



REPORT OF THE
NCAA MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER RULES COMMITTEE
JANUARY 29-31, 2024, MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items. The NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee approved the following rules change proposals for the 2024 and 2025 seasons. The Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee requests approval from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel for the following items:

a. Ball Pressure – Rule 2.1.3.

1. Recommendation. To eliminate the ball pressure psi specifications and require ball pressure to conform to the manufacturer's recommendations printed on the ball.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. Soccer balls all have the manufacturer's recommendations printed on them. The previous rule allowed for a wide range and potential conflict between a preference of ball pressure and the manufacturer's recommendation. Following the manufacturer's recommendations will ensure balls are inflated to the optimal pressure for that particular ball and avoid potential injury situations where the ball is inflated above the manufacturer's recommendation.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

b. Game Roster – Rule 3.2.1.

1. Recommendation. To require the official NCAA game roster, with starting players designated, to be given to the opposing coach and referee (in addition to the scorekeeper as currently required) not later than 15 minutes before game time. The copy given to the referee shall not have the total number of cautions or ejections listed.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To assist officials in identifying players for misconduct, especially in the coaching and team areas, and to potentially avoid situations where illegal players

participate. Designating starters will facilitate the process of entering player names and numbers by the sports information staff.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.

5. Student-athlete impact. None.

c. Stopping the Clock – Rules 3.7.2 and 6.3.5.5. *This rule was tweaked by the Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee during its March 21, 2024, videoconference.

1. Recommendation. ~~To require the clock to be stopped on all substitutions in the final 15 minutes of regulation play and all of overtime.~~ To require the clock to be stopped on substitutions made by the leading team or if the game is tied in the final 15 minutes of regulation play and all of overtime.

2. Effective date. Immediately.

3. Rationale. Currently, the clock stops during the final five minutes of the second period (or second overtime period) when the leading team makes a substitution. Surveys consistently pointed out that coaches felt the clock was being unfairly manipulated by teams in order to earn a win or a tie. Expanding the window during which the clock will stop for substitutions will preserve playing time and reduce opportunities to manipulate the clock. This proposal was modified from the original form of stopping for all substitutions during the final 15 minutes and all of overtime because it potentially created an incentive for the losing team to artificially prolong the game by repeatedly subbing to stop the clock.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.

5. Student-athlete impact. None.

d. Video Review – Rule 5.7.3.

1. Recommendation. To expand video review to include (1) all potential penalty kick situations, (2) all straight red card situations (an ejection for two yellow cards is not reviewable), (3) denial of obvious goal-scoring opportunities situations, and (4) any potential offside violation in goal-scoring opportunities.

2. Effective date. Immediately.

3. Rationale. To assist officials with getting game critical and misconduct situations correct. The 2023 experimental rule, which was used by eight DI conferences, included

penalty kick, straight red card and denial of obvious goal-scoring opportunities situations. Out of 80 reviews, 17 calls were changed based on video review.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.

5. Student-athlete impact. None.

e. Postseason Overtime – Rule 7.1.1.

1. Recommendation. To reinstate sudden-victory (golden goal) during postseason overtime.

2. Effective date. Immediately.

3. Rationale. In previous seasons, there were very few instances of the team being scored on first in overtime coming back to win the game. Therefore, requiring teams to play more minutes with few instances of a different result, especially with the potential for the advancing team to play another game the following day, is not in the best interest of the student-athlete.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.

5. Student-athlete impact. Will likely result in an overall decrease in playing time, which may be beneficial for an advancing team that plays a game the following day.

f. DI MEN ONLY – Substitutions – Rule 3.6.1.

1. Recommendation. To eliminate re-entry in the second half for field players and make all periods the same (no re-entry).

