

AMERICAN MIDWEST CONFERENCE

Softball

ACADEMIC YEAR:	Spring 2012
CONFERENCE LIAISON:	Claude English – Athletic Director Park University
CONFERENCE SPORT CHAIR: College	Dan Hurst – Hannibal-LaGrange
CONFERENCE RATERS: (National)	Eric Newell – Williams Baptist College (Conference) Wendy Spratt – Columbia College
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE: University	Craig Walston – Missouri Baptist University Tracy Gastineau – William Woods Amy Reif – Park University
TOURNAMENT DATE(S):	April 27-28, 2012 (Quarterfinals); May 1-2, 2012 (Semifinals); May 4-5, 2012 (Championship)
TOURNAMENT SITE:	Higher seeds will host in each round
TIME(S):	TBA
<u>NAIA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP – NATIONAL TOURNAMENT DATES:</u>	May 17-23, 2012
TOURNAMENT SITE:	Gulf Shores Sportsplex – Gulf Shores, Ala.
TIME(S):	TBA

AMC SOFTBALL POLICIES --

I. OFFICERS

- A) At the annual Spring meeting the conference Head Coaches will elect the following officers;
1. A Softball Chairperson for a two year term beginning August 1st of the academic year following the election. The softball chairperson will preside at meetings.
 2. A National Rater for a two-year term with an option to be re-elected.
 3. A Conference Rater for a two-year term. If the National rater vacates the position, the

conference rater has the option to become the national rater.

4. An Oversight Committee consisting of three coaches.

5. If an officer vacates their coaching position an interim will be elected to complete the term.

II. GUIDELINES FOR CONFERENCE PLAY

A) The AMC regular season will consist of each team playing a doubleheader against each other team.

B) The match-ups will be determined by a random draw every two years. The host team the first year will be the traveling team the second year and will continue alternate in subsequent years.

C) The match-ups will be inserted into a predetermined round robin schedule, including rain dates, that has been approved by the conference coaches. The schedule will be reversed in the second year of the rotation.

D) If both head coaches agree the scheduled doubleheader may be moved to any day the same week, including the weekend before or after.

E) If the rescheduled doubleheader is during either team's Spring Break, the coaches may reschedule on any agreeable date.

F) The conference teams shall submit their finalized conference schedule to the AMC SID before conference play begins and any changes or rescheduling during the season shall also be reported to the AMC SID.

G) The head coaches involved in a rainout situation must reschedule according to the make-up policy of the current adopted conference regular season schedule. If the coaches cannot agree, the respective athletic directors will make the decision.

H) Make-Up Policy

The make-up date for each scheduled doubleheader is the next day, unless the make-up date falls on a Thursday or Friday and either team is scheduled to travel or a Sunday and either team is prohibited from playing by their institution. If that day is not playable the head coaches must agree upon a make-up date within 24 hours. The coaches may agree to use the visiting team's field to complete with the new host team securing and paying for umpires.

Conference doubleheaders will begin at 2 p.m. unless otherwise agreed upon by the head coaches involved.

III. COMPETITION POLICIES FOR CONFERENCE PLAY

A) The rules used in conference competition will be the rules governed by the NCAA rulebook with approved NAIA-SCA modifications and the following AMC stipulations;

B) In conference doubleheaders, the host team will be the home team in the first game and visitor in the second game.

C) The International Tiebreaker will begin in the 10th inning unless weather or darkness becomes an issue. This will be decided by the Head Coaches prior to each game.

D) The designated home team for each game is the official scorer.

E) A complete game will be called if one team is ahead by eight runs or more after the

fifth inning.

F) The host institution is responsible for supplying two umpires for conference doubleheaders. Failure to do so will result in the host team having to reschedule at the visiting institution and pay for umpires, or forfeit both games. Visiting team should allow a reasonable amount of time for unexpected umpire delays as long as they are notified by host team.

G) Darkness Policy/Suspended Play

1. Games that are suspended before being called complete by the umpires will be rescheduled and continued.

2. Any score or inning played prior to the suspension of play must be documented by the host institution and play will continue from that point.

3. A continued game will start with the same line-up that was in effect when the game was suspended. Any alteration of the line-up must be in accordance with approval of the umpire.

