

DIVISION I SUMMER CONDITIONING PERIOD AND PRESEASON PRACTICE PERIOD FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

EFFECTIVE DATE

1. **Question:** What is the effective date of the proposal?
Answer: The Division I Board of Directors clarified the application of the proposal's May 1, 2003, effective date by indicating that the proposal will take effect with the beginning of an institution's summer conditioning period.

2. **Question:** What happens if the academic year of an institution ends before the beginning of the summer conditioning period?
Answer: The principle behind the current NCAA 13.12.3.9 (voluntary summer conditioning in football) and the football conditioning model is the health and safety of enrolled and prospective student-athletes. An institution whose academic year ends before the beginning of its summer conditioning period may continue to apply NCAA 13.12.3.9 until the beginning of the summer conditioning period. For example, Institution A's last day of finals is May 3; however, its summer conditioning period does not begin until June 4. The strength coach for Institution A may design and conduct voluntary workouts for enrolled student-athletes (see NCAA 17.02.1-(1)) and prospects who have signed a National Letter of Intent .

MEDICAL CREDENTIALS

3. **Question:** The proposal states that all strength and conditioning coaches conducting non-mandatory weight-training or conditioning activities shall be required to have cardiopulmonary resuscitation/first aid certification. Does this mean that the strength and conditioning coaches are required to have both CPR and first aid certification, or just one of them?
Answer: It was the intent of the medical personnel on the working group that developed the proposal that strength coaches had both first aid and CPR certification.

SUMMER CONDITIONING PERIOD

4. **Question:** When you count back to determine the start of the summer conditioning period, do you count back from the first day of the acclimatization period or from the day the team reports?
Answer: According to Proposal 2002-84, the summer conditioning period begins nine weeks before the "first permissible reporting date for preseason practice." Therefore, institutions should count back nine weeks from the day before the start of the five-day acclimatization period.

5. **Question:** Is it permissible to provide expenses such as room and board to prospects participating in summer conditioning activities?
Answer: No. Only football prospects that are receiving non-athletic aid per Bylaw 15.2.7.1.2 may receive such expenses during the summer.
6. **Question:** May prospects that have not signed an NLI (e.g., walk-ons) participate in summer conditioning supervised by the strength coach and receive medical physical exams administered in the summer vacation period.
Answer: No. The proposal is specific to prospects that have signed a NLI or, for those institutions not using the NLI, a prospect who has signed an institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid.
7. **Question:** Counting back nine weeks for the summer conditioning program may permit quarter schools to begin this portion of the model before completion of the spring academic term. Under such circumstances, may NLI signees be on campus, provided a physical exam, and begin non-mandatory conditioning with a strength coach while both the prospect's high school and the institution are still in session?
Answer: The proposal, as written, does not specifically address this issue. However, it is the Membership Services staff's belief that the proposal was not intended to allow prospects to engage in summer conditioning activities at the institution while still enrolled in high school. Such activities may negatively impact a prospect's academic obligations. Therefore, the staff will consult with the Football Issues Committee prior to issuing a confirmation (or, if necessary, seek an official interpretation from LRIS).
8. **Question:** Is it permissible to provide shoes as apparel under Bylaw 17.11.6-(2)-(b) of the proposal?
Answer: Yes. An institution may loan (thus not give) clean apparel, including shoes, to all football prospects that qualify for involvement in such activities.
9. **Question:** On what day can apparel be distributed to prospects who participate in summer workouts?
Answer: The proposal was never intended to allow prospects who were still in high school to participate in summer workouts (though this isn't explicitly noted in the proposal). Therefore, once high school classes have been completed, prospects may receive workout gear as soon as they arrive on campus for summer workouts.
10. **Question:** May football equipment be used during summer workouts?
Answer: No. This was clarified by the Board of Directors when it adopted the proposals at its April 2003 meeting.

11. **Question:** With non-mandatory strength and conditioning being limited to eight hours per week during the summer, does this require institutions to track the eight hours? If so, does that not make the workouts mandatory in some way?
Answer: The workouts being conducted by the strength and conditioning coach should be tracked to ensure that student-athletes are not participating in more than eight hours. However, this does not, in effect, make them mandatory workouts. Attendance records should be maintained only to ensure compliance with the legislation and should not be shared with coaches.
12. **Question:** If a student-athlete participates in the eight hours of non-mandatory weight training and conditioning activities conducted by the institution's strength coach, can the same student-athlete voluntarily do more activity beyond the eight hours as long as the activity is not conducted by the strength and conditioning coach?
Answer: Yes. Outside of the eight hours of conducted workouts, if student-athletes want to use the weight room at their discretion, the strength coach can be there to monitor for health and safety purposes (but may not conduct the workout).