2. Effective date. Immediately.

3. Rationale. Division I men's head coaches have consistently expressed a preference to more closely align substitution rules to the IFAB (FIFA) Laws of the Game. The committee reviewed player and substitution statistical data since 2016 and noted the average number of individual substitutions made per team per game has increased (10.38 to 14.97); however, the number of players used per team per game has remained unchanged (16.39 vs. 16.49). This data suggests substitutions are being made to move the same player into and out of the game on a rotation basis rather than increasing overall opportunities for participation. Therefore, the committee's aim is to eliminate the second half re-entry to improve the flow of the game and acknowledge the membership's opinion without negatively impacting overall participation rates. Re-

entry for goalkeepers (one re-entry per period) and re-entry allowances for illness/injury/bleeding, signs of concussion and permanent medical conditions remain unchanged.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. This could result in more players being used in a game or the players in the game staying in for longer periods, which in either case will increase playing time for one segment of the team.

g. DI MEN ONLY – Substitutions – Rule 3.6.1.

1. Recommendation. To allow teams six moments to make substitutions in a game. Current substitution exceptions for goalkeepers, injury caused by an opposing player who was cautioned or ejected, bleeding injury, blood on the uniform, concussion evaluation and a permanent medical condition will not count as a moment as long as no other substitutions are made at the same time by that team. If a coach has used all of their moments and there is an injury not covered by the current exceptions listed previously, the team will play short. For postseason overtime games, any unused moments will carry over and one additional moment for all of overtime will be awarded.

An official NCAA substitution card will be created to assist with substitution moments. Coaches will be required to hand the card to an official before the substitute(s) will be beckoned onto the field.

2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To restore game flow and reduce the amount of lost time due to unlimited potential substitution moments. Based on the substitution statistical data since 2016, the average number of individual substitutions made per team per game has increased (10.38 to 14.97) and the number of players used per team per game remains unchanged (16.39 vs. 16.49). The result is that the same players are cycling in and out multiple times, which impedes game flow and reduces the amount of time the ball is in play.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. This could result in more players being used in a game or the players in the game staying in for longer periods, which in either case will increase playing time for one segment of the team.

h. DI MEN ONLY – Substitutions – Rule 3.6.1.

1. Recommendation. To allow substitutions to occur during any stoppage of play.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To acknowledge that with limited moments for substitution, coaches should have the flexibility to make substitutions during any stoppage of play.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and announcements.** Tim Cupello, chair of the Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee, welcomed the committee and invited guests and thanked them for their time.
2. **Review schedule, agenda, committee operations manual and Playing Rules Oversight Panel directive.** The rules committee 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, principles for rules writing, and experimental playing rules guidelines. The rules committee was reminded of the directive of PROP from 2014. This directive encourages all rules committees to strongly consider providing at least a one-year delay for Division II and Division III institutions before implementing any rules changes that have financial or facility implications.
3. **Approval of the January 17 videoconference report.** The report was approved as written.
4. **Playing Rules Oversight Panel report and review of integral rules.** Robert Davenport, PROP liaison to the Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee, reviewed the following topics of discussion from PROP's January 10 annual meeting.
 - a. Sportsmanship directive – PROP will be issuing a directive to all rules committees to review its rules surrounding sportsmanship and reaffirm that those rules adequately address unsporting behavior that may occur during competition. The rules committee agreed the playing rules adequately address unsporting behavior and allow for yellow and red cards to be issued in these types of situations.
 - b. Federated rules process – The rules committee reviewed the list of integral rules and the list of rules topics that may be federated/permissive. It was noted these lists should be used as a framework by rules committees when considering whether to federate a playing rule.

