

Division: I

Proposal Number: 2026-27

Title: PLAYING AND PRACTICE SEASONS -- MEN'S SOCCER -- REDISTRIBUTION OF MEN'S SOCCER PLAYING SEASON MODEL

Status: In Progress

Intent: To amend the men's soccer playing and practice season, as specified.

Category: Amendment

Bylaws: Amend 17, as follows:

17 Playing and Practice Seasons

[17.01 through 17.02 unchanged.]

17.1 General Playing-Season Regulations.

[17.1.1 through 17.1.6 unchanged.]

17.1.7 Time Limits for Athletically Related Activities. In all sports, the following time limitations shall apply:

[17.1.7.1 through 17.1.7.2 unchanged.]

17.1.7.3 Computation and Recording of Hour Limitations.

[17.1.7.3.1 through 17.1.7.3.4 unchanged.]

17.1.7.3.5 Preseason Practice. Daily and weekly hour limitations do not apply to countable athletically related activities occurring during preseason practice prior to the first day of classes or the first scheduled contest, whichever is earlier.

[17.1.7.3.5.1 unchanged.]

17.1.7.3.5.2 Exception -- Men's Soccer. In men's soccer, all activities that occur during the transition period and preseason shall be conducted pursuant to Bylaw 17.22.2.

[17.1.7.3.5.2 through 17.1.7.3.5.3 renumbered as 17.1.7.3.5.3 through 17.1.7.3.5.4, unchanged.]

[17.1.7.3.6 through 17.1.7.3.8 unchanged.]

17.1.7.4 Required Day Off -- Playing Season. During the playing season, all countable athletically related activities (per Bylaw 17.02.1) shall be prohibited during one calendar day per week, except during participation in one conference and postseason championship and any postseason bowl games, National Invitation Tournament, or Women's Basketball Invitation Tournament, and during participation in NCAA championships.

[17.1.7.4.1 through 17.1.7.4.2 unchanged.]

17.1.7.4.3 Preseason Practice -- Sports Other Than Football **and Men's Soccer**. In sports other than football **and men's soccer**, an institution is not required to provide student-athletes with one day off per week during preseason practice that occurs prior to the first day of classes, or the first scheduled contest, whichever is earlier.

[17.1.7.4.4 unchanged.]

17.1.7.4.5 Preseason Practice -- Men's Soccer. In men's soccer, between the start of preseason practice and the first scheduled regular-season intercollegiate contest, all countable athletically related activities per Bylaw 17.02.1 shall be prohibited during one calendar day per week.

[17.1.7.4.5 through 17.1.7.4.8 renumbered as 17.1.7.4.6 through 17.1.7.4.9, unchanged.]

[17.1.7.5 through 17.1.7.8 unchanged.]

17.1.7.9 Additional Required Days Off. An institution shall provide a student-athlete with 14 additional days off during the playing season (including vacation periods during the season) or outside the playing and practice season during a regular academic term when classes are in session. Required athletically related activities are prohibited on such days. However, a student-athlete may participate in voluntary activities. The seven-day discretionary period (see Bylaw 17.1.7.12.7) at the conclusion of the championship segment does not count toward this requirement. Health and medical activities (e.g., medical evaluations or treatment for prevention and/or rehabilitation of injuries) or activities that are academically related (e.g., meetings with academic advisor, tutoring sessions) are permitted during the days off.

[17.1.7.9.1 through 17.1.7.9.3 unchanged.]

[17.1.7.10 through 17.1.7.11 unchanged.]

17.1.7.12 Additional Required Days Off -- Men's Soccer. In men's soccer, an institution shall provide student-athletes with five additional days off during the playing season. Required athletically related activities are prohibited on such days.

17.1.7.~~12~~**13** Additional Restrictions.

17.1.7.~~12~~**13.1** No Class Time Missed in Conjunction with Nonchampionship Segment Competition -- Baseball, Field Hockey, Lacrosse, **Women's** Soccer, Softball and Volleyball. In baseball, field hockey, lacrosse, **women's** soccer, softball and volleyball, no class time shall be missed in conjunction with nonchampionship segment competition, including activities associated with such competition (e.g., travel and other pregame or postgame activities).

