



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I MEN'S SOCCER RULES SUBCOMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 2-4, 2026, ANNUAL MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative items. The NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee approved the following rules change proposals for the 2026 and 2027 seasons. The Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee requests approval from the Division I Men's Soccer Oversight Committee:

a. Field Dimensions (Rule 1.1).

(1) Recommendation. Increase the maximum width of the field of play from 75 yds to 80 yds.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. This aligns with the International Football Association Board (IFAB) maximum suggested width for international matches.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

b. Field Markings and Measurements – Commercial Logos (Rule 1.3.6).

(1) Recommendation. Permit up to four (4) commercial logos (two in each half of the field), not larger than 15-foot-by-15-foot square, on the field provided they are not in the penalty area and do not obscure any required field markings.

(2) Effective date. August 1, 2026.

(3) Rationale. To increase revenue opportunities for institutions and to align with other NCAA sports that permit commercial advertising on the playing surface.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

c. The Ball - Style, Shape and Material (Rule 2.2).

- (1) Recommendation. No fewer than nine (9) game balls shall be used and available during the game. *Note: This applies to Division I matches only.*
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. This will reduce lost time and get the ball back in play more quickly.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

d. Permissible Equipment (Rule 4.5.7).

- (1) Recommendation. Devices for the collection of data may be worn on the wrist or arm if properly taped down and padded.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. This will expand opportunities for data collection while also making sure the devices are not considered dangerous to any player.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. Varies depending on types of equipment.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

e. The Referee (Rule 5.1).

- (1) Recommendation. For Division I, require a fourth official for all games/matches.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. The demands of the modern game require the presence of a fourth official to assist the referee.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. Approximately \$2,500-\$3,500 (~\$250-\$350 per game hosted).
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

f. The Referee – Discretionary Power (Rule 5.6.7).

- (1) Recommendation. If a player from each team seeks medical evaluation or is treated on the field after a penalty kick has been awarded, both players can remain on the field.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. This avoids a situation where a forward who might otherwise take the kick is forced to leave the game after seeking medical evaluation or treatment while the goalkeeper can remain.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

g. Video Review (Rule 5.7.1).

- (1) Recommendation. Permit the following changes to Video Review procedures as follows:
(1) Referees can initiate a review at any time for timing issues or for the ball crossing the endline; (2) All other reviews will require a coach's challenge; (3) Each team will have two challenges per match; and (4) If a team is out of challenges, the referee can initiate a review on their own during the last 10 minutes of regulation or in overtime
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. This will eliminate uncertainty over when a review should take place and will reduce unnecessary reviews. Coaches will have more control over the decision to review a play.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

h. Video Review (Rule 5.7.3).

- (1) Recommendation. Permit the addition of the following offenses by the attacking team as reviewable play situations: (1) A foul prior to the scoring of a goal; (2) A foul or an offside prior to the award of a penalty kick or the issuing of a red card for Denial of an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity; (3) and Offside prior to the scoring of a goal.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Increases fairness and aligns with current practice under IFAB.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

i. Other Officials and Their Duties – Video Match Official (Rule 6).

(1) Recommendation. The governing sports authority may appoint a video match official to assist the referee with all aspects of video review. The video match official may be located at the game site or at a centralized location. *Note: This rule applies to Division I matches only.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Will make reviews quicker and more efficient as well as adding a safety net for suggesting reviews in the last ten minutes of a match or in overtime when a team is out of challenges.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

j. Suspended Game – Completed Game (Rule 7.7.4).

(1) Recommendation. Games that have progressed to 70 minutes or beyond with a margin of three (3) or more goals will be considered final if the game is suspended and cannot be resumed the same day. If the margin is less than three (3) goals after 70 minutes or the game has not progressed to 70 minutes, the game will either be resumed at a later date or considered a no contest. *Note: This rule applies to Division I men and women only.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. This reflects a desire to base results that impact postseason selection on full length games whenever possible.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

k. Inclement Weather Policy, Expiration of Time (Rule 7.8).

(1) Recommendation. Unless agreed to by the teams or determined by the governing sports authority, no game may be started if more than three hours have elapsed between the scheduled start time and the all clear being given. Once the all clear is given, teams shall have adequate warm up time. Once a game has been started and suspended, no

game may be resumed the same day if more than three hours have elapsed between the first suspension of play and the all clear being given for the first and all subsequent delays unless the teams or the governing sports authority have agreed to a longer waiting period. The teams and/or governing sports authority may agree to resume a suspended game at a later date. If teams have hard departure deadlines necessitated by travel considerations, these shall be communicated to the governing sports authority as soon as possible.

- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. This extends the window for teams to resume games the same day and allows for more games to be completed.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

i. Goalkeeper Delay (Rule 12.3.1.1).

- (1) Recommendation. If goalkeepers hold onto a live ball for more than eight (8) seconds, a corner kick will be awarded. *Note: The official will visually and verbally count down the last five (5) seconds.*
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. This will reduce the amount of time consumed by goalkeepers holding onto the ball. This aligns with IFAB in terms of the count and the penalties for violations.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

m. Cautions (Rule 12.4.3.1 & 12.4.3.2).

- (1) Recommendation. Cautions shall be issued to the head coach when: (1) Multiple substitutes run through the opposing team's bench area or illegally enter the field beyond the immediate vicinity of the touchline during the celebration of a goal; (2) and Misconduct punishable by a caution takes place in the coaching or team area and the individual offender cannot be located. Cautions shall be issued to assistant coaches and other bench personnel when they argue with officials.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Improve accountability for poor behavior and reduce dissent.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

n. Accumulated Cautions (Rule 12.5.1.1).

