**NCAA Ice Hockey Rules Committee – 4v4 Overtime Discussion Document**

**Process:** First, it is important to note that the rules process includes several opportunities for membership engagement. This includes:

- Open proposal opportunity;
- Conference meetings/recommendations;
- AHCA annual meeting/rules presentations;
- NCAA rules survey;
- Comment period (after NCAA committee meets); and
- Final approval/implementation.

In each of these phases, the committee deliberates and reviews all aspects of a proposal, which includes available research/data, the impact on health and safety and whether or not it enhances the game.

Overall, the committee is charged with doing what the 12 people elected to the committee believe is in the best interest of the game. The committee is made up of 6 DI and 6 DII/III representatives, with an even split between men’s and women’s representatives. The committee listing may be found [HERE](#).

**Rationale:** The following points were made in support of moving to 4v4 overtime and allowing conferences to use 3v3 and a sudden-death shootout for conference standings:

- The purpose of overtime is to decide a winner; removing a player from both teams increases the likelihood that this will occur. In the 2014-15 NHL season, 44.6% of games that went to the 4-on-4 overtime were decided in overtime, compared to 34.4% last season in Division I men’s hockey.
- Using the 4v4 format is not something new to the game; teams practice this type of play and it occurs normally in the game today.
- The NHL and other leagues have used 4v4 successfully in the past decade and saw an increase in the number of ties that are broken.
- The 4v4 format opens up the ice a bit and aligns with the committee’s stated focus to enhance the speed and skill in the game and encourage scoring chances.
- The proposed change is being made with the caveat that the Division I championship committees would consider some adjustment to the credit awarded for an overtime win/loss.
- Consistency across college hockey should be attained by allowing only these options for regular season games.

**Transparency:** The committee met at various points during deliberations with the NCAA championships committees that use an RPI, as any change made by the rules committee would impact results. The rules change, therefore, was contingent on the championships committees reviewing/adjusting the RPI to consider providing some credit for a team that reaches overtime but loses (and less credit for the team that wins) due to the fact that the game is being artificially changed.

The committee reviewed the impact based on last year’s results for the Division I Men’s and National Collegiate Women’s championship selections. For the Division I Men’s Championship, the teams making
the tournament would not change and no team would have jumped a band in the RPI based on a 75%-25% distribution (75% for an OT win, 25% for an OT loss). For the National Collegiate Women’s Championship, the top 16 teams would have remained the same and in two cases teams would have moved up or down one line.

**Historically -- NCAA Committee Decisions:** Through the years, there have been numerous rules changes made by committees that did not receive the support of some areas of the membership. A few examples that ultimately were passed and implemented:

- Three-point line in basketball (largely opposed in the 1980s by the coaching community);
- Volleyball voted in rally scoring (each point counts regardless of who serves) with opposition of many Division I coaches a few years ago (it is now looked upon as a major reason the sport has grown in popularity);
- Men’s basketball coaches were against removing one timeout and not allowing them to call timeout during a live ball situation last year (still is opposition but it has widely been praised as helping to speed up the game);
- Football coaches were largely against ejecting players for targeting when the rule was put in several years ago, but it now has the support of most as improving the health/safety aspects of the game;
- Football coaches were split on the issue of breaking ties when the overtime system was implemented in the 1996; and
- **Not** using a shot clock for every possession in men’s lacrosse (three years ago, the Division I coaching community pushed the committee to approve, but the committee did not; other rules changes have been extremely successful and this is no longer a significant issue).

**Statistics/Survey:**

- Overall, 18.5% of all games go to overtime and 37.3% are decided in OT.
- In Division I Men’s play, 21.9% go to overtime and 34.4% are decided in OT.
- In Division I Women’s play, 16.1% go to overtime and 34.7% are decided in OT.
- In Division III Men’s play, 19.8% go to overtime and 38.3% are decided in OT.
- In Division III Women’s play, 13.9% go to overtime and 43.9% are decided in overtime.

On the rules survey, the following responses were collected (DIM=DI Men, DIW=DI Women, etc.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>DIM Strongly Support/Support</th>
<th>DIM Limited Support</th>
<th>DIM No Support</th>
<th>DIW Strongly Support/Support</th>
<th>DIW Limited Support</th>
<th>DIW No Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4v4 with some adjustment to RPI</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3v3 with some adjustment to RPI</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leave overtime as 5v5</td>
<td>77.7%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Description

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4v4 with some adjustment to RPI</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3v3 with some adjustment to RPI</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave overtime as 5v5</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other notes:

- The committee voted to utilize the traditional 5-on-4 power play structure in the 4-on-4 overtime, should a penalty carry over to the overtime or a penalty be called during overtime play. In those scenarios, after a penalty expires play would continue 5-on-5 until the next stoppage of play. After the stoppage of play, 4-on-4 play would be used.
- Two men’s DI conferences indicated interest in utilizing a 3-on-3 overtime and sudden death shootout after the 65-minute game.
- At least one women’s league utilized 4v4 in overtime during the regular season (Hockey East).