PRE-SEASON PRACTICE

13. **Question:** May student-athletes receive expenses to report the evening prior to the first day of the five-day acclimatization period?
Answer: Yes. Consistent with a July 26, 1994 Official Interpretation, student-athletes may report the evening before the first day of the five-day acclimatization period. During that evening, student-athletes may engage in non-countable athletic related activities (e.g., sign compliance forms and begin getting physicals).
14. **Question:** During the preseason practice period is the entire team required to practice together, or may freshman practice separately from returning student-athletes?
Answer: As set forth in the proposal, first-time participants and returning student-athletes may either practice separately or together.

FIVE-DAY ACCLIMATIZATION PERIOD

15. **Question:** Must the five-day acclimatization period be within the 35 practice opportunities?
Answer: Yes. The five-day acclimatization period is included within the 35 practice opportunities. Therefore, institutions will use the practice opportunity formula, per Bylaw 17.02.11, in the same manner as they have done in previous years to establish their first date of practice, the first five days of which will be the acclimatization period. The first five days of the preseason practice period are the acclimatization period.

16. **Question:** If an institution takes a Sunday off during the acclimatization period, is the five-day acclimatization period, in effect, extended by one day?
Answer: Yes. All student-athletes are required to go through the five-day period. Therefore, if an institution takes a day off during that period, the acclimatization period will be extended by one day.
17. **Question:** The five-day acclimatization period is required of all participants, regardless of when one reports. It appears that if an individual (e.g., starting quarterback) is unable to maintain the consecutive sequencing of the five-day period for reasons beyond one's control (e.g., illness, leave camp due to death in family) that individual could be on a different practice schedule than the rest of the team. Would it be permissible after the five-day period for a team to conduct two different practice sessions on the same day for players to eventually catch up? For example, conducting a Day 5 acclimatization period session of no more than three hours in length for some players + a multiple session of no more than 5 hours for the rest of the team.
Answer: It would be permissible to have student-athletes on different "cycles" during the preseason practice period. Thus, the example noted above would be consistent with the proposed legislation.
18. **Question:** Is contact permissible during the five-day acclimatization period?
Answer: The proposal does not, per se, prohibit contact during any day of the acclimatization period. However, student-athletes may not wear full pads until the fifth day of the acclimatization period so institutions should use their discretion to determine the appropriate type and amount of contact during the acclimatization period.

PRACTICE FOLLOWING THE ACCLIMATIZATION PERIOD

19. **Question:** Subsequent to the five-day acclimatization period, Proposal 2002-84 limits the number of on-field practice hours (3 hours or 5 hours depending on the number of on-field practice sessions). Is the number of hours that may be spent practicing "off-field" (e.g., weight room) limited?
Answer: Time spent weightlifting need not be counted as part of the hourly limitations for on-field practice. However, weightlifting still may not occur during the three-hour recovery period between practices on days with multiple practices. All other countable athletically related activities (except "walk-throughs" per 02-84-1) must be included within the hourly limitations.

20. **Question:** The pre-season practice period is defined as starting on the first day of the acclimatization period and ending on the day before a team's first contest (for example August 30). Say for example, an institution's first day of classes is August 25 and according to NCAA Bylaw 17.1.5.3.5, student-athletes are limited to four hours per day and 20 hours per week of countable athletically related activities once classes begin or the first game is played (whichever occurs earlier). Proposal 2002-84 states that single practices during the preseason period cannot exceed three hours (one less hour than allowed under NCAA 17.1.5.1) and multiple practices shall not exceed five hours (one more hour than the allowable number in Bylaw 17.1.5.1). Which rule takes precedence?
Answer: Once the hourly limits in NCAA 17.1.5.1 are triggered, either by the first day of classes or the institution's first game, those are the limits that apply. Remember that there is a difference between the hourly countable activities limits in Bylaw 17.1.5.1 and the hourly practice limits of 2002-84, since countable activities can involve more than just practice activities (e.g., meetings, film study, lifting weights). So once Bylaw 17.1.5.1 comes into effect, then countable athletically related activities for a could not exceed a total of four hours – for example a team could have one 3 hour on field practice followed by another countable non-practice hour (e.g., required film study), or a team could have a multiple on field practice day consisting of a total of four hours.
21. **Question:** May an institution have academic meetings (e.g., required non-football meetings) during the 3-hour recovery period?
Answer: No. The proposal is not specific to athletic meetings. Therefore, student-athletes would not be permitted to attend academic orientation or life skills meetings set up by the athletics department.
22. **Question:** Are Sundays subject to the restrictions that prohibit multiple on-field practice sessions (e.g., two-a-days or three-a-days) on consecutive days?
Answer: Yes. During the preseason practice period, if an institution practices on a Sunday, it counts against their limit of 29 permissible preseason practices.
23. **Question:** May an institution conduct one practice on consecutive days then switch back to a two-a-day practice? (e.g., Weds - one practice; Thurs - one practice; and Fri - two practices).
Answer: Yes. The proposal only precludes multiple practices on consecutive days. Therefore, the example above would be permissible and the institution may only practice once on Saturday [or the day of their next practice]).
24. **Question:** Under proposal 02-84-1, if an institution conducts three distinctly different practices on one day (assuming all hourly restrictions are adhered to), is the institution charged with 2 or 3 of their maximum 29 practices during the preseason?
Answer: The NCAA staff consulted with the Football Issues Committee regarding this issue and it was agreed that the institution would use 3 of their 29 practices on that day.

