

SOFTBALL

Conference Office Liaisons. The following SEC staff members are the designated liaisons for softball: Sport Administrator – Byron Hatch; Communications – Jill Skotarczak; Officiating – Lurline Hamilton/Sylvia Hagan.

REGULAR-SEASON COMPETITION

Artificial Noisemakers. [SEC Bylaw 30.22.1.5e] Artificial noisemakers shall not be brought into or used in any sports venue during games between member institutions. Each institution must have statements printed on tickets and notices to the effect that such noisemakers will not be permitted inside its competition areas.

Awards. The General Administration section of the Commissioner’s Regulations provides a complete list and guidelines for all Conference awards. In addition, the recipients of the sport-specific awards listed below will be selected as follows:

1. **All-SEC Team.** The recipients will be determined by vote of the head coaches. Two weeks before the end of the regular season, the SEC office will send out nomination links for All-SEC online voting, which are due back the following week. In order to nominate a player, she must have played in a minimum of 50 percent of the team’s conference games at the position nominated. Nominees for position players must have played in a minimum of 50 percent of the team’s conference games at the position nominated. Nominees for the pitching position must have played in a minimum of 25 percent of the team’s conference games. Nominees for DP/Utility must have played at least a total of 50 percent of the team’s conference games at two or more positions, with at least 33 percent of the total games being played at one position.

On Sunday following the last competition of the regular season, a list of nominees, a voting ballot and final SEC stats will be sent to all head coaches. The final ballots will be due on Monday afternoon.

The first and second teams will consist of 14 players each: infielders (5), outfielders (4), pitchers (3), catcher (1), and DP/utility (1). Ties will not be broken. Announcement of the All-SEC Teams will be made one day prior to the start of the SEC Softball Tournament.

2. **All-Freshman Team.** The recipients will be determined by vote of the head coaches. Coaches vote during the All-SEC process.
3. **All-Defensive Team.** The recipients will be determined by vote of the head coaches. SEC coaches will only participate in balloting conducted through the Conference office.
4. **Player of the Year.** The recipient will be determined by vote of the head coaches. Coaches vote during the All-SEC process. Player of the Year must be an All-SEC nominee and not a pitcher.
5. **Pitcher of the Year.** The recipient will be determined by vote of the head coaches. Coaches vote during the All-SEC process. Pitcher-of -the-Year must be an All-SEC nominee.
6. **Freshman of the Year.** The recipient will be determined by vote of the head coaches. Coaches vote during the All-SEC process. Freshman of the Year must be an All-Freshman Team nominee.
7. **Coach of the Year.** The recipient will be determined by vote of the head coaches. Coaches vote during the All-SEC process and are not permitted to vote for themselves. The following criteria shall be considered for Coach of the Year: success of the team, improvement of the team from the previous season, ability to fully use the talents of the team, and professional manner and attitude.
8. **Scholar-Athlete of the Year.** See General Administration section of the Commissioner’s Regulations.
9. **Community Service Team.** See General Administration section of the Commissioner’s Regulations.

10. **Player and Pitcher of the Week.** See General Administration section of the Commissioner's Regulations.

11. **Freshman of the Week.** See General Administration section of the Commissioner's Regulations.

Barrel Compression Testing. The regular season and the SEC Tournament will be governed by the annually approved Barrel Compression Testing Protocol attached as Supplement A.

Coaches Meeting [SEC Bylaw 21.8] Each head coach is required to attend the annual coaches meeting in September at the SEC Office.

Coaches Meeting Chair. The chair of the annual coaches meeting will be an alphabetical rotation with Ole Miss serving as the chair for 2015-2016. Subsequent years will be as follows: Missouri (2016-2017), and South Carolina (2017-2018). A chart listing the complete rotation will be maintained by the Conference office.

Conferences. Each team may hold no more than seven conferences (any combination of offensive or defensive conferences) during a seven inning game. If extra-innings are necessary, then NCAA rules will govern the number of conferences a team is permitted.

Conference Championship/Tournament. [SEC Bylaw 30.22.1.3]

1. The team with the highest percentage of wins during regular-season Conference competition will be declared the Conference champion. If two or more teams are tied with the highest percentage of wins, they will be declared Conference co-champions.
2. There will be a Conference tournament at the conclusion of the Southeastern Conference regular season in order to determine the Conference's automatic qualifier to the NCAA Championship. The Conference tournament will be conducted under the guidelines outlined in these Commissioner's Regulations.

