



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION II SOFTBALL COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 11, 2018, TELECONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEM.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative item.

- **Participation in the 2020 Spring National Championships Festival.**

- a) Recommendation. That the Division II Championships Committee approve a recommendation to withdraw the softball championship from the 2020 spring festival due to the loss of days in the regular season.
- b) Effective date. 2020 championship.
- c) Rationale. The festival date formula results in a loss of eight days in 2020 since the date formula does not align with softball's standard date formula. Data indicate that teams play roughly the same number of games in festival and non-festival years. In fact, in the 2012 and 2016 festival years, the national average for games played was 49.4, which was the highest out of a 10-year span from 2009-18. The overall average was 48.2 games in that period and ranged from 46.9 – 49.4 games. Squeezing the same number of games into fewer days leads to more midweek games and more missed class time for student-athletes.

Over the past few years, the committee has grappled with how to address the loss of days in festival years and has considered many options (see Attachment). Ultimately, the committee is recommending withdrawal from the 2020 festival since the other options have more far-reaching impacts than simply not participating in the festival.

The committee is hopeful that a festival working group will be able to address the loss of days in the softball season for the 2024 festival and beyond.

- d) Estimated budget impact. None.
- e) Student-athlete impact. By withdrawing from the 2020 spring festival, student-athletes will not play as many midweek doubleheaders, which leads to better balance and student-athlete well-being. While the committee acknowledges the

enhanced student-athlete experience the festival provides, members also recognize that experience is reserved for the eight teams participating at the finals site as opposed to the detriments of the compressed season all other teams experience.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- **Update on four-person umpire crews in Division I.** Staff updated the committee on the recent move to four-person umpire crews for the postseason in Division I softball, starting with the 2019 championship. Staff will work with the national coordinator of officials to ensure the Division II umpire pool is not impacted by the increased need for umpires in the Division I tournament.

Committee Chair: *Brandon Davis, San Francisco State University.*

Staff Liaison: *Molly Simons, Championships and Alliances*

Division II Softball Committee October 11, 2018, Teleconference
Attendees:
Kristy Bayer, Arkansas Tech University.
Brandon Davis, San Francisco State University.
Donna Fields, Saint Mary’s University (Texas).
Rob Fournier, Wayne State University (Michigan).
Patrick Peasant, Miles College.
Stacey Vallee, Francis Marion University.
John Wilson Jr., Virginia State University.
Absentees:
Dean Johnson, Caldwell University.
Guests in Attendance:
Terri Holmes, Northern State University; Division II Championships Committee liaison.
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
John Kuzio, Championships and Alliances.
Molly Simons, Championships and Alliances.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Roberta Page, Championships and Alliances.



Strategic Review of the 2020 Division II Spring Festival: Softball

Issue:

The dates for the 2020 Division II National Championships Spring Festival (May 12-16, 2020) were determined over seven years ago. Due to the current championships date formula and the festival date formula in 2020, there will be eight fewer days than a standard playing season during the 2020 season.

Background:

When the dates for the festival were originally determined there was a focus on selecting dates with the least impact for all participating sports. Since dates were set, the dates for the softball championship have been slightly adjusted, which impacts the season in festival years. The number of days in a season also vary due to when the fourth Saturday in May occurs.

The first table below outlines the standard date formula for softball and the formula in festival years. The second table outlines the impact for 2020, specifically.

Sport	Standard Date Formula	Date Formula in Festival Years
Softball	Fourth Saturday in May. (Thursday – Monday)	One to one and a half weeks earlier than standard date formula. (Or the third Saturday in May. Tuesday – Saturday)

Impact for 2020:

	Standard Date	Date for 2020 Festival Year	Difference in Days
Competition Start	January 31 (Feb. 1* is on a Saturday)	January 31 (Feb. 1 is on a Saturday)	No change
Earliest Conference Tournament Start Date	April 29	April 22	8 days
Automatic Qualifier Due	May 3	April 26	7 days
Selections	May 4	April 27	7 days
Regionals	May 7-9	April 30 – May 2	7 days
Super Regionals	May 14-15	May 6-7	8 days
Finals	May 21-25	May 12-16	9 days

*The number of days in the softball playing season vary from year-to-year based on what day Feb. 1 falls—therefore, the impact in festival years varies.

Various membership groups have voiced concerns with the date formula for 2020, noting that weather constraints for many parts of the country in the spring season lead to a compressed season with student-athletes potentially playing more mid-week games, ultimately resulting in more missed class time. The softball committee is being asked to weigh the following outcomes.

Possible Outcomes:

The Division II softball committee is asked to consider the following outcomes and make a recommendation to the Division II Championships Committee to address the loss of days in 2020:

- a. Count fall competition for conference opponents (permissive policy—number of games and participation would be determined by conferences).
- b. Decrease the number of countable games required for championship selection for 2020 [e.g., decrease from 56 countable games (or 24 for selection purposes) to a lesser number in the festival year].
- c. Conduct eight, eight-team regionals (contests held over the traditional super regional weekend).
- d. Softball does not participate in festival for 2020 (understanding that participation would be reinstated in 2024).
- e. Other.