[17.1.7.12.1.1 through 17.1.7.12.1.2 renumbered as 17.1.7.13.1.1 through 17.1.7.13.1.2, unchanged.]

[17.1.7.12.2 through 17.1.7.12.8 renumbered as 17.1.7.13.2 through 17.1.7.13.8, unchanged.]

[17.1.7.13 renumbered as 17.1.7.14, unchanged.]

[17.1.8 through 17.1.9 unchanged.]

[17.2 through 17.21 unchanged.]

17.22 Soccer. Regulations for computing the soccer playing season are set forth in Bylaw 17.1. (See Figure 17-1 and Figure 17-2.)

17.22.1 Length of Playing Season. *The length of an institution's playing season in soccer shall be limited to a 132-day season, which may consist of two segments (each consisting of consecutive days) and which may exclude only required off days (see Bylaws 17.1.7.4, 17.1.7.6 and 17.1.7.7) and official vacation, holiday and final-examination periods during which no practice or competition shall occur. A transition period (see Bylaw 17.22.2) shall not count toward the 132-day season.*

(a) Men. The length of an institution's playing season in men's soccer shall be limited to a 132-day season, consisting of a fall and spring segment (each segment consisting of consecutive days) and which may exclude only required off days (see Bylaws 17.1.7.4, 17.1.7.4.5, 17.1.7.6 and 17.1.7.7) and official vacation, holiday and final-examination periods during which no practice or competition shall occur. A transition period (see Bylaw 17.22.2) shall not count toward the 132-day season.

(b) Women. The length of an institution's playing season in women's soccer shall be limited to a 132-day season, which may consist of two segments (each consisting of consecutive days) and which may exclude only required off days (see Bylaws 17.1.7.4, 17.1.7.6 and 17.1.7.7) and official vacation, holiday and final-examination periods during which no practice or competition shall occur. A transition period (see Bylaw 17.22.3) shall not count toward the 132-day season.

17.22.2 Transition Period -- Men. In men's soccer, outside of the playing season and prior to the institution's first day of classes of the applicable term, an institution may commence transition period practice sessions beginning seven calendar days prior to the first permissible preseason practice date for the applicable segment. A transition period shall be conducted as follows:

(a) A student-athlete's participation in countable athletically related activities per Bylaw 17.02.1 shall be limited to a maximum of eight hours per week with not more than four hours per week spent on skill-related instruction;

(b) All countable athletically related activities per Bylaw 17.02.1 shall be prohibited during two calendar days per week; and

(c) An institution shall not play a contest or engage in a date of competition with outside competition (game or exhibition).

[17.22.2 renumbered as 17.22.3, unchanged.]

17.22.34 Preseason Practice -- Men. In men's soccer, an institution shall not commence practice sessions prior to 16 calendar days before ~~the first scheduled regular-season intercollegiate contest (not a scrimmage, exhibition game or alumni contest that may occur before the first scheduled regular-season contest);~~

(a) Fall Segment. The 13th Thursday prior to Thanksgiving Day.

(b) Spring Segment. The Friday of the 11th weekend before the first round the NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Championship.

[17.22.4 renumbered as 17.22.5, unchanged.]

17.22.56 First Contest or Date of Competition -- Men. An institution shall not play its first regular-season contest or engage in its first date of competition (game) with outside competition before ~~the Thursday before the 12th weekend before the start of the NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Championship (see Figure 17-2), except that an alumni contest may be played the previous weekend;~~

(a) Fall Segment. The 11th Thursday prior to Thanksgiving Day (see Figure 17-2).

(b) Spring Segment. The Friday before the 9th weekend before the first round of the NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Championship.

17.22.56.1 Exception -- Scrimmages/Exhibition Games. In men's soccer, an institution may play up to ~~three~~ **five** soccer scrimmages or exhibition games (which shall not count toward the institution's won-lost record) **per academic year (both segments combined). The scrimmages or exhibition games must be played after the first practice and** prior to the first scheduled regular-season contest ~~during a particular academic year of the applicable segment, provided such~~ **Such** scrimmages or exhibition games ~~are conducted during the institution's declared playing season per Bylaw 17.22.1 and~~ are counted against the maximum number of contests (see Bylaw 17.22.8.1). Contests that would otherwise be exempted from the maximum number of contests per Bylaw 17.22.8.3 shall count against the maximum if they are played ~~during the preseason practice period~~ prior to the date specified for the first permissible regular-season contest **of the applicable segment.**

[17.22.6 renumbered as 17.22.7, unchanged.]

