

**MINUTES OF THE
NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION
DIVISION III CAUCUS**

**December 7-8, 2017
Bally's Las Vegas**

The meeting was brought to order by NFCA Division III Board Representative Diana Pepin (Eastern Connecticut State) at 8:30 a.m. PT.

1. Introduction of new NFCA Division III Board rep Renae Hartl (Luther)
 - a. Her term begins Jan. 1, 2018.
2. First-time attendees
 - a. Stand and introduce yourselves.
3. Hall of Fame coaches
 - a. Stand and be recognized.
4. Congratulations to NCAA finalists
 - a. National champion Virginia Wesleyan (head coach Brandon Elliott)
 - b. Runner-up St. John Fisher (head coach Bari Mance)
5. Bylaws Voting
 - a. Video presentation by NFCA Executive Director Carol Bruggeman about proposed changes to NFCA bylaws.
 - b. Paper vote "yes" or "no" on proposal.
6. Committee Reports
 - a. Top 25 (chair George Wares (Central))
 - i. If you feel your team should be considered for Top 25 and isn't currently, you need to contact your regional rep or Dave Hines, the NFCA's Division III liaison, to make sure you are in the mix.
 - ii. The NFCA poll is a publicity poll, and not connected to NCAA selection, though the teams are often similar.
 - b. All-America (chair Brandon Elliott (Virginia Wesleyan))
 - i. Nominate AND vote to keep players eligible for All-America consideration throughout that process.
 - ii. Returning All-Americans go on the Schutt Sports/NFCA Player of the Year Top 50 watchlist (which will be released in preseason, by Feb. 1).
 1. Eventual winner does not have to be on the first list released.
 - c. Hall of Fame (Division III member Deb Pallozzi (Ithaca))
 - i. Nominations due Nov. 1 for next induction class.
 - ii. Everything is online now, so nominate (and have the ability to go back and edit) up until deadline.
 - iii. Committee has officially added a good-character component for candidates/current Hall of Fame members.

- iv. She is coming off the committee, so express your interest (committee interest form at NFCA.org) if you want to be on this committee.
- d. NCAA Rules (member Julie Lenhart, Cortland)
 - i. A reminder that the committee doesn't make the rules itself. The committee uses the survey all coaches are sent to determine what rules people want to see enacted.
 - ii. Make sure you are voting. It matters to have a voice.
 - iii. She is coming off the committee in September, so express an interest to the NCAA if you want to be considered for this group.
- 7. NCAA Championships (see attached supplement for more details)
 - a. Jan Gentry, NCAA Associate Director of Championships
 - i. Central and Northeast reps on Division III Softball Championship Committee will be rotating off on Sept. 1, 2018.
 - 1. Self-nominate for those spots, if interested, at NCAA.org
 - ii. Travel party size moving back to 25 (squad size is not increasing, though).
 - iii. Coaches are interested in having more players able to dress with increase in party size, but fear is that administrators will take those spots instead of players.
 - iv. Per diem increase (and that will go up to \$100 in near future).
 - v. Host per diem reintroduced.
 - vi. Reasons Division III went away from eight-team regionals:
 - 1. Fewer bids.
 - 2. Tough to have seven teams try to find hotels when timing is often same as graduations in a college town.
 - 3. More teams get to host with smaller regionals and also super regional round.
 - 4. Weather could create havoc in small timeframe.
 - 5. Less missed class time.
 - 6. Better ability to separate conference teams.
 - 7. Straw poll: Most in room favored current regional/super regional format.
- 8. NCAA Legislation
 - a. Mo Harty, NCAA Associate Director, Academic & Membership Affairs
 - i. Proposals
 - 1. Academic misconduct penalties.
 - 2. Sports wagering penalties.
 - 3. SAAC structure
 - a. One rep for each conference.
 - b. SAAC opposes, because it feels 40+ reps are too many members.
 - 4. Graduate transfers
 - a. Allow a student-athlete that has completed degree at a school to transfer to only another

Division III school, so long as they have eligibility left.

b. Proposal has NCAA Management Council support

c. Support has been a 50/50 break overall.

