REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION II SOFTBALL COMMITTEE
JUNE 21-22, 2017, MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.
   - None.

2. Nonlegislative items.
   a. Selection criteria recommendation.
      (1) Recommendation. That the selection criteria for softball be modified to remove the in-region, nonconference won-lost record and add Division II results versus teams with a winning record.
      (2) Effective date. September 1, 2018.
      (3) Rationale. The committee believes the recommendation will help differentiate teams during the evaluation process. Using results against teams with a winning record places value on scheduling tougher opponents. Currently, in-region, nonconference won-lost could encourage teams to schedule weaker opponents for an “easy win,” which the committee wants to discourage. Ultimately, the committee feels that a win against a stronger team is more impressive than a win against a weaker team, so this change would reward teams with a tougher schedule.
      (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
      (5) Student-athlete impact. This change should more accurately reflect the best teams in each region, which will have a positive impact on student-athletes.
   b. Reseeding of the 16 super regional teams.
      (1) Recommendation. That the Division II Championships Committee allow the softball committee to seed the 16 super regional teams based on regional Rating Percentage Index (RPI).
      (2) Effective date. September 1, 2018.
      (3) Rationale. The committee believes this change will make the tournament more competitive and exciting. Currently, the committee reseeds the final eight teams
advancing to the championship site. By seeding one round earlier, the bracket should become more competitive since regional designation would not be a factor. After discussing different ways to address regionalization in the postseason, the committee agreed that reseeding at super regionals would eliminate some of the conference matchups that continue into the second weekend of postseason play. Looking at the 2017 championship bracket, reseeding at the super regional round would have eliminated three conference matchups. In this model, seeding set at the super regionals would be maintained for the remainder of the tournament.

(4) Estimated budget impact. TBD.

(5) Student-athlete impact. This change would have a beneficial impact on student-athletes because it would create more competitive matchups and, in some cases, avoid a rematch with a conference opponent.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. Review of 2016 meeting report. The committee approved the 2016 annual meeting report as written.

2. Division II Championships Committee updates. Staff provided an update on the regionalization working group and discussed a concept to reseed at the super regional round (see Nonlegislative item 2b). While the committee agrees regionalization is working in the regular season and for selection of teams to the tournament, members want to look for ways to ensure that the best teams advance to the finals site.

3. Division II governance and academic and membership affairs update. Chelsea Crawford from the academic and membership affairs staff reviewed pertinent 2017 Convention legislation that will go into effect in August.

   Ryan Jones from the governance staff joined the meeting to provide updates including the upcoming launch of the online coaches education program, plans for the 2018 membership census, Make It Yours activations and the regular-season media agreement.

   The committee expressed concerns with the loss of the week in Festival years and discussed possible solutions including a baseball/softball joint championship in those years or bringing 16 teams to the Festival site. Mr. Jones encouraged the committee to continue its creativity in how to address the loss of the week in Festival years.

4. NFCA convention report. Brian Stanley from the National Fastpitch Coaches Association provided an update for the committee. Members discussed top priorities for coaches, which include season length in Festival years, regional crossover in the postseason and game environment. The committee stressed the importance of having data from the coaches
association on season-length proposals so the committee knows how many people support certain ideas. Staff will continue to work with the committee and the NFCA to explore options for addressing the loss of the week in Festival years.

5. **Championship manuals and site selection materials review.** The committee reviewed the 2017 manuals and made necessary updates for the 2018 championship. The committee noted the difficulty with having so many manuals associated with the championship and asked staff to explore the feasibility of combining some of the manuals.

6. **Committee timeline review.** The committee discussed the timeline and made necessary updates for the 2018 season.

7. **Review of NCAA playing rules and barrel compression testing (BCT).** Dee Abrahamson provided a bat testing update for the committee. She noted that the regular-season bat testing initiatives are seeing success. Vickie Van Kleeck, NCAA secretary-rules editor, updated the committee on the reorganization of the rule book. The rules committee is focusing on the reorganization and also development of umpires. Ms. Van Kleeck noted that the rules group will be working on a new instructional video to educate site representatives on how to bat test in preliminary rounds.