4. The host institution is responsible for umpire fees for suspended and continued games.

H) Duties of the Host Institution

1. Provide a safe competitive field environment.

2. Provide regulation softballs, water, and certified athletic trainer availability.

3. Report results to requested media.

I) Pre-Game Protocol for Host Institution

1. Designate allotted warm-up area of field for visiting team.

2. Warm-up opportunities prior to competition will be equal for both teams at the discretion of the Host Institution.

3. Conduct a meeting for coaches and umpires to provide information regarding playing field and ruling procedure provided by the umpires.

J) Protests

1. Protest Committee. A rotation alphabetically of three teams (coaches) will compile the protest committee annually. If one or more coaches on the protest committee is involved personally with the protest, then the Softball Chair will appoint the coaches next in order to substitute on the committee. (The protest committee for 2012 will consist of the head coaches from Stephens, Williams Baptist, and William Woods)

2. Procedure for Protest: When a game is completed under protest, (NOTE: The protesting school must state the intent to PROTEST to the Head Umpire about the play in question prior to a new play beginning). After completion of the contest the protesting school must:

a. Document the date, time, and place of the game.

b. Document the names of the umpires and scorers.

c. Document the rule and section of the official rules or local rules under which the protest is made.

d. Document the information, details, and conditions pertinent to the decision to protest.

e. Document all essential facts involved in the matter protested.
f. Notify by noon the next day the Athletics Directors of the two schools involved and the Conference Commissioner.

3. When a game is protested, the Protest Committee will rule one of the following:
a. The protest is considered to be invalid and the game stands as played.
b. The protest is determined to be valid because of the misinterpretation of a playing rule.

The decision will be corrected and the game shall be replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made. The replay will be at the same site at a time agreed upon by the Athletic Directors of the involved institutions.

IV. CONFERENCE POSTSEASON TOURNAMENT

A) The top 8 teams, determined by conference regular season play, will qualify for the post-season conference playoffs. The playoffs are a championship series in a best 2 out of 3 games with three different rounds - quarterfinals, semi finals, and finals. The winners of each round advance to the next round until a champion is determined. The eventual champion will advance to the NAIA national tournament.

B) Seeding for the play-offs will be based on conference regular season play only. Ties will be broken by the following steps.

1. Head to Head competition between all tied teams.
2. Total run difference among tied teams (maximum eight runs)
3. Fewest runs allowed among tied teams (maximum eight runs)
4. Fewest runs allowed in all Conference games (maximum eight runs)
5. Total run difference in all Conference games (maximum eight runs)
6. Coin toss.

* As teams are eliminated from the tie, steps will be re-applied starting with step #1.

C) The host site for each round will be the higher seed. The host institution must meet the following criteria:

1. Supply a regulation field.
2. Have a tarp or submit a back-up plan for the use of an alternate regulation field.

The alternate

field site must not cause unreasonable travel for the opponent and must be submitted to all

conference coaches at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the play-offs.

3. If both fields are unplayable and the lower seeded team has a playable regulation field or use

of a playable regulation alternative field, the higher seed will travel to the field of the lower

seed, but the higher seed will still be the home team in the first and third games.

D) Rain-Out Contingency Plan

The deadline for the first round is Monday, April 30, 2012.

The deadline for the second round is Thursday, May 3, 2012.

The deadline for the championship round is Monday, May 7, 2012.

If the games are not completed by the end of the day Sunday, Wednesday, and Sunday, respectively, all three games will be played on the deadline date.

If only one game is completed by the end of the deadline that winning team will advance.

If only two games are completed by the deadline and the series is tied 1-1, the team with the highest run differential (8-run maximum) will advance. If the tie remains the higher-seeded team will advance.

If none of the games are able to be completed at either team's field or an alternate location by the deadline, the highest seed will advance to the next round.

E) Play-Off Procedure

Quarterfinal Round - # 1 seed will host # 8 seed; # 2 seed will host # 7 seed; # 3 seed will host # 6 seed; # 4 seed will host # 5 seed. The first two games of the best of three will be played on April 27, 2012. The "If Necessary" third game will be played on April 28, 2012. The coaches have the option to move the dates to Saturday, April 28, 2012, and Sunday, April 29, 2012, in order to limit missed class time if both schools are allowed to play on Sunday. The highest seed will be the home team for the 1st and 3rd game of the series with the lower seed being the home team for game 2.