Basically, the 50 percent against do not offer graduate courses at their institution.

5. Exhibitions

a. Allow two exhibitions, plus an alumni game.

ii. Legislation tips

1. There has to be two conferences to propose legislation.

2. Propose penalties for poor transfer ethics by coaches.

3. Extending the non-traditional season, say, another week, due to inclement weather is a Division I proposal that might be a good idea for Division III, too.

4. Swimming/diving and track/field passed (last year) to allow individual practice timetables for student-athletes.

a. They still have to have a day off, but it can be different for individuals (i.e. pitchers and infielders on different schedules).

b. You may lose days off for coaches and support staff if you are giving different days off for players.

5. Deadline for proposals is July 1 for voting in January 2019.

b. Caucus group overwhelmingly in favor of some sort of legislation for non-traditional season to change current 16 practices, one play date and 21 innings.

c. Division III recruiting calendar?

i. Consisting of a dead period (no contact, including camps and clinics) around the holidays.

ii. It's a work-life balance issue for those in favor.

iii. Others suggested the dead period would take away income opportunities for those that rely on camps, clinics and private lessons to make financial ends meet.

iv. Could instead do a "quiet" period, allowing on-campus camps only.

9. Spring Break trips

a. Housing requirements can be astronomical.

b. It was suggested that the NFCA take over (or help regulate) spring tournaments.

10. NFCA Leadoff Classic

a. March 2-4, 2018, in Tucson, Ariz.

b. 32-team tournament (up from usual 24 teams, due to great interest).

c. 31 of teams played in their conference tournament in 2017.

d. 20 qualified for NCAAs.

- e. Eight reached NCAA Super Regionals.
- f. Five advanced to NCAA Championship, including national champ Virginia Wesleyan and runner-up St. John Fisher.

11. Regional breakout session led by Division III HCC reps

- a. Discuss hot topics and discover others within region
 - i. Fall ball and its current structure
 - 1. Positives/negatives.
 - 2. Changes we'd like to see.
 - ii. Transfers within and to schools outside Division III
 - iii. Who is interested in return to eight-team regionals?
- b. Regional findings:
 - i. Atlantic
 - 1. Did not have strong feeling toward transfers.
 - 2. Favor keeping current regional/super regional format.
 - 3. Favor moving to two competition dates in fall.
 - a. Use 16 days in fall, but up to you how you use them.
 - ii. Central
 - 1. Two conferences have a no-transfer rule (making student-athletes sit out a year), though they haven't seen it happen.
 - 2. Favor keeping current regional/super regional format.
 - 3. Favor two play days in fall, more than 21 innings, perhaps four games.
 - 4. Favor 20 people in uniform for NCAAs. Realize it is a monetary issue.
 - 5. Basketball can change roster names game-to-game for NCAAs and they would like similar flexibility.
 - iii. East
 - 1. Favor keeping three games on one day during fall, as cost is a concern when adding second competition day.
 - 2. Favor keeping current regional/super regional format, as previous format created more stress on support staff and concerns if weather is bad during that timeframe.
 - iv. Great Lakes
 - 1. Favor two play days, more innings.
 - 2. Favor 16 days per student-athlete, rather than 16 days per team, to allow more flexibility.
 - 3. Favor keeping current regional/super regional format.
 - 4. Favor dead period for Division III (in unison with Division I and Division II).
 - v. Midwest
 - 1. Transfers have not been an issue in their region. If student-athletes are paying \$50K for school, they should be able to play wherever they want, they feel.

