.	
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:	
Kevin Alcox, Championships and Alliances.	
Donisha Carter, Championships and Alliances.	
Morgan DeSpain, Championships and Alliances.	
Aaron King, Championships and Alliances.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Louise McCleary, Division III Governance.	
Bill Regan, Academic and Membership Affairs.	