8. **Umpires.** The committee discussed the postseason umpire selection process and how to ensure the best umpires are officiating games. The committee wants to work with the new national coordinator to explore ways to enhance the relationship between the site representatives and umpires-in-charge at each regional and super regional site, to ensure the best officials are calling each game.

9. **Rankings process review.** The committee felt the rankings process ran smoothly. Members suggested that the regional chair assist new regional advisory committee members individually in case new members have more in-depth questions. Committee members also provided suggestions for new national committee member orientation that will help with the consistency of onboarding new members.

10. **Selections review.** The committee reviewed the 2017 selection criteria and also recommended a change in criteria for the 2018-21 cycle (see Nonlegislative Item 2a).

11. **Regional and super regional review.** The committee reviewed the participant evaluations from the regionals and super regionals. Overall, participants enjoyed their experiences in those rounds. The committee asked staff to include a few additional procedures in the site representative manual to ensure all sites operate in the same manner. Staff reviewed the number of sites forced to use the rain day and the committee discussed edits to the prechampionships manual to ensure clarity about when games should be completed in each round. The committee handled one misconduct issue from a preliminary round and decided to send a private reprimand to the institution.
12. **2017 championship review and 2018 championship preview.** The committee praised the staff from the city of Salem and Mountain East Conference for their roles in hosting a successful championship. Since the championship is returning to Salem in 2018, the committee noted a few logistical adjustments to help the championship run more smoothly. The committee also addressed concerns from the participant evaluations.

The 2017 championship was the first to allow reseeding at the finals site. The No. 1 and No. 2-seeded teams met in the championship finals series, with the No. 2 team taking the title. The committee was pleased with how the reseeding played out and felt it made the matchups at the finals site more competitive.

Committee members approved the regional, super regional and finals site brackets for 2018.

13. **Season length in Festival years.** Continuing conversation from Informational Item 3, the committee asked staff to seek guidance from the Division II Championships Committee on the feasibility of a joint softball/baseball championship in Festival years, adding a week to the beginning of the season in Festival years, bringing 16 teams to the Festival or leaving the Festival calendar as is. Upon receiving feedback, staff will work with the committee to weigh the pros and cons of these different concepts.

14. **Sponsorship list review.** The committee reviewed the sponsorship list and noted future changes in some conference alignments.

15. **Committee chair appointment.** The committee voted to reappoint Jen Starek as chair of the committee for her second year. The committee is pleased with Ms. Starek’s leadership and feels her service for another year will provide consistency for the committee.

16. **2018 annual meeting dates.** The committee will hold its next annual meeting June 12-13 in Indianapolis.

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**Committee Chair:** Jen Starek, University of New Haven, Northeast-10 Conference  
**Staff Liaison:** Molly Simons, Championships and Alliances

### Attendees:

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<tr>
<td>Kristy Bayer, Arkansas Tech University; Great American Conference</td>
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<td>Daven Bond, Colorado Christian University; Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference</td>
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<td>Brandon Davis, Dominican University of California; Pacific West Conference</td>
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<td>Melissa Frost, University of Indianapolis; Great Lakes Valley Conference</td>
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<td>Jen Starek, University of New Haven; Northeast-10 Conference</td>
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Les Stuedeman, University of Alabama in Huntsville; Gulf South Conference.
Stacey Vallee, Francis Marion University; Peach Belt Conference.
John Wilson Jr., Virginia State University; Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

**Absentees:**
None.

**Guests in Attendance:**
Dee Abrahamson, NCAA barrel compression testing liaison. *(via teleconference)*
Gary Bryce, Wayne State University. *(via teleconference)*
Carey Harveycutter, City of Salem.
John Shaner, City of Salem.
Brian Stanley, NFCA. *(via teleconference)*
Vickie Van Kleeck, NCAA Softball Secretary Rules Editor. *(via teleconference)*

**NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:**
John Kuzio, Championships and Alliances.
Molly Simons, Championships and Alliances.

**Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:**
Chelsea Crawford, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Ryan Jones, Governance.