



REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER COMMITTEES
FEBRUARY 7-9, 2023, JOINT COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Exploratory criteria – point-based formulas.** The committees request examining a point-based formula in 2023 alongside the approved winning-percentage formula criterion. (See Action Item 2.)
2. **Championship date formula.** The committees are planning to propose a change to the championship date formula, but before doing so they would like feedback from the Division III Championships Committee in order to address any concerns. (See Informational Item 6-a.)

ACTION ITEMS.

1. **Legislative items.**

- None.

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

- **Exploratory criteria – point-based formulas.**

- a. Recommendation. Allow the Division III Men's and Women's Soccer Committees to use the 2023 selections as an exploratory year to evaluate a point-based formula compared with the current formula based on winning percentage.
- b. Effective date. Immediate.
- c. Rationale. The committees believe there is value in examining the difference in the current formulas based on winning percentage in which a tie is equal parts win and loss, and a point-based formula in which a tie is one-third of a win based on the commonly used points standings in all conferences (three points for win; one point for tie; and no points for losses). With the removal of overtime in the regular season and increase in ties, the committees feel this new formula will align better with what the membership uses for regular-season rankings and should be applied for rankings and selections purposes as well. This would include overall record percentage, results vs. ranked percentage, and the calculation of strength of schedule.

The committees noted that the Division III Championships Committee is asking team sport committees to consider the Pairwise metric for selection purposes as well. While the soccer committees support Pairwise, they believe the point-based formula is still a priority, as even with a move to Pairwise the point-based formula would be one of the

data points used in that metric. This exploratory comparison would allow the committees to determine if the current winning-percentage formula or a point-based formula is most ideal for soccer and use that one formula. Then, whichever formula is selected would be used as part of the Pairwise system as one of the main data points. Because Pairwise allocates certain weights to certain data points, the committees want to know if the point-based formula is more valuable and how much it should weigh in the current ranking system and also in a potential Pairwise ranking system. So, regardless of whether Pairwise is adopted as a criterion, the committees need to examine this new formula for its use in the future.

- d. Estimated budget impact. None.
- e. Student-athlete impact. The committee intends to use this examination to continue finding the best and fairest way to select teams for the championship.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Review 2022 joint meeting report.** The committees reviewed and approved the 2022 joint meeting report as presented.
2. **Governance.** The committee received updates from staff on issues pertinent to Division III, including social media strategies, student-athlete health and safety and wellness, and results from the NCAA Convention.

The committee also received updates on issues the Division III Championships Committee is deliberating, including the upcoming budget cycle, championship access, per diem, travel party size, bracket expansion, travel, and selection criteria related to Pairwise.

3. **Championship review.** The committee discussed items related to the preliminary rounds and the final site of the 2022 soccer championships. The committee agreed to some changes/improvements to the championships, including practice on the game field, changes to the banquet, hotel improvements, community service, facility improvements, hospitality, and championship schedule. Specific details of all the changes will be included in the 2023 manuals and highlighted in Division III newsletters.
4. **United Soccer Coaches (USC).** The committees met with Trish Hughes, United Soccer Coaches College Programs Officer, on the following topics: preseason acclimatization, spring season, and days of rest. In addition, the committees were provided details in relation to a new coaches connection group within USC specific to Division III in which one coach from each conference will participate in calls to discuss issues related to Division III soccer.

5. **Officials.** The committees did not have the opportunity to meet with Ryan Cigich, national coordinator of officials, due to a last-minute schedule change. However, the committees relayed a few topics and questions to Mr. Cigich, including feedback on the oversight coordinator, equipment, official assignment process, bench behavior, and card accumulation.
6. **Championships, selections, bracketing, and preliminary-round hosting.** The committees discussed a variety of topics regarding the championships, including:
 - a. **Championship date formula.** The committees discussed a potential change to their championship date formulas that would modify the current use of midweek matches. The committees have discussed this change in recent years and the membership has been surveyed and has indicated support. There are multiple reasons for this potential proposal in the eyes of the committee, including rest and recovery, player safety, scheduling flexibility, and improving the student-athlete experience. However, before they officially submit a recommendation, the committees want initial feedback from the Division III Championships Committee in order to refine the proposal as necessary to mitigate concerns. The committees reiterate that there is no financial impact in changing the date formula. The goal would be to implement the change into the next bid cycle, which means a decision in the next two to three months would be ideal.