Semifinal Round - The four winners from the quarterfinal round qualify for the semi finals. The winner of the # 1 versus # 8 seed will play the winner of the # 4 versus # 5 seed; the winner of the # 2 versus # 7 seed will play the winner of the # 3 versus # 6 seed. The highest seed according to the original seeding will host. The semifinal round will be the best of three with the first two games played on May 1, 2012. The "If Necessary" third game will be played on May 2, 2012. The highest seed will be the home team for the 1st and 3rd games of the series. The lower seed will be the home team for game 2.

Final Round - The two winners of the semi-final round will meet for the championship finals at the highest seed according to the original seeding. The championship final series will be the best of three games with the first two games to be played on May 4, 2012. The "If Necessary" game will be played on May 5, 2012. The coaches have the option of playing the "If Necessary" game on May 6, 2012 if either team has graduation on May 7th and both teams are allowed to play on Sunday. The higher seed will be the home team for the 1st and 3rd games of the series. The lower seed will be the home team for game 2. The winner of this final series will advance to the NAIA National Tournament.

Umpires: The conference will hire an Umpire Coordinator to assign umpires for all playoff rounds. Two umpires will be used for the quarterfinal round and three will be used for semifinal and final round. The Coordinator will work with the Conference Chair to create a pool of umpires approved by the coaches. Conference coaches will have the opportunity to submit recommendations to the Chair.

Host institutions are responsible for umpire fees and may charge admission to offset the cost.

V. ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM SELECTION AND AWARDS

A) Each coach will nominate up to five field players and three pitchers from his/her team for All-

Conference honors. The list of nominees will be sent to the conference SID by Monday at 9

a.m. prior to the conference tournament. All nominations are due at that time, even if there are

games remaining on a team's schedule. A player cannot be nominated as both a field player and as a pitcher. Coaches will supply a ranking of all of their nominations that combine field

players and pitchers. This ranking must combine field players and pitchers.

Example: 1. Field player, 2. Pitcher, 3. Field player, 4. Pitcher... (#1 being their top player, etc.).

B) Each coach will also nominate one player from his/her team for the following awards:

1. Newcomer of the Year
2. Freshman of the Year

C) Upon receipt of all the nominees, the conference SID will compile a ballot and distribute it,

along with statistics for each nominee, by Monday at 9 p.m. prior to the playoffs.

Each coach will rank the top 18 players based on performance in regular season competition and return the ballot to the conference SID by the set deadline. Coaches MUST select the players in the rank order given by the nominating coach. Coaches will also designate five additional votes for honorable mention.

D) The conference SID will tabulate the votes and provide the results for the pre-playoff conference coaches meeting at which time the coaches will determine a final ranking.

E) The All-Conference team will consist of two categories. The top 18 vote-getting players,

regardless of position, will make up the All-Conference first team. The next 18 vote-getters will

be named honorable mention All-Conference.

F) Coaches will also rank the nominees for Pitcher, Player, Newcomer, Freshman, and Coach

of the Year. Coaches may not vote for his/her players or for himself/herself.

G) Awards

PLAQUES

1. Postseason Conference Championship
2. Conference Championship
3. Coach of the Year
4. Player of the Year
5. Pitcher of the Year
6. Newcomer of the Year
7. Freshman of the Year
8. First Team All-Conference (18)

CERTIFICATES

1. Academic All-Conference
2. Honorable Mention All-Conference

VI. RATINGS

A. The duties of the conference raters shall include in the following order :

1. Conduct weekly conference ratings to determine ranking.
2. Submit ranking to Oversight Committee.
3. National Rater participates in National Ranking.

B. Ranking Guidelines for Raters

1. Head-to-head
2. AMC like opponents in similar situations*
3. All like opponents in similar situations*
4. Strength of schedule/overall record
5. Record for the week/schedule for the week**

* -- Opponents in similar situations meant that you both played a doubleheader or were both in tournament play. Otherwise, your first pitcher compared to your third pitcher scenarios might come into play.

** -- Record/schedule for the week should be considered in regards to most current competition, keeping strength of opponents in mind.