Departure Times. The visiting team shall make arrangements to depart the locale of the competition site following the final game of each Conference series via the last available flight, bus, etc., leaving that day and connecting to the visiting team's final destination.

The visiting team shall complete and return a Conference Departure Form to the proper game management official at the competition site and to the Conference office by January 10th each year. This form will indicate the visiting team's designated departure time from the competition site facility following the final game of each Conference series. Once the departure time is established, the host institution will set a game time that provides a reasonable amount of time for completion of a seven inning game. If the visiting team is utilizing air travel, the final game of the series may start no later than 4 p.m. local time. A visiting team's departure time as designated on the Conference Departure Form may not be modified without approval by the Conference office.

If a contest is called due to travel arrangements, the following procedures will be used:

1. If the contest is called and is a regulation game according to NCAA Softball Rule 6.12, the contest and all averages will count in the final playing record.
2. The contest will be considered a regulation tie game if it meets the conditions set forth in NCAA Softball Rule 6.14 and all averages will count in the final playing record.
3. If the contest is called prior to reaching regulation game status per NCAA Softball Rule 6.16, the contest will be considered a "No Game" (see NCAA Softball Rule 6.18).

In no case shall departure time of umpires be a factor in completing games.

Double-Header Warm-Up. Access to the batting cages must be split equally between both teams during the time between games of a double-header. [*Adopted 12/15/15*]

Examination Schedule. If a team is scheduled to play “away” during the week of its final examination period, the game will be rescheduled in advance by the two teams involved.

Facilities. All facilities should meet NCAA requirements insofar as possible. Both teams should have equal access to facilities and equipment as defined in the NCAA rules under Pre-game Practice. (see NCAA Softball Rule 5.1).

Inclement Weather. The inclement weather policy is as follows:

FOR FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY SERIES

1. If a game is postponed on Friday or Saturday due to inclement weather, the game shall be completed from the point of interruption on the following day prior to the regularly scheduled game.
2. In the event the regularly scheduled game is televised, the postponed game may be rescheduled, in consultation with the conference office, prior to, or following, the regularly scheduled game, whichever allows the best opportunity to complete such game without interruption.
3. Televised Games Affected by Weather
 - A. For games televised on ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU
 - (1) If a game is postponed on Friday, and the regularly scheduled Saturday game is televised by ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU, the regularly scheduled televised Saturday game must start at its published start time. If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game on Saturday, that game must be stopped after the completion of a full inning 45 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled televised game and resumed following the completion of the regularly scheduled televised game.
 - (2) If a game is postponed on Saturday, and the regularly scheduled Sunday game is televised by ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU, the regularly scheduled televised Sunday game must start at its published start time. If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the Sunday regularly scheduled televised game, that game must be stopped after the completion of a full inning 45 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled televised game and resumed following the completion of the regularly scheduled televised game.
 - B. For games televised on the SEC Network
 - (1) If a game is postponed on Friday, and the regularly scheduled Saturday game is televised by the SEC Network, institutions must use their best efforts to start the regularly scheduled televised Saturday game on the SEC Network at its published start time. (The postponed game should be scheduled at a time which provides the regularly scheduled televised game a reasonable chance of starting at its published time.) If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game, the postponed game must be completed without interruption.
 - (2) If a game is postponed on Saturday, and the regularly scheduled Sunday game is televised by the SEC Network, institutions must use their best efforts to start the regularly scheduled televised Sunday game on the SEC Network at its published start time. (The postponed game should be scheduled at a time which provides the regularly scheduled televised game a reasonable chance of starting at its published time.) If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game, the postponed game must be completed without interruption.
 - (3) A postponed or regularly scheduled game may begin or end on the SEC Network Alternate Channel or on SEC Network+.
4. If weather prohibits a game from occurring on the date scheduled and cannot be played during the weekend series, then the game(s) will not be rescheduled.

