

GNAC SPORTS REGULATIONS

SOFTBALL

Section 1. PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT

- 1.1. All member institutions fielding teams in softball shall agree to participate for the championship.

Section 2. SCHEDULE

- 2.1 All member institutions shall observe the NCAA starting date for pre-season practice.
- 2.2 The maximum number of games permitted in a single season shall not exceed the NCA maximum number of allowable games. (Revised 5/09; 5/10)
- 2.3 Varsity contests shall be scheduled in accordance with the regulations as they appear in Article 17 of the Bylaws of the NCAA.
- 2.4 Conference members shall complete their conference-scheduled contests (except for contests which are postponed and are unable to be rescheduled under the Make-up policy, Section 2.6) as assigned yearly by the conference office. The Conference member(s) responsible for failure to meet this requirement shall be declared ineligible for the Conference championship in softball for the year in which the infraction occurs. No Conference game shall be scheduled after the Saturday preceding the regional playoffs.
- 2.5 Each member school will play six games against each other member of the Conference. Four games will be played at the home field of one team and two games will be played at the other site. Starting times will be determined by the host institution. (Revised 05/04; 10/04; 11/08; 10/09).
- 2.6 Make-up policy (Revised 05/04; 11/08)
 - a) The intent of the GNAC softball rainout policy is that all games affecting the GNAC championship and the awarding of the automatic berth or an at-large berth for the NCAA Championships shall be played if possible.
 - b) If a series is postponed prior to the visiting team traveling:
 - (1) The entire series may be moved to the next available Monday or Tuesday, or
 - (2) If in the first round, sites for the first and second round may be flip-flopped
 - (3) If in the second round, the site may be switched. If this causes a team to travel twice to the same site, the non-traveling team will pay reasonable travel expenses to the team traveling for the second time.
 - c) When the distance between competing schools is less than 250 miles and overnight travel is not required, all conference games postponed shall be rescheduled at the same location the games were originally scheduled at unless the participating schools mutually agree to a different location. When the distance between schools is more than 250 miles, the games shall be rescheduled if the visiting team has not traveled. If the visiting team has traveled, the games shall be rescheduled under the following guidelines:
 - (1) If the postponed games were scheduled in the first half of the home-and-home series, up to six games may be played during the second half of the home-and-home schedule at the opposite site either over two (two tripleheaders) or three days (three doubleheaders) **OR** if the visiting team has another conference game

scheduled in the same general vicinity, the games may be rescheduled at the original site on that trip (**Example** – Two of Northwest Nazarene's scheduled games at Saint Martin's in the first half are rained out. Six games may be played in the second half at NNU. Two of NNU's games at Saint Martin's in the second half are rained out. NNU is scheduled to play at Western Oregon later in the year. The postponed games may be rescheduled for that trip).

- (2) In case of a rainout, the visiting team has the obligation to stay a reasonable length of time to play on the next day unless the visiting or home team is unable to play the next day because of religious reasons. Rescheduling a conference game will have priority over a previously scheduled non-conference game.
 - (3) If the postponed games were scheduled in the second half of the home-and-home series and no subsequent trip is planned for that general vicinity, the games will not be rescheduled unless one of the teams involved is in contention for the conference championship or an at-large berth as determined by the conference office. In that case, the games shall be rescheduled. The games may be rescheduled for the original site or if both teams agree, the games may be rescheduled at a neutral site. If the games are rescheduled for the original site, the travel and hotel expenses for the visiting team will be split evenly between the two participating schools.
- c) If a team in contention for the conference title and automatic berth is unable to complete their entire conference schedule because of rained out games on the final weekend of the season, and that team finishes with the same number of losses as another conference team, they shall be considered tied as far as the NCAA automatic berth is concerned and the tiebreaker criteria will then be employed. In employing the tiebreaking criteria, a team will not be penalized for its inability to complete its entire schedule because of a rain out. **Examples** – If Team A finishes with a record of 30-10 and Team B has two games rained out on the final weekend and finishes with a record of 28-10, they shall be considered tied in determining the automatic berth. In applying the tiebreaker criteria, if Team A has a 8-0 record (or 7-1) against Team C and Team B has a 6-0 record (or 5-1) against Team C, they shall still be tied.

Section 3. NCAA REGIONAL TOURNAMENT REPRESENTATION

- 3.1 The Conference Champion will be the team with the best won-loss percentage in the assigned conference schedule.
- 3.2 If there is a tie for the Conference Championship, the tie-break procedure in Bylaw 1.5.3.1 (reprinted below) will determine the team which will receive the GNAC's automatic berth in the NCAA regional playoffs. The teams tied, however, will still be declared co-champions.

