



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION II SOFTBALL COMMITTEE
JUNE 16-17, 2020, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. Review of 2019 meeting report.** The committee approved the 2019 annual meeting report as written.
- 2. Division II academic and membership affairs update.** Members of the academic and membership affairs staff reviewed legislative changes due to COVID-19, noting the membership is expressing confusion on the correct way to count exhibition contests – whether it should be by opponent or just only counting time, regardless of how many opponents are played within the time limit. The NCAA staff will review the language and provide clarification to the committee.
- 3. Division II Championships Committee updates.** Staff provided updates on current discussions the Championships Committee is having due to the effects of COVID-19 and how the division will move forward with budgets, playing seasons, minimum and maximum number of contests required, etc. Staff also noted that the committee will conduct a thorough review of the nullification process and penalties at an upcoming meeting.
- 4. NFCA convention report.** Brian Stanley from the National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) and Gretta Melsted, head coach at Augustana University (South Dakota), provided an update, noting that the NFCA will issue a press release for the annual awards, given the cancellation of all championship banquets for 2020-21. Members discussed concerns from the coaches regarding changes in scheduling due to COVID-19 (i.e., conference-only schedules) and how that could impact championship selections. Discussions on selections and rankings will continue with the sport committee as more is known about spring schedules.
- 5. Division II governance update.** Representatives from the NCAA Division II governance staff updated the committee on areas of focus for the future, as well as adjustments that will be made during the 2020-2021 seasons because of COVID-19.

- 6. Review of NCAA playing rules and barrel compression testing (BCT).** Dee Abrahamson provided a bat testing update, noting that Division II continues to experience the most failed bats during the regular season and postseason compared to the other divisions. She noted the NCAA Softball Rules Committee is developing a bat testing guideline document that will be posted on Arbiter upon completion. The committee asked questions regarding when bat testing should occur and were instructed that it should occur prior to every game.

Vickie Van Kleeck, NCAA softball secretary-rules editor, also joined the meeting to discuss pertinent agenda items from the softball rules committee meeting. Even though this is not a rules-change year, a new concussion rule will go into effect. The rule notes that if a player in the game is involved in an incident that requires concussion protocol evaluation, a substitute can enter the game without impacting substitution limits.

- 7. 2023-26 bid review.** The committee reviewed all bids received for the current 2023-26 bid cycle and will make formal recommendations to the Division II Championships Committee by the stated deadline.
- 8. Championship manuals and site selection materials review.** The committee reviewed the adjustments for the 2020 championship and felt no additional changes should be made at this time. The committee noted the importance of distinguishing rounds in all manuals and ensuring all site representatives are familiar with the failure to adhere to policies and procedures for the sport and are enforcing those outlined policies.
- 9. Committee timeline review.** The committee discussed the timeline and made necessary updates for the 2021 season.
- 10. Regional, super regional and final review.** The committee reviewed all the changes made at the 2019 annual meeting and determined they should not be adjusted until they can be implemented at a championship. The noted changes from 2019 were:
 - Modified the “home/away” designation process for the if-necessary game in the super regionals to mirror the process used for regionals and the championship final series.
 - Approved a motion to change the naming protocol for preliminary rounds. Instead of the region and site number (e.g., Atlantic 1 and Atlantic 2), the site will be named by the city in which the games are played (e.g., Institute, WV Regional and West Liberty, WV Regional).
 - In the future, both head coaches or a designee from each institution must be present for the coin toss. At the championship final site, the designee may be a committee representative.
 - Agreed to emphasize more to site representatives that any behavior that violates a championship policy could be a misconduct or failure to adhere to policies and procedures and all those issues should be presented to the championship manager.

- Modified shared line drills. In the future, teams will conduct line drills separately. Both teams will take the field 30 minutes prior to first pitch. At the 25-minute mark, the home team will take line drills. At the 18-minute mark, the visiting team will take line drills. At the 11-minute mark, teams will clear the field and the umpire meeting will occur.
- To emphasize the importance of sportsmanship and fan behavior, the committee recommended having a student-athlete read the crowd control statement prior to each game. The committee also asked that team administrators play a larger role in ensuring a fair and safe game environment.

11. Preview of 2020 championship final site. Committee members approved the regional, super regional and final site brackets for 2021. The 2021 championship will be hosted by Metropolitan State University of Denver. The start times for games at all rounds were reviewed and no changes were made.

12. Review Division II Softball Committee strategic plan. The committee reviewed the strategic plan assembled in 2019 and made slight adjustments to goals that were completed.

13. Review of regionalization map and sponsorship list. Committee members reviewed the regionalization map and sponsorship list and noted potential changes for 2020-21. Staff shared that the map and list will be finalized in August.

14. Committee chair appointment. The committee voted to appoint Dean Johnson, associate director of athletics/head softball coach at Caldwell University, as chair of the committee. Mr. Johnson has served on the committee for two years and will provide great leadership and guidance for the committee.

15. 2021 annual meeting dates. The committee will hold its next annual meeting June 15-16 via Microsoft Teams.

Committee Chair: Kristy Bayer, Emporia State University
Staff Liaison: Morgan DeSpain, Championships and Alliances

Division II Softball Committee June 16-17, 2020, Teleconference
Attendees:
Kristy Bayer, Emporia State University.
Donna Fields, St. Mary's University (Texas).
Rob Fournier, Wayne State University (Michigan).
Rebekah Gasner, Montana State university Billings.
Dean Johnson, Caldwell University.

Allie Kolezynski, Mountain East Conference.
Patrick Peasant, Miles College.
Stacey Vallee, Francis Marion University.
Absentees:
None.
Guests in Attendance:
Dee Abrahamson, NCAA barrel compression testing liaison.
Gretta Melsted, Augustana University (South Dakota).
Brian Stanley, NFCA.
Vickie Van Kleeck, NCAA softball secretary-rules editor.
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
Donisha Carter, Championships and Alliances.
Morgan DeSpain, Championships and Alliances.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Chelsea C. Hooks, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Angela Red, Academic and membership Affairs.
Roberta Page, Championships and Alliances.
Ryan Jones, Governance.
Maritza Jones, Governance.