5. Length of Games
 - A. All games played should be scheduled as a regulation game.
 - B. If weather prevents playing both the Friday and Saturday game, or if the Saturday game does not begin because of rain, there shall be two regulation games on Sunday. If a Friday game is postponed and no games are played on Saturday, the postponed game shall be resumed on Sunday, followed by a regulation game.
 - C. If a postponed game is unable to be completed because of inclement weather and has reached official game status per NCAA Softball Rule 6.12, it shall be declared a game.
 - D. Once a postponed game is resumed, the game shall be complete if one team has a lead of eight or more runs per NCAA Softball Rule 6.13.
6. Restart Times
 - A. In the event of rain, no game may start after 10:00 pm local time or resume after midnight local time.
 - B. In the event of a rain-delay prior to the beginning of play on Sunday, the game must begin at least two hours prior to the visiting team's scheduled departure time from the field, but no later than 4:00 pm local time to avoid a rain out of the game.
 - C. If the game begins and is postponed (Sunday game), it must resume by 6:00 pm local time to avoid a rain out of the game.
7. Travel Considerations
 - A. In all instances, departure time takes priority. A team may not stay over until Monday to begin or complete a game or series.
 - B. In the event the visiting team is not scheduled to leave the host city until Monday and there are no prior travel limitations for the game's umpires that would dictate departure to enact these deadlines, with Conference approval, it would be permissible to waive the 4:00 pm deadline for the start of a game and a 6:00 pm deadline for the resumption of the game.
8. Authority to Play Doubleheaders
 - A. If weather forecasts on Friday and Saturday morning call for a high occurrence of inclement weather on Saturday or Sunday (80 percent or higher), the home team in consultation with the visiting team may request permission from the Conference Office to play a doubleheader on Friday or Saturday provided the teams are already in the locale and there is no television involved.
 - B. Approval of a prospective doubleheader shall be limited to circumstances where there is a high likelihood that weather will not permit a game to be played on one of the days in the series.

FOR THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY SERIES

1. If a game is postponed on Thursday or Friday due to inclement weather, the game shall be completed from the point of interruption on the following day prior to the regularly scheduled game.
2. In the event the regularly scheduled game is televised, the postponed game may be rescheduled, in consultation with the conference office, prior to, or following, the regularly scheduled game, whichever allows the best opportunity to complete such game without interruption.

3. Televised Games Affected by Weather

A. For games televised on ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU

- (1) If a game is postponed on Thursday, and the regularly scheduled Friday game is televised by ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU, the regularly scheduled televised Friday game must start at its published start time. If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game, that game must be stopped after the completion of a full inning 45 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled televised game and resumed following the completion of the regularly scheduled televised game.
- (2) If a game is postponed on Friday, and the regularly scheduled Saturday game is televised by ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU, the regularly scheduled televised Saturday game must start at its published start time. If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game, that game must be stopped after the completion of a full inning 45 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled televised game and resumed following the completion of the regularly scheduled televised game.

B. For games televised on the SEC Network

- (1) If a game is postponed on Thursday, and the regularly scheduled Friday game is televised by the SEC Network, institutions must use their best efforts to start the regularly scheduled televised Friday game on the SEC Network at its published start time. (The postponed game should be scheduled at a time which provides the regularly scheduled televised game a reasonable chance of starting at its published time.) If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game, the postponed game must be completed without interruption.
- (2) If a game is postponed on Friday, and the regularly scheduled Saturday game is televised by the SEC Network, institutions must use their best efforts to start the regularly scheduled televised Saturday game on the SEC Network at its published start time. (The postponed game should be scheduled at a time which provides the regularly scheduled televised game a reasonable chance of starting at its published time.) If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game, the postponed game must be completed without interruption.
- (3) A postponed or regularly scheduled game may begin or end on the SEC Network Alternate Channel or on SEC Network+.

4. If weather prohibits a game from occurring on the date scheduled and cannot be played during the weekend series, then the game(s) will not be rescheduled.

5. Length of Games

- A. All games played should be scheduled as a regulation game.
- B. If weather prevents playing both the Friday and Saturday game, or if the Saturday game does not begin because of rain, there shall be two regulation games on Sunday. If a Friday game is postponed and no games are played on Saturday, the postponed game shall be resumed on Sunday, followed by a regulation game.
- C. If a postponed game is unable to be completed because of inclement weather and has reached official game status per NCAA Softball Rule 6.12, it shall be declared a game.
- D. Once a postponed game is resumed, the game shall be complete if one team has a lead of eight or more runs per NCAA Softball Rule 6.13.

6. Restart Times

- A. In the event of rain, no game may start after 10:00 pm local time or resume after midnight local time.