2. Favor four-team regionals. It has worked out well for region teams.
 3. Favor 28 innings over two days in fall.
 4. Favor two hours a week with student-athletes October-January to address added risk of safety with players working out on their own.
 5. Dead period during holidays?
- vi. New England
1. NESCAC does not have a fall season, and they have been very successful.
 2. If NCAA does ever go back to an eight-team regional format, it is important to not lose that extra week of the season. Also, host schools need to bid, if larger regional format is going to work.
 - a. Kris Herman (Williams) noted that an eight-team regional format would give more student-athletes another week to play in the spring.
 3. Keep an eye on transfers.
 4. How to get players into umpiring to combat shortage in that profession? Can we help facilitate that?
 5. Split season into fall and spring segments?
- vii. Northeast
1. Agree with non-traditional season suggestions.
 2. Haven't had major issues with transfers.
 3. Suggest creating NFCA All-Region teams that are proportionate to the number of teams in that region (suggested adding three more at-large first team spots to allow more players to go forward for All-America consideration).
- viii. West
1. Favor splitting dates (two play dates and hours allowed/week).
 2. Typically better grades in the spring, as interest of student-athletes is better kept when they are playing.
 3. Hard to keep student-athletes as engaged in the fall.
 4. Not a lot of issues in the region with transfers.
 5. Favor keeping current regional/super regional format.
 6. NCAA squad size: Give more student-athletes an opportunity to dress.

12. Adjournment. The caucus (completion of first day) was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. PT.

13. Friday continuation: How scheduling affects NCAA tourney chances (see attached supplement for more details)

a. Led by Ms. Gentry and Ms. Pepin

i. Panel included Mr. Wares, Ms. Herman, Ms. Pallozzi, Kim Wilson (Rowan) and Mike Reed (Texas-Tyler)

1. Scheduling

- a. "There is a misconception that strength of schedule is the priority criteria for selection. There is not a priority order. It is not the be-all, end-all. Strength of schedule is important (though)." — Ms. Gentry
- b. "I don't like to play teams that are in a conference where they are going to finish seventh." — Mr. Wares
- c. "The league definitely matters. Someone over .500 and local so we don't have to travel too much." — Ms. Wilson
- d. "You have to minimize missed class time, so try to play the hardest teams you can (including on your spring trip), without missing too much class time. We got better as a team playing teams that were farther into their season (than us at that point)." — Ms. Herman
- e. "I want to put people on our schedule that beat us the previous season. Ask to play teams at spring tournaments that are good. Maybe coordinate with schools you want on your schedule and then call tournament schedulers." — Ms. Pallozzi
- f. "Take time to understand what the columns being considered (for NCAA selection) are. Look at schedules, especially returners to make sure a good team (now) won't be a bad team when you play them." — Mr. Reed
- g. If you have a chance to serve on an NCAA Regional Advisory Committee, do it.

2. Conference Tournaments

- a. NESCAC and Iowa Conference are now single-elimination events, so one loss in conference tournament, rather than two, could help a team on the NCAA bubble get in potentially.
- ii. Organizers of spring break tournaments were in attendance to hear concerns and preferences of Division III coaches for those events.
1. "There's more control with scheduling than you think. We start scheduling teams in May. Register early. Schedule housing when you register. When you change your travel, understand it affects 10 other teams. If you want to play a team, but that team doesn't want to play you, we won't force the teams to play each other." — Alison Strange, PFX Spring Games (Clermont, Fla.)

2. “You always get a say in who you play. We ask you your hopes and dreams with your schedule and try to accommodate them.” — Kandice Tiggas, Tucson Invitational Games (Tucson, Ariz.)
3. “Our goal is to provide 6-8 teams on your ‘want-to-play’ list. Some teams give us a list of 10 teams and ‘I don’t want to play anyone else.’ We will work with you.” — Trina Spiniello, Diamond 9 Events (Kissimmee, Fla.)

14. Adjournment. The caucus (completion of second day’s continuation) was adjourned at 8:45 a.m. PT.

NCAA DIVISION III SOFTBALL COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

DECEMBER 2017

This annual report is provided by the NCAA Division III Softball Committee to outline key actions taken by the softball committee and the Division III Championships Committee during the past year and to provide general information regarding the softball championship. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact a member of the softball committee or Jan Gentry, NCAA associate director of championships (jgentry@ncaa.org; 317-917-6626).