(1) Recommendation. All yellow cards issued to bench personnel during a game shall be charged against the head coach for the purposes of accumulation. *Note: During a game, a head coach is not penalized for cards given to assistants, but the totals after the game shall reflect the accumulation of all cards to the coaching staff.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. This will encourage head coaches to ensure that their assistants are behaving appropriately.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

o. Ejections - Violent Behavior II, Fighting and Referee Assault (Rule 12.7.10, 12.7.11, & 12.7.12).

(1) Recommendation. While these rules remain in place, the determination will now be made after the game by a committee of NCAA Soccer Officiating staff rather than be the referee on the field. The referee's job will simply be to issue the red card and describe the incident. The committee will examine the report and video and decide if the criteria for Violent Behavior II, Fighting, or Referee Assault have been met.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. This will lead to greater consistency and accuracy. Referees will no longer have to decide in the moment and will not have to go to video review to determine how to categorize an ejection.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

p. Suspensions and Illegal Participation (Rule 12.8).

- (1) Recommendation. Permit the following penalty for failure to serve a suspension: (1) Two-game suspension for the individual; (2) Two-game suspension for the head coach; (3) and Forfeit of each game that the suspended individual improperly participated in.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Encourages greater accountability and restores a team consequence for failure to serve a suspension.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

q. Suspensions and Illegal Participation (Rule 12.8.1).

- (1) Recommendation. Each ejection carries its own penalty, but additional games will not be added for each subsequent ejection beyond the first.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Eliminates a rule that was excessively punitive. Conference and institutions may still choose to impose penalties beyond the ones imposed by rule.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

r. Suspensions and Illegal Participation (Rule 12.9.5).

- (1) Recommendation. Suspensions incurred prior to a regular season game against a non-divisional opponent cannot be served against a non-divisional opponent. These suspensions must be served in the next game against an opponent from the same division. Suspensions earned in games against non-divisional opponents will be served in the next regular season game. *Note: Applies to Division I men and women only.*
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Avoids games being scheduled against non-divisional opponents for the purposes of manipulating suspensions.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and announcements.** The chairs of the Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee and Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee welcomed the subcommittee members and invited guests in attendance, and thanked them for their time.
2. **Review schedule, agenda and subcommittee operations.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee and Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee reviewed the meeting schedule, agenda and operations manual, which included the NCAA conflict of interest policy, guidance for committee members regarding meeting reports, notes and email, voting procedures, the federated rules process for Division I, Division II and Division III, principles for rules writing, and experimental playing rules guidelines. The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee and Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee was reminded of the directive of PROP from 2014. This directive encourages all to strongly consider providing at least a one-year delay for institutions before implementing any rules changes that have financial or facility implications.
3. **Approval of the 2025 NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee annual meeting report and the December 17, 2025, videoconference report.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee approved the December 17, 2025, report as written. The 2025 NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee annual meeting report was provided as informational.
4. **Joint meeting of Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee.**
 - a. **NCAA Sport Science Institute Injury Surveillance.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, and Divisions II and III Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee heard a report from the NCAA Sport Science Institute Injury Surveillance and the Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention. This report included information on injury rates, injury distributions and injury mechanisms.
 - b. **National Federation of State High School Associations report.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, and Divisions II and III Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee heard a report from the NFHS, which included areas of potential rules changes for the next season and the state of the sport for participants and officials for the federation.
 - c. **National coordinator of officials report.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, and Divisions II and III

Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee received a report from the national coordinator of officials.

- d. Active official report.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, and Divisions II and III Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee received a report from the active official.
- e. Secretary-rules editor report and trends report.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee, and Divisions II and III Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee received a report from the secretary-rules editor, including a review of statistics from the 2025 NCAA soccer season which includes data from previous seasons.
- 5. Review 2026 and 2027 rules proposals, 2025 rules survey results, committees' feedback and editorial change proposals.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee reviewed and considered several rules proposals as noted above in the Action Items section of this report.
- 6. Future annual meeting and videoconference schedule.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee reviewed its future meeting and videoconference schedule. The next videoconference is scheduled for March 18 at Noon Eastern time.
- 7. Selection of chair.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee elected Michael Seabolt, head men's soccer coach at Missouri State University, as chair of the Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee for a one-year term beginning September 1, 2026.
- 8. Other business.** The other business included a review of recent legislation adopted by the Division I Cabinet regarding the use of commercial or nonprofit trademarks or logos on student-athlete uniforms, apparel and equipment. In response to the adopted legislation, the Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee also approved an editorial change to address the placement of commercial and nonprofit logos on the uniform and apparel. As a note, the additional logos permitted may not interfere with required uniform markings.
- 9. Adjournment.** The Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee adjourned at 5:00 p.m. Eastern time on February 3, 2026.

Committee Chair: Michael Sebolt, Missouri State University, American Conference
Staff Liaison(s): Stanley Broaden, Championships and Alliances, Playing Rules and Officiating

NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee February 2-4, 2026, Annual Meeting
Attendees:
Carlo Acquista, Fordham University.
Lindsey Babcock, Wake Forest University.
Josh Berlo, University of Denver.
James Clark, University of Washington.
John Collins, national coordinator of officials.
Rob Emmerich, Stony Brook University.
Trevor Gorman, University at Albany.
Rich Grady, secretary-rules editor.
Patrick O'Toole, University of Michigan.
Daniel Radford, active official.
Michael Sebolt, Missouri State University
Absentees:
None.
Guests in Attendance:
Kody Campbell, The Datalys Center.
Avinash Candran, The Datalys Center.
Julie Cochran, National Federation of State High School Associations.
NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:
Stanley Broaden.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
LaGywn Durden, Greg Johnson, Mallory Mickus and Alyssa Rice.