- B. In the event of a rain-delay prior to the beginning of play on Sunday, the game must begin at least two hours prior to the visiting team's scheduled departure time from the field, but no later than 4:00 pm local time to avoid a rain out of the game.
 - C. If the game begins and is postponed (Sunday game), it must resume by 6:00 pm local time to avoid a rain out of the game.
7. Travel Considerations
- A. In all instances, departure time takes priority. A team may not stay over until Monday to begin or complete a game or series.
 - B. In the event the visiting team is not scheduled to leave the host city until Monday and there are no prior travel limitations for the game's umpires that would dictate departure to enact these deadlines, with Conference approval, it would be permissible to waive the 4:00 pm deadline for the start of a game and a 6:00 pm deadline for the resumption of the game.
8. Authority to Play Doubleheaders
- A. If weather forecasts on Thursday and Friday morning call for a high occurrence of inclement weather on Friday or Saturday (80 percent or higher), the home team in consultation with the visiting team may request permission from the Conference Office to play a doubleheader on Thursday or Friday provided the teams are already in the locale and there is no television involved.
 - B. Approval of a prospective doubleheader shall be limited to circumstances where there is a high likelihood that weather will not permit a game to be played on one of the days in the series.

FOR SATURDAY THROUGH MONDAY SERIES

1. If a game is postponed on Saturday or Sunday due to inclement weather, the game shall be completed from the point of interruption on the following day prior to the regularly scheduled game.
2. In the event the regularly scheduled game is televised, the postponed game may be rescheduled, in consultation with the conference office, prior to, or following, the regularly scheduled game, whichever allows the best opportunity to complete such game without interruption.
3. Televised Games Affected by Weather
 - A. For games televised on ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU
 - (1) If a game is postponed on Saturday, and the regularly scheduled Sunday game is televised by ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU, the regularly scheduled televised Sunday game must start at its published start time. If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game on Sunday, that game must be stopped after the completion of a full inning 45 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled televised game and resumed following the completion of the regularly scheduled televised game.
 - (2) If a game is postponed on Sunday, and the regularly scheduled Monday game is televised by ESPN, ESPN2 or ESPNU, the regularly scheduled televised Monday game must start at its published start time. If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the Monday regularly scheduled televised game, that game must be stopped after the completion of a full inning 45 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled televised game and resumed following the completion of the regularly scheduled televised game.
 - B. For games televised on the SEC Network

- (1) If a game is postponed on Saturday, and the regularly scheduled Sunday game is televised by the SEC Network, institutions must use their best efforts to start the regularly scheduled televised Sunday game on the SEC Network at its published start time. (The postponed game should be scheduled at a time which provides the regularly scheduled televised game a reasonable chance of starting at its published time.) If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game, the postponed game must be completed without interruption.
 - (2) If a game is postponed on Sunday, and the regularly scheduled Monday game is televised by the SEC Network, institutions must use their best efforts to start the regularly scheduled televised Monday game on the SEC Network at its published start time. (The postponed game should be scheduled at a time which provides the regularly scheduled televised game a reasonable chance of starting at its published time.) If a postponed game is resumed/started prior to the start of the regularly scheduled televised game, the postponed game must be completed without interruption.
 - (3) A postponed or regularly scheduled game may begin or end on the SEC Network Alternate Channel or on SEC Network+.
4. If weather prohibits a game from occurring on the date scheduled and cannot be played during the weekend series, then the game(s) will not be rescheduled.
5. Length of Games
 - A. All games played should be scheduled as a regulation game.
 - B. If weather prevents playing both the Saturday and Sunday game, or if the Sunday game does not begin because of rain, there shall be two regulation games on Monday. If a Friday game is postponed and no games are played on Sunday, the postponed game shall be resumed on Monday, followed by a regulation game.
 - C. If a postponed game is unable to be completed because of inclement weather and has reached official game status per NCAA Softball Rule 6.12, it shall be declared a game.
 - D. Once a postponed game is resumed, the game shall be complete if one team has a lead of eight or more runs per NCAA Softball Rule 6.13.
6. Restart Times
 - A. In the event of rain, no game may start after 10:00 pm local time or resume after midnight local time.
 - B. In the event of a rain-delay prior to the beginning of play on Monday, the game must begin at least two hours prior to the visiting team's scheduled departure time from the field, but no later than 4:00 pm local time to avoid a rain out of the game.
 - C. If the game begins and is postponed (Monday game), it must resume by 6:00 pm local time to avoid a rain out of the game.
7. Travel Considerations
 - A. In all instances, departure time takes priority. A team may not stay over until Tuesday to begin or complete a game or series.
 - B. In the event the visiting team is not scheduled to leave the host city until Tuesday and there are no prior travel limitations for the game's umpires that would dictate departure to enact these deadlines, with Conference approval, it would be permissible to waive the 4:00 pm deadline for the start of a game and a 6:00 pm deadline for the resumption of the game.
8. Authority to Play Doubleheaders