2017-18 Division III Softball Committee Members

<u>Region</u>	<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
Atlantic	Renee Hellert	Moravian College	610-861-1531	hellertr@moravian.edu
Central	Lindsay Eagan	Thomas More College	859-344-3628	eaganl@thomasmore.edu
East	Kim Wilson	Rowan University	609-221-0239	wilson@rowan.edu
Great Lakes	Kim Tatro	Lawrence University	920-832-6975	kimberly.n.tatro@lawrence.edu
Midwest	George Wares	Central College (Iowa)	641-628-5195	waresg@central.edu
New England	Diana Pepin	Eastern Connecticut State University	860-465-5182	pepind@easternct.edu
Northeast	Michelle Manning	Ithaca College	607-274-5708	mmanning@ithaca.edu
West	Janae Shirley	East Texas Baptist University	903-923-2240	jshirley@etbu.edu

Review of 2017 Championship

The 2017 NCAA Division III Softball Championship was a 62-team tournament. Teams competed at 16 regional sites (14 four-team sites and two three-team sites) and the regional winners advanced to eight super regional sites. The finals were held at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex, hosted by the University of Central Oklahoma and the Oklahoma City All-Sports Association. The national champion was Virginia Wesleyan University and the runner-up was St. John Fisher.

Key Dates for 2018 Championship

Selections: Sunday, May 6
 Regionals: May 11-13
 Super Regionals: May 18 & 19
 Championship: May 24-29 at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, hosted by the University of Central Oklahoma and the Oklahoma City All-Sports Association.

2018 Championship Field

The 2017 championship field will include 62 teams.
 Pool A: 42 Pool B: 1 Pool C: 19

2017-18 Sport Sponsorship

There are 410 institutions that sponsor Division III softball and are eligible for the championship.

Committee Nomination Process

- Two positions are open (Central and Northeast).
- One appointee must be an administrator.
- Presidents' Athletic Conference and Liberty League are not eligible.
- Self nominations accepted; posted deadline was **Dec. 1 but nominations are still being accepted.**
- <https://web1.ncaa.org/committees/loginPage>

Future Championship Dates

<u>Year</u>	<u>Selections</u>	<u>Regls</u>	<u>Super Regls</u>	<u>Champ</u>
2019	May 5	May 10-12	May 17 & 18	May 23-28
2020	May 3	May 8-10	May 15 & 16	May 21-26

Future Championship Sites

2019: Tyler, Texas (The University of Texas at Tyler)
 2020: Tyler, Texas (The University of Texas at Tyler)
 2021: Salem, Virginia (Moyer Sports Complex)
 2022: Salem, Virginia (Moyer Sports Complex)

Division III Championships Committee Actions (effective 2017-18)

- Official travel party size increased to 25 (from 22). Squad size remains at 20 and bench size remains at 30.
- Per diem increased to \$95 (from \$90).
- Host per diem reintroduced at \$30.
- Ground transportation expenses will be paid for teams that fly to the championship.
- Fees for Division III officials increased 12 percent.
- Nonconference strength of schedule added to selection criteria as secondary criterion.
- Results versus ranked opponents to include teams in final ranking and preceding ranking.
- Seeding for eight teams at final site confirmed after teams advance from super regionals.
- Hosts of preliminary-round competition at nonpredetermined sites do not receive an honorarium.

2018 Softball Committee Annual Meeting

The softball committee will meet **June 18-20, 2018** in Indianapolis. If you have issues that you would like the committee to discuss, please forward them in writing to Jan Gentry at the NCAA office by **June 8**.

**2017 NFCA DIVISION III SOFTBALL CAUCUS
STRENGTH OF SCHEDULE DISCUSSION DOCUMENT**

Selection Criteria

The committee will first review the primary criteria, which emphasize Division III competition, and all criteria listed will be evaluated (not listed in priority order). If the evaluation of the primary criteria does not result in a decision, the committee will review the secondary criteria and all criteria listed will be evaluated (not listed in priority order). The secondary criteria introduce results against opponents from other classifications (i.e., NAIA, NCAA Divisions I and II).