The committees specifically mention that the goal of this proposal would be not to increase the number of matches being played for most of the membership but to play fewer midweek matches and provide more recovery time for student-athletes.

In researching the number of games played the committees found that even though teams are permitted to play 20 matches in the regular season, only about 1.5% of schools played all 20. Most played between 16-19 matches (10% played 19, 20% played 18, 25% played 17, and 25% played 16). At the lower end, 12% played 15 and then 7% played between 11 and 14. So, while the opportunity exists to play more matches – and some schools take advantage of the extra weekend to play more games without having to add midweek matches – the committees' recommendation would be to play a similar number of matches and move midweek contests to the open weekend.

- b. **Selection criteria:** The committees agreed to propose an exploratory year in 2023 looking at the difference in the current formulas based on winning percentage and a point-based formula. (See Action Item 2.)
- c. **Bench limits:** The committees discussed requesting an increase in the bench limit to prevent any team members from having to sit in the stands during the championships. The bench limit was increased to 40 for the 2020 championships. The women's committee preferred no bench limit, though after discussion agreed some limit should be established and though not formalized, 50 was mentioned as being preferred. The men's committee has concern over increasing the limit as they address bench behavior in men's soccer. They

would agree on 50 if they are approved to require the players to sit and not stand during tournament matches.

- d. **Film exchange:** The committees approved continuing to require a film exchange in the tournament and the use of HUDL at no charge to those not using HUDL in the regular season. The committees will work closely with coaches and their support staff to identify those responsible for game film to make sure the correct person is assigned to film exchange at each individual institution.
 - e. **Transition period:** The committees reviewed the NCAA Convention proposal for preseason acclimatization for fall sports that was defeated. The committees are working on a proposal that addresses the main goal of preseason acclimatization, and that is a preseason transition period which provides time for student-athletes to transition from the summer into the fall championship season. The committees will work with the NCAA Sport Science Institute and the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports for recommendations and supporting science in creation of the proposal and the detailed preseason schedule.
7. **Championship bid cycle.** The committees discussed the upcoming bid cycle and bid specs specific to soccer. The committees agreed to what is being requested within bids and also began identifying potential locations and facilities they would be interested in, though they remained open to all those interested in hosting. They put a priority on staffing and support for the championships within the community for those potential hosts.

Committee Chair: W - Nicolle Wood, Salem State University,
 M - Justin Newell, Kenyon College, North Coast Athletic Conference

Staff Liaison(s): W – Mark Bedics, Championships and Alliances
 M – Kevin Alcox, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Men's and Women's Soccer Committees February 7-9, 2023, Joint Annual Meeting	
Attendees:	
Brad Bankhead, Hardin-Simmons University.	
Carl Christian, CUNY Athletic Conference.	
Rob Dallas, Cabrini University.	
David Kulik, Johnson & Wales University (Providence).	
Brian Marcantonio, Utica College.	
Gabe Margolis, Brandeis University.	
Justin Newell, Kenyon College.	
Travis Wall, St. Olaf College.	
Jon Waters, University of Lynchburg.	
Beverly Biancur, North Carolina Wesleyan College.	

Jessica Huda, Montclair State University.
Katari Key, Alverno College.
Susan Kolb, Hood College.
Crystal Lanning, University of Wisconsin River Falls.
Frank Marino, California Lutheran University.
Brianne Smithson, Bowdoin College.
Adam Sprague, Mount Aloysius College.
Nicolle Wood, Salem State University.
Absentees:
None.
Guests in Attendance:
Trish Hughes, United Soccer Coaches.
Carey Harveycutter, Championship Host – City of Salem.
John Shaner, Championship Host – City of Salem.
John Oney, Championship Host – VBR Sports.
NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:
Kevin Alcox, NCAA Championships and Alliances.
Mark Bedics, NCAA Championships and Alliances.
Bryce Peters, NCAA Championships and Alliances.
Jackie Kawamoto, NCAA Championships and Alliances.
Kelly Whitaker, NCAA Championships and Alliances.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Eric Hartung, Division III Governance.
Katie Mucci, Division III Governance.
Sarah Turner, Academic and Membership Affairs.
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.