Tie-Break. In the event of a tie for the championship, the GNAC representative to postseason play shall be determined as follows:

- d) The best won/loss record in all GNAC counting conference games played between the tied teams over the past regular season;
- e) The best won/loss record in all games, including non-conference games, played between the tied teams over the past regular season;
- f) The best won/loss record of the tied teams against the next place finisher(s);
- g) If still tied, then teams will be compared to the next place finisher(s), and so on until a representative is determined;

- h) If still tied, the representative will be the institution with the highest NCAA regional ranking.

Section 4. CONDUCT OF PARTICIPANTS – (See Bylaw Article 10, Section 1)

Section 5. PLAYING RULES

- 5.1 In conference games, the pre-game procedure shall follow the NCAA Softball Rules.
- 5.2 The eight-run rule after five innings (or 4 1/2 if the home team is ahead) shall apply to all conference games. The NCAA halted game rule shall be used in all conference games.
- 5.3 The International Tie-Breaker rule shall be used beginning with the top of the 10th inning in all conference games.
- 5.4 The host team shall be the "designated home team" for all games of a series. When teams play additional games at one site because of rainouts, the visiting team will be designated as the home team for any games originally scheduled for its home field.
- 5.5 The time between games of a doubleheader shall be a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 30. If a tripleheader is played, the interval between games shall be a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 30 minutes as determined by home management.

Section 6. OFFICIALS

- 6.1 Two umpires will be assigned to all Conference games. (Revised 11/08; 5/09)
- 6.2 All umpires shall be ASA or CSA certified utilizing NCAA Softball Rules.
- 6.3 If a game has been rained out and umpires have traveled to the site of the game, umpires shall be paid for one game only plus their appropriate travel fee (if it applies). If the second game of the scheduled doubleheader has begun, umpires will also be paid for the second game. (New Section 11/08)

Section 7. EQUIPMENT

- 7.1 The official ball used for all conference games shall be the ball approved by the NCAA for regional and national championship play. (Revised 5/05).

Section 8. GAME MANAGEMENT/CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION

- 8.1 The host team will provide adequate equipment and supplies at the game site, including the following:
 - 8.1.1. Game Balls
 - 8.1.2. Drinking water and cups
 - 8.1.3. Restroom facilities
 - 8.1.4. Towels (if pre-arranged)
- 8.2 The host team shall provide a trainer at least one and one-half hour prior to game time either at the game site or in the training room. A trainer must be in attendance during, between and for a reasonable time period following the games (s).
- 8.3 The host team shall provide a well-trained and knowledgeable official scorer for each contest. The official scorer shall be the final authority for all scoring decisions made during the course of the game. Under no circumstances shall the official scorer be permitted to keep score in either the host or visiting team's dugout.

- 8.4 The host team shall allow the visiting team a maximum of eight minutes pre-game warm-up on the playing field. The visiting team will be notified of their pre-game warm-up time and ground rules/facility rules upon arrival.
- 8.5 Pre-game information, including parking, appropriate entry into the facility, practice times, etc. shall be communicated in writing to the coach and any appropriate administrators of the visiting team prior to the game.

Section 9. CONFERENCE CHAMPION

- 9.1 The conference champion will be the team with the best winning percentage in the assigned conference schedule. In case of a tie, co-champions will be declared.

Section 10. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 10.1 All Conference schools are required to use StatCrew software.
- 10.2 The StatCrew game file shall be e-mailed to the Visiting team sports information director and to the GNAC Conference office as soon as possible at the conclusion of the game. If requested, a box score and play-by-play should also be faxed to the Visiting team SID and/or head coach.
- 10.3 Per NCAA guidelines, statistics from games played against junior colleges, club teams and teams from foreign countries may not be counted when reporting statistics to the NCAA and the GNAC. The lone exception is games against Canadian schools may be counted if the Canadian institution plays at least 50 percent of its contests against U.S. four-year institutions.

Section 11. VIDEO EXCHANGE AND SCOUTING REPORT POLICY

- 11.1 No in-person scouting is allowed, (Revised 5/09)

Section 12. ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

- 12.1 For guidelines in selection of All-Conference team, see Bylaws, Article 9.1
- 12.1. For guidelines in selection of Academic All-Conference team, see Bylaws, Article 9.2.
- 12.2. For guidelines in selection of Conference Coach of the Year, see Bylaws, Article 9.3
- 12.3. A Player-of-the-Year, a Pitcher-of-the-Year, a Newcomer-of-the-Year and a Freshman-of-the-Year shall be selected. See Bylaws, Article 9.4
- 12.4. A Player-of-the-Week and Pitcher-of-the-Week shall be selected. See Bylaws, Article 9.5

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