17.22.78 End of Regular Playing Season. ~~A member institution shall conclude all practice and competition (games and scrimmages) in soccer by the last date of final exams for the regular academic year at the institution.~~

(a) Men. An institution shall conclude all practice and competition (games and scrimmages) by:

(1) Fall Segment. The Saturday immediately preceding Thanksgiving Day.

(2) Spring Segment. The conclusion of the NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Championship game.

(b) Women. An institution shall conclude all practice and competition (games and scrimmages) in soccer by the last date of final exams for the regular academic year at the institution.

17.22.89 Number of Contests and Dates of Competition.

17.22.9.1 Minimum Number of Contests -- Institutional -- Men. In men's soccer, an institution shall schedule at least the following minimum number of intercollegiate contests:

(a) Fall Segment. Eight regular-season contests.

(b) Spring Segment. Three regular-season contests.

~~17.22.89.12~~ Maximum Limitations -- Institutional. *A member institution shall limit its total playing schedule with outside competition in soccer during the institution's soccer playing season in any one year to 20 contests during the segment in which the NCAA championship is conducted and five dates of competition during another segment, except for those contests and/or dates of competition excluded under Bylaws 17.22.8.3 and 17.22.8.4. Travel to competition in the nonchampionship segment shall be restricted to ground transportation, unless there are no Division I institutions that sponsor the sport located within 400 miles of the institution.*

(a) Men. An institution shall limit its total playing schedule with outside competition in men's soccer during the institution's playing season in any one year to 20 contests and five scrimmages or exhibitions, except for those contests and/or dates of competition excluded under Bylaws 17.22.8.3 and 17.22.8.4, which may include:

(1) Fall Segment. A maximum of 18 contests that may be played during the fall segment, except for those contests excluded under Bylaws 17.22.8.3 and 17.22.8.4.

(2) Spring Segment. A maximum of 10 contests that may be played during the spring segment, except for those contests excluded under Bylaws 17.22.8.3 and 17.22.8.4.

(b) Women. An institution shall limit its total playing schedule with outside competition in women's soccer during the institution's soccer playing season in any one year to 20 contests during the segment in which the NCAA championship is conducted and five dates of competition during another segment, except for those contests and/or dates of competition excluded under Bylaws 17.22.8.3 and 17.22.8.4. Travel to competition in the nonchampionship segment shall be restricted to ground transportation, unless there are no Division I institutions that sponsor the sport located within 400 miles of the institution.

~~17.22.89.12.1~~ Exception -- Isolated Institution -- **Women.** ~~If~~ **In women's soccer, if** there are fewer than five other Division I institutions that sponsor soccer (for the applicable gender) located within 400 miles of the institution, the institution may use any form of transportation to travel to the number of nonchampionship segment competitions that represents the difference between the number of other institutions and five.

~~17.22.89.12.2~~ Hawaii or Alaska Exception -- Nonchampionship Segment Travel -- **Women.** ~~Once~~ **In women's soccer, once** every four years, an institution may use any form of transportation for travel to Hawaii or Alaska for nonchampionship segment competition against an active member institution located in Hawaii or Alaska.

~~17.22.89.12.3~~ In-Season Foreign Competition. A member institution may play one or more of its countable contests in soccer in one or more foreign countries on one trip during the prescribed playing season. However, except for contests played in Canada and Mexico or on a certified foreign tour (see Bylaw 17.35), the institution may not engage in such in-season foreign competition more than once every four years.