- c. Nontraditional seasons – PROP agreed that unless specified by the rules committee, there should not be a requirement to use playing rules during the nontraditional season. However, it was noted that in general, playing rules are being followed, and that coaches should mutually agree before the competition on the rules that will be used.
 - d. Secretary-rules editors serving as active officials – PROP reaffirmed its position from 2011 that secretary-rules editors should not serve as active game officials for the sport in which they serve as secretary-rules editor.
5. **Secretary-rules editor report.** The rules committee heard a report from the secretary-rules editor, which included a review of the 53 protests received during the 2023 season, common rules questions and suggested rules clarifications/corrections, feedback on the video review experimental rule and use of a 4th official during the regular season. It was noted that as part of the rules book editing process, there will be a move to remove all approved rulings and incorporate them into the rules language. All of this will be editorial.
 6. **National coordinator of officials report.** The rules committee heard a report from the national coordinator of officials, which focused on a recap of the 2023 season.
 7. **Active official report.** The rules committee heard a report from the active official, which focused on areas of the rules that could be clarified and points of emphasis for the 2024 season.
 8. **Trends report.** The rules committee reviewed the statistical trends, which included year-to-year comparative data on sport sponsorship, regular season and postseason overtime games, red and yellow cards, fouls, substitutions, goals and assists. It was noted regular-season games ending in a tie increased slightly in 2023, only two games from the 2023 postseason were impacted by the rules change to require both overtimes be played to completion (the team that scored first did not win) and the average number of substitutions has increased since 2020 while the average number of players has slightly decreased.
 9. **National Federation of State High School Associations report.** The rules committee heard a report from the NFHS, which included areas of potential change for next season.
 10. **NCAA Injury Surveillance Program report.** The rules committee heard a report on the men's and women's injury data report from the Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention. This report included information on injury rates, injury distributions, injuries during set pieces, injuries during season segments, injuries during game segments and injuries following overtime games.
 11. **Review 2023 rules survey results.** The rules committee reviewed the 2023 rules survey results in conjunction with discussion on the corresponding rules change proposals.
 12. **Review 2024 and 2025 rules proposals, committees' feedback and editorial change proposals.** The rules committee reviewed and considered 51 rules proposals and recommended five major rules changes for all divisions and three additional rules changes for

DI men only for the 2024 and 2025 seasons, as noted above in the Action Items section of this report. The recommended rules changes for all divisions include deferring ball pressure specifications to the manufacturer's recommendation, requiring the game roster to be exchanged with opposing coaches and the referee and designating starters, stopping the clock on all substitutions in the final 15 minutes of regulation play and all of overtime, expanding video review and reinstating sudden-victory during postseason overtime. The recommended rules changes for DI men only include the five items listed previously and eliminating re-entry in the second half, allowing teams six substitution moments and allowing substitutions to occur during any stoppage of play.

13. Review DI Nominating Committee information. The rules committee reviewed the nominations to replace Tim Cupello and Rudy Fuller on the committee. The committee provided input on the nominees, which NCAA staff will send to the DI Nominating Committee.

14. Future annual meeting and videoconference schedule. The rules committee scheduled a videoconference for noon Eastern time Thursday, March 21, to review the comment period results. The 2025 annual meeting is scheduled for January 28-29 in Indianapolis.

15. Selection of chair. The Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee elected Brandon Bianco, head men's soccer coach at Denison University, as chair for a one-year term beginning September 1, 2024.

16. Other business. Outgoing committee members were recognized and thanked for their service to the committee and Association.

17. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m. Eastern time on Wednesday, January 31.

Committee Chair: Tim Cupello, University of California, Riverside, Big West Conference

Staff Liaison(s): Ashlee Follis, Championships and Alliances, Playing Rules and Officiating

NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee January 29-31, 2024, Meeting	
Attendees:	
Brandon Bianco, Denison University.	
Amy Calabrese, University of Louisville.	
Eric Crawford, Georgia Southwestern State University.	
Tim Cupello, University of California, Riverside.	
Rudy Fuller, University of Pennsylvania.	
Rich Grady, secretary-rules editor.	
Brandon Koons, Otterbein University.	
Courtney Sirmans, Miami University (Ohio).	

Kim Sutton, California State University, Chico.
Absentees:
None.
Guests in Attendance:
Avinash Chandran, Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention.
Julie Cochran, National Federation of State High School Associations.
John Collins, national coordinator of officials.
Robert Davenport, Oklahoma Baptist University.
Daniel Radford, active official.
NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:
Ashlee Follis.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
LaGwyn Durden, Greg Johnson, Connor Lancashire and Mallory Mickus.