25. **Question:** The three-hour recovery time between practices (from the end of the first practice session to the start of the last practice session) must be continuous. What if a team conducts more than two practices on a given day? Doesn't that contradict the requirement of three continuous hours as written in the proposal? Would the recovery time be based on the number of practice sessions conducted on that day (i.e., the recovery time would be between the two last practice sessions of the day)?
Answer: Not necessarily. Unlike the example above, an institution could practice once in the morning, take a three-hour break, and then have two shorter practices later that day. That would give the institution three practices and it still would have provided a three-hour recovery period between the first and last practices.
26. **Question:** What kind of equipment or apparel may be worn during a walk-through?
Answer: According to the proposal, student-athletes may not wear protective equipment (e.g., helmets, shoulder pads). It is permissible for student-athletes to wear, for example, t-shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, sweatpants, shoes, and/or cleats.
27. **Question:** As written, the proposal does not specifically prohibit walk-throughs during the five-day acclimatization period. It only states that after the five-day period, walkthroughs are not considered an on-field activity. Thus, are walkthroughs permitted during the five-day period as long as they are counted within the hourly practice limitations?
Answer: A walkthrough, except as permitted in Proposal 2002-84-1 (in the preseason period after the acclimatization period), is an on-field practice activity. Thus, if an institution conducts a walk-through during the five-day acclimatization period, the walk through counts as the one practice per day and may be no longer than three hours in duration.
28. **Question:** During the recovery period between practices on days that permit multiple practices, are walkthroughs permitted?
Answer: No. During the recovery period student-athletes may not engage in athletically related activities, including walkthroughs, even if in a controlled environment (e.g., indoor practice facility).
29. **Question:** Is there a time limit on a walkthrough that occurs outside of the five-day acclimatization period?
Answer: The proposal does not include any time limits on the duration of a walkthrough.

OUT OF SEASON SPRING CONDITIONING PERIOD

30. **Question:** May an institution "double dip" with its discretionary weeks. For example, the first week of the summer conditioning period is the last week for finals from the spring term. If the institution calls this a discretionary week, may that week count as one of the eight required discretionary weeks between Jan. 1 and the start of summer conditioning AND count as the one required discretionary week during the summer?

Answer: No. The proposal divides the off-season into three distinct (and not overlapping) segments. By definition, the spring segment is from January 1 until the start of the summer conditioning period. Therefore, if the summer conditioning period (nine weeks back from preseason practice) extends into the academic year for a particular institution, a week of discretionary time during that period may only count as the one week of discretionary time for the summer conditioning period. It is not possible to count the week of discretionary time in the summer conditioning period as well as the spring period.

31. **Question:** A blocking sled is equipment related to the sport of football, so it may not be used in out-of-season conditioning that is required during the eight hours per week per Bylaw 17.1.5.2.2. However, if Proposal 2002-84 is adopted, according to Part D of the proposal, the out-of-season conditioning rules for football student-athletes are not Bylaw 17.1.5.2 and its subsections. Rather, it is the new Bylaw 17.11.6--which makes no mention of a ban on football-related equipment in conditioning. During out-of-season conditioning during the academic year, are there any restrictions on the use of equipment related to the sport of football?

Answer: The proposal was not designed to permit the use of equipment related to the sport of football during the out-of-season conditioning periods. This could be clarified at the Management Council meeting and added to the proposal (using the language from current NCAA Bylaw 17.1.5.2.2. (Action was not taken by the Management Council at its April 2003 meeting. It is possible that this change will occur before the out of season conditioning period that begins January 1, 2004).

32. **Question:** Will the eight week student-athlete discretionary time period start from January 1 or immediately after bowl participation? For example, if an institution participates in a post-season bowl game on January 4, would the eight week period begin January 5 or January 1?

Answer: Technically, the out of season spring conditioning period begins January 1. So, if a team plays in a January 4 bowl game, the January 1-7 time period may not be used as one of the eight discretionary weeks for the spring. A discretionary week may begin on January 5 or 6, as long as it lasts seven days.