REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION II MEN’S AND WOMEN’S SOCCER COMMITTEES
JANUARY 26, 2016 MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- Practice start date. (Bylaw 17.19.2.1 – Playing Seasons – First date of practice – championship segment; Bylaw 17.19.2.2 – Playing Season – Preseason Activities before the first day of classes or first scheduled contest)

  (1) **Recommendation.** That the Division II Championships Committee sponsor legislation to change the practice start date for men’s and women’s soccer from 17 days before the first permissible contest to 21 days before the first permissible contest. Additionally, the soccer committees would like to change the preseason activities before the first day of classes or first scheduled contest legislation to mirror the daily and weekly hour limitations during the playing season (e.g. four hours per day and 20 hours per week).

  (2) **Effective date.** August 1, 2017.

  (3) **Rationale.** According to data presented at the NCAA Soccer Summit, student-athletes need sufficient time to physically prepare before starting regular-season competition. Current legislation dictates a practice start date of 17 days before competition. Findings from the soccer summit state that soccer athletes could benefit from a standardized approach to pre-season training to decrease injuries.

     In this proposal, institutions would adhere to the current regular-season time restrictions during the practice time as well: 20 hours per week of countable athletically related activity (CARA), one day off per seven-day period and no more than four hours of CARA per day.

  (4) **Estimated budget impact.** Will vary based on institutional start dates.

  (5) **Student-athlete impact.** This change will allow for a standard acclimatization period for soccer student-athletes before starting competition. Data collected by the NCAA Sport Science Institute indicate that fewer injuries may occur during the regular season when athletes have a longer timeframe to condition their bodies to full playing capacity.

2. Nonlegislative items.

   a. Championship date formula in non-festival years.
(1) **Recommendation.** That the Division II Championships Committee approve a change in the championship date formula for non-Festival years as outlined below.

- First round: Weekend before Thanksgiving (Thursday or Friday).
- Second round: Weekend before Thanksgiving (Saturday or Sunday).
- Third round: Weekend after Thanksgiving (Thursday or Friday).
- Quarterfinals: Weekend after Thanksgiving (Saturday or Sunday).
- Semifinals and Final: Two weekends after Thanksgiving (Thursday through Saturday).

(2) **Effective date.** August 1, 2017.

(3) **Rationale.** Consistent with findings from the February 2015 NCAA Sport Science Institute Soccer Summit, additional weeks in the regular season are necessary to improve student-athlete health and wellness by spreading available matches over a longer period. Moving the championship start date one week later will allow a minimum of 11 weekends to conduct 18 regular-season matches and conference tournament play. Although the optimal recovery time between matches is 72 hours, adding weekends will permit student-athletes to have the recommended 48 hours of recovery time between matches.

Providing an additional week and weekend in the season would allow more flexibility in scheduling and the opportunity to schedule a lesser number of midweek games, which affords more recovery time throughout the season.

NCAA statistics also report that teams complete an average of 17.56 games during the regular season, which is fewer than the maximum number of 18 games allowed. Adding time to the season will allow teams to complete all matches, thereby helping sport committees evaluate criteria for selections.

(4) **Estimated budget impact.** None.

(5) **Student-athlete impact.** Student-athletes will have more weeks to complete the same number of games, thus decreasing the risk of injury from playing games in the shorter timeframe.

b. Championship date formula in festival years.

(1) **Recommendation.** That the Division II Championships Committee approve a change in the championship date formula for Festival years as outlined below.

- First round: Weekend before Thanksgiving (Thursday or Friday).
• Second round: Weekend before Thanksgiving (Saturday or Sunday).
• Third round: Weekend of Thanksgiving (Friday).
• Quarterfinals: Weekend of Thanksgiving (Sunday).
• Semifinals and Final: Weekend after Thanksgiving (Thursday through Saturday).

(2) **Effective date.** August 1, 2017.

(3) **Rationale.** To maintain the length of the regular-season, it is necessary to play third-round and quarterfinal games over Thanksgiving in Festival years. With a new date formula, the Festival would shorten the season by one week.

(4) **Estimated budget impact.** Increased travel costs due to the Thanksgiving weekend.

(5) **Student-athlete impact.** Student-athletes will have more weeks to complete the same number of games, thus decreasing the risk of injury from playing games in the shortened timeframe.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Review of the 2015 men’s and women’s soccer committee meeting report.** The committees approved the report from the 2015 meeting.

2. **Division II governance update.** Staff provided updates and resources, including the Division II facts and figures document, 2015-16 priorities, and promotional brochures for coaches and athletics directors/staff.

3. **Soccer rules review/update.** Staff summarized potential major rule changes as outlined by the soccer rules committee for the 2016 and 2017 rule book. Rule change proposals are currently out for comment with the membership.

4. **Review of the 2015 championship.** The committees reviewed the 2015 championship and noted the following items.

   a. **Banquet.** In the future, the committees would like to incorporate additional championship signage and the championship trophies at the banquet facility. Committee members also recommended the use of team photos and video during the banquet, as well as student or coach speakers from each team.

   b. **Signage.** The committees applauded the new championship logo system as well as Division II “Make It Yours” signage displayed at the facility.
5. **Preview of 2016 championship.** The committees discussed game and practice times as well as banquet options for the 2016 championships in Kansas City. The committees noted a desire to market to local youth club soccer teams to increase attendance at the championships.


7. **Season length discussion.** The committees discussed options for lengthening the season (see action items, above). Both committees agreed that more time to play the maximum number of games is vital to the health and well-being of student-athletes. Based on data presented at the 2015 Soccer Summit, the committees proposed two action items.

8. **Eligibility issues in men’s soccer.** The men’s soccer committee updated the group on potential recommendations regarding the increasing age of international male soccer athletes. The men’s committee will discuss the issue further before submitting a proposal.

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**Committee Chair:** Brandon Bronzan, Sonoma State University, California Collegiate Athletic Conference, men’s committee

Magnus Nilerud, University of Bridgeport, East Coast Conference, women’s committee

**Staff Liaison(s):**

Eric Breece, Championships and Alliances, men’s committee

Molly Simons, Championships and Alliances, women’s committee

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**Division II Men’s and Women’s Soccer Committees**  
**January 26, 2016, Meeting**

**Attendees:**

J.B. Belzer, Regis University (Colorado); Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference.

Josh Doody, Notre Dame de Namur University; Pacific West Conference.

Todd Diuguid, University of Charleston (West Virginia); Mountain East Conference.

Dana George, Delta State University; Gulf South Conference.

Lisa Liotta, University of Findlay; Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

Magnus Nilerud, University of Bridgeport; East Coast Conference.

Jennifer Rushton, Armstrong State University; Peach Belt Conference.

Lewis Theobald, University of Central Missouri; Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association.

Kevin Alcox, Great Midwest Athletic Conference.

Brandon Bronzan, Sonoma State University; California Collegiate Athletic Association.

Gavin Donaldson, West Virginia Wesleyan College; Mountain East Conference.

Bill Elliott, University of West Florida; Gulf South Conference.
Gary Hamill, Wingate University; South Atlantic Conference.
Frank Kohlenstein, Colorado School of Mines; Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference.
Matthew Thompson, University of the District of Columbia; East Coast Conference.
Brock Wissmiller, Upper Iowa University; Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference.

**Absentees:**
None.

**Guests in Attendance:**
Butch Raymond, Coaches Connection Liaison.

**NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:**
Eric Breece, Championships and Alliances.
Molly Simons, Championships and Alliances.

**Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:**
Ashlee Ferguson, Championships and Alliances.