~~17.22.89.23~~ Maximum Limitations -- Student-Athlete. *An individual student-athlete may participate in each academic year in not more than 20 soccer contests during the segment in which the NCAA championship is conducted and five dates of competition in soccer during another segment. This limitation includes those contests in which the student represents the institution in accordance with Bylaw 17.02.12, including competition as a member of the varsity, junior varsity or freshman team of the institution.*

(a) Men. An individual student-athlete may participate in each academic year in not more than 20 men's soccer contests and five scrimmages or exhibitions which include not more than 18 contests during the fall segment and not more than 10 contests during the spring segment. This limitation includes those contests in which the student represents the institution in accordance with Bylaw 17.02.12, including competition as a member of the varsity, junior varsity or freshman team of the institution.

(b) Women. An individual student-athlete may participate in each academic year in not more than 20 soccer contests during the segment in which the NCAA championship is conducted and five dates of competition in soccer during another segment. This limitation includes those contests in

which the student represents the institution in accordance with Bylaw 17.02.12, including competition as a member of the varsity, junior varsity or freshman team of the institution.

[17.22.8.3 through 17.22.8.4 renumbered as 17.22.9.4 through 17.22.9.5, unchanged.]

[17.22.9 through 17.22.11 renumbered as 17.22.10 through 17.22.12, unchanged.]

[17.23 through 17.34 unchanged.]

Source: NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Oversight Committee

Effective Date: August 1, 2027

Topical Area: Playing and Practice Seasons

Rationale: The current season no longer reflects modern expectations for student-athlete well-being, development, or fan engagement. This proposal intends to support student-athlete health, performance, academic balance, long-term development and reduce midyear transfers. Further, this proposal emphasizes the opportunity for redistribution of existing resources, rather than expansion. The proposal does not increase the number of days counting toward the 132-day playing season or increase the maximum number of contests.

Estimated Budget Impact: Varies.

Impact on Student-Athlete's Time (Academic and/or Athletics): Varies.

History:

Apr 1, 2026	In Progress	
May 11, 2026	In Progress	The Men's Soccer Oversight Committee amended the proposal to eliminate the restriction on the number scrimmages or exhibition games that may be played in the fall and spring segments and permit an institution to participate in up to five scrimmages or exhibition games, which may occur during the fall or spring segments or both (five total each academic year). The committee also amended the proposal to remove the restriction that additional required days off must be consecutive with two taken in the fall and three taken in the spring. As amended, the proposal permits the five additional required days off to be taken at any time during the playing season.
May 11, 2026	In Progress	Adopted by the Men's Soccer Oversight Committee pending review by the Division I Cabinet.

Legislative References

Legislative Cite	Title
17	Playing and Practice Seasons
17.1	General Playing-Season Regulations.
17.1.7	Time Limits for Athletically Related Activities.
17.1.7.3	Computation and Recording of Hour Limitations.
17.1.7.3.5	Preseason Practice.

Legislative Cite	Title
17.1.7.4	Required Day Off -- Playing Season.
17.1.7.4.3	Preseason Practice -- Sports Other Than Football.
17.1.7.9	Additional Required Days Off.
17.1.7.12	Additional Restrictions.
17.1.7.12.1	No Class Time Missed in Conjunction with Nonchampionship Segment Competition -- Baseball, Field Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball.
17.22	Soccer.
17.22.1	Length of Playing Season.
17.22.3	Preseason Practice -- Men.
17.22.5	First Contest or Date of Competition -- Men.
17.22.5.1	Exception -- Scrimmages/Exhibition Games.
17.22.7	End of Regular Playing Season.
17.22.8	Number of Contests and Dates of Competition.
17.22.8.1	Maximum Limitations -- Institutional.
17.22.8.1.1	Exception -- Isolated Institution.
17.22.8.1.2	Hawaii or Alaska Exception -- Nonchampionship Segment Travel.
17.22.8.1.3	In-Season Foreign Competition.
17.22.8.2	Maximum Limitations -- Student-Athlete.

Student-Athlete Success/Well-Being: A redistributed and decompressed season spanning consecutive semesters would meaningfully reduce time demands during any single academic term, resulting in fewer midweek contests and less missed class time.

Enforceable and Merits Outweigh Monitoring Burdens: Yes. The proposed enhancements to student-athlete well-being outweigh monitoring or compliance burdens.

Consequential or Nationally Significant: Yes. Playing and practice season legislation is nationally significant.

Division I Commitment: The Commitment to Student-Athlete Well-Being.