PRIMARY CRITERIA – For ranking and selection (all contests leading up to the NCAA championships)

- Won-lost percentage against Division III opponents.
- Division III head-to-head competition.
- Results versus common Division III opponents.
- Results versus ranked Division III teams as established by the final ranking and the ranking preceding the final ranking.
- Division III strength of schedule.

- Conference postseason contests are included.
 - Contests versus provisional and reclassifying members in their third and fourth years shall count in the primary criteria. Provisional and reclassifying members shall remain ineligible for rankings and selections.

Strength of Schedule Calculation

The strength of schedule is made up of two factors: the opponents' winning percentage (OWP) and the opponents' opponents' winning percentage (OOWP).

Opponents' Winning Percentage. Take each opponent's won-lost record against other Division III teams (excluding the results against the team in question); add all wins and all losses to get the cumulative won-lost record that is used to determine the opponents' winning percentage.

To Calculate. Team A's schedule is as follows:

Opponent	Record	vs. Team A	Wins	Losses	
Team B	21-7	1-0	20	7	
Team C	14-11	0-1	14	10	
Team D	9-14	0-1	9	13	
Team E	8-17	0-1	8	16	
Team F	19-8	1-0	18	8	
Totals:			69	54	$69 \div (69 + 54) =$.561 (OWP)

Opponents' Winning Percentage (OOWP). The strength of each opponent's schedule is measured by taking all of their opponents' won-lost records and finding the winning percentage based on the total opponents' opponents' won-lost record. This recognizes the fact that two opponents with similar won-lost records may have played far different schedules (in terms of strength of opponents).

To Calculate. Using the total opponents' won-lost record for Teams B, C, D, E and F (Team A's opponents), perform the same calculation as the OWP.

	Opponents' Wins	Opponents' Losses	
Team B	35	75	
Team C	63	40	
Team D	55	55	
Team E	75	37	
Team F	44	60	
Totals:	272	267	$272 \div (272 + 267) =$.505 (OOWP)

It is important to note that the OOWP will support the OWP (i.e., if Teams A and C have the same OWP of .561; Team A has an OOWP of .505 and Team C has an OOWP of .456; it would indicate Team A has the stronger strength of schedule).

Strength of Schedule Calculation. To calculate the strength of schedule, add two-thirds of the OWP to one-third of the OOWP. Team A's strength of schedule calculation is as follows:

	Value	Weight	SOS Value
OWP	.561	.667	.374
OOWP	.505	.333	.168
Strength of Schedule			.542

Weighted Scale. Once the Opponents' Average Winning Percentage (OWP) and Opponents' Opponents' Average Winning Percentage (OOWP) are calculated, they are combined on a weighted scale (i.e., 2/3 OWP and 1/3 OOWP) to determine the strength of schedule.

SECONDARY CRITERIA – For ranking and selection

- Non-Division III won-lost percentage.
- Results versus common non-Division III opponents.
- Division III nonconference strength of schedule (**NEW in 2017-18**).

In-Region Competition

- Contests against Division III opponents within an institution's established sport region.
- Contests against Division III opponents within an institution's membership region (Constitution 4.13.1.1).
- Contests against Division III opponents within a 500-mile radius. The mileage calculator in the NCAA Travel Expense System (<https://web1.ncaa.org/TES/exec/TES/exec/miles>) will be used to confirm distance from campus to campus.
- Contests against conference opponents.
- Bylaw 31.3.2.3 Exception: For sports with a spring NCAA championship, an institution may exempt out-of-region contests conducted during one institutional vacation period (e.g., Spring Break).

Note: Contests against institutions in any year of the provisional or reclassifying process into Division III (within the same defined membership region) counts as in-region.