

Regulation 11

SOFTBALL

11.1 General Rules. Softball Conference competition shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of the NCAA, the Mountain West Handbook and the Mountain West Softball Game Management Handbook.

11.2 Format. The Conference regular-season champion shall be determined through a single round-robin schedule. *(Revised December 2010)*

11.3 Regular-Season Champion. The regular-season champion shall be the institution with the highest regular-season winning percentage in Conference competition. In the event of a tie, there shall be co-champions. *(Revised June 2008)*

11.4 Championship Tournament. A six-team, single into double elimination Conference tournament shall be held with the tournament champion representing the Conference as its automatic representative to the NCAA Division I Softball Championship. *(Revised June 2022)*

11.4.1 Minimum Number of Participants. Member institutions that sponsor the sport of softball shall take a minimum of nine (9) participants to the Conference Softball Championship. Institutions that do not meet the minimum number of participants requirement shall be assessed a fine of \$5,000 plus the costs associated with the team traveling to the Championship site. The Conference office shall determine the cost of traveling to the Championship site. If failure of the member institution to bring the minimum number of participants to the Conference Softball Championship results in a loss to the host institution, the fine shall be used to cover the expenses incurred by the host institution. If failure to bring the minimum number of participants to the Conference Softball Championship does not result in a loss to the host institution, the fine shall be included in the Conference championships budget. Waivers of the minimum number of participants rule may be granted by the Commissioner.

11.4.2 Cancellation of Championship. In the event the Conference championship cannot be started or, if started, cannot be completed, the Conference regular-season champion shall represent the Conference as the automatic representative to the NCAA Division I Softball Championship. Additional information and exceptions regarding the cancellation of the Championship can be found in the Mountain West Softball Championship Handbook. *(Revised October 2001)*

11.4.3 Championship Game Ball. The official game ball for all Championship contests shall be determined by the Conference.

11.4.4 Tournament Date. The Conference championship shall be held the Thursday – Saturday immediately preceding the day of selection for the NCAA Division I Softball Championship. *(Revised December 2010, February 2013, February 2014, April 2022)*

11.4.5 Tournament Seeding. Tournament Seeding shall be determined based on the final regular-season Conference results. Teams shall be seeded according to regular season winning percentage. Additional information regarding tournament seeding can be found in the Mountain West Softball Championship Handbook.

11.4.6 Pre-Championship Meeting. A pre-championship meeting shall be held prior to the start of the Championship. The head coaches of all participating institutions are required to participate in the meeting. A head coach who fails to participate in the mandatory pre-championship meeting shall have written notification sent to their director of athletics and institutional sport administrator. If a head coach provides the Conference office advanced notification of their absence from the meeting, the Commissioner (or designee) may approve of a substitute. Conference office staff and an institutional representative also shall participate in the conference call. (Adopted October 2006; Revised December 2010, February 2013, February 2014, May 2017)

11.5 Automatic Qualifier. The Conference tournament champion shall be the automatic representative to the NCAA Division I Softball Championship.

11.6 Playing Rules. All Conference softball contests shall be conducted according to NCAA Softball Rules, including rules adopted for NCAA tournament competition, except as modified by Conference regulations.

11.7 Scouting of Opponents. Scouting of a Conference opponent is prohibited. Coaches and/or administrators may attend contests versus a Conference opponent that involves a member of the coach's or administrator's immediate family provided no scouting activities take place. (*Revised July 2002, June 2008*)

11.8 Video/Scouting Report Exchange. A coach shall not send film, video or give a written or verbal scouting report on a Conference team to any institution outside the Conference.

11.8.1 Violations of Video/Scouting Report Exchange Policy. A member institution that exchanges video or scouting reports in the sport of softball with institutions outside the Conference shall be subject to the following:

- a. First Offense.** Private reprimand of the head coach and the individual who sent the video/report to the institution outside the Conference.
- b. Second Offense.** Written notice to the Conference of the second offense. A copy of the notice shall be kept in the personnel file of the individual in the office of the institution's director of athletics.
- c. Third Offense.** The Commissioner shall suspend the head coach for one contest. Such suspension shall occur immediately following receipt of notice by the Commissioner.

11.8 Competition Roster. Regulations for competition rosters are set forth in Regulation 1.14.

11.9 Time Between Contests. The time between contests of a doubleheader shall be a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 30 minutes. The host institution shall inform the umpires as to the time between contests.

11.10 Awards. The softball coaches shall select recipients for each Conference award. Coaches shall not vote for themselves or for their own student-athletes for any of the awards. Should a coach fail to complete the entire ballot, the student-athletes from that team shall not be eligible to receive

an award. Policies and procedures governing awards selection are outlined in the Mountain West Softball Game Management Handbook.

11.10.1 All-Conference Team. The All-Conference team shall consist of 30 student-athletes (15 first-team and 15 second-team members). Each student-athlete shall be provided an award from the Conference. *(Revised July 2013)*

11.10.2 Individual Awards. Individual awards shall be provided to the Coach of the Year, Player of the Year, Pitcher of the Year, Defensive Player of the Year and Freshman of the Year. *(Revised July 2013)*

Only head coaches are viable coach of the year candidates. There may not be a tie for Mountain West Coach of the Year. In the event of a tie, coaches shall re-vote between the two (or more) highest vote receivers. Co-awards for the individual student-athlete awards are permitted, but there must not be more than two. In the event of a three-way tie for an “Of the Year” award, the coaches shall re-vote amongst the three to get to one or two recipients.

To be considered for the Player of the Year, the recipient shall have been a first-team All-Conference selection. To be considered for Freshman of the Year, the recipient shall have been the highest-ranking freshman on any All-Conference team. *(Clarified August 2017)*

11.10.3 All-Tournament Awards. An 11-person all-tournament (nine players, one designated player, and a Tournament Most Valuable Player) shall be selected.

The all-tournament team shall be selected by the coaches as follows: the coaches of the teams losing in game 6 and 7 shall select two student-athletes each from their respective teams, the coach of the runner-up team shall select three student-athletes from their team and the winning coach shall select four student-athletes from its team, including a designated player and Most Valuable Player.

11.11 Meeting of Coaches. There shall be an annual meeting of the softball coaches to be held each year on a date to be determined in consultation with the administrative liaison. Any changes shall be subject to approval by the Joint Council. Attendance by each head coach is mandatory. *(Revised April 2006, July 2021)*