- A. If weather forecasts on Saturday and Sunday morning call for a high occurrence of inclement weather on Sunday or Monday (80 percent or higher), the home team in consultation with the visiting team may request permission from the Conference Office to play a doubleheader on Saturday or Sunday provided the teams are already in the locale and there is no television involved.
- B. Approval of a prospective doubleheader shall be limited to circumstances where there is a high likelihood that weather will not permit a game to be played on one of the days in the series.

OTHER

1. Authority to Rule on Game Stoppage

The Plate Umpire has sole authority to suspend, postpone or cancel the game if conditions become unfit for play per NCAA Softball Rule 15.3.12.

2. Lightning Strikes

- A. Each member institution shall be responsible for having the capability to determine when lightning strikes are within specified distances from the competition site. When lightning is detected within 10 miles of the competition site (or, at a minimum, that by the time the monitor observes 30 seconds between seeing the lightning flash and hearing its associated thunder), home team game management shall utilize the public address system to inform those in attendance that inclement weather including lightning is within 10 miles and that should patrons vacate the facility for safe shelter, they will be allowed to re-enter with a ticket stub. When lightning is detected within eight miles of the competition site, the competition shall be suspended.
- B. To resume athletics activities, lightning safety experts recommend waiting 30 minutes after both the last sound of thunder and last flash of lightning. See also NCAA Softball Rule, Appendix G Safety Guidelines/Lightning Guidelines.
- C. A 10-minute warm-up period may be granted following the 30-minute suspension.

NCAA Automatic Qualification. The Conference tournament champion will be the Conference's automatic qualifier to the NCAA Championship.

Officials. [SEC Bylaw 30.20.1] The Conference office shall assign umpires for all home Conference and (effective August 1, 2014) non-conference contests. Notification of game officials and all information pertaining to officiating can be found on www.spotfoul.com. Access to the website can be obtained by contacting Sylvia Hagan.

The following procedures shall be utilized regarding umpires at all Southeastern Conference softball games:

1. Each institution will provide a dressing room for umpires closely located to the softball facility. When male and female umpires are assigned, two separate dressing rooms should be provided, if possible. Admittance to this room shall be limited to game officials and conference office representatives. No guests, visitors or institutional personnel (other than a trainer or manager upon request or conference office representative) shall be admitted. The officials' dressing room shall be set up with towels, soap, soft drinks, water, and cups.
2. Security escorts for umpires should be provided from the dressing room to the field and back to the dressing room at the conclusion of each game.
3. Criticism of officials or the officiating program by institutional personnel is prohibited. Comments about officiating are to be directed to the Conference office only. All reports or comments pertaining to officiating or game management responsibilities, or concerning players, coaches or officials, shall be directed to the Conference office only. Public comments related to officiating by officials, coaches or institutional personnel are prohibited.

4. Films, videotapes, and DVD's shall not be used by coaches or other institutional personnel for public criticism of officials or officiating (e.g., the use of game films to produce clips for television or newspapers depicting officiating calls). No reference to officiating matters shall be permitted on coaches' radio and/or television shows.
5. Coaches shall not contact officials directly through correspondence or telephone. All matters pertaining to officials or officiating must be directed to the Conference office only. Likewise, this policy precludes officials from contacting coaches in a similar manner.
6. The list of game officials assigned to a game shall not be announced to the media and/or public prior to the distribution of pre-game information packets before a game.
7. Compensation – Payment of the game officials will be handled by a third-party service (PayOGFE.com). Each institution will be invoiced for their share of the compensation and travel/expense reimbursements for the game officials. The home team shall be responsible for the compensation and travel/expense reimbursements for the game officials for non-conference home games. Officials for non-conference games assigned through a local assignor or association as determined by individual institutions WILL BE PROCESSED AND PAID BY THE HOME INSTITUTION. The Conference office and Athletics Directors shall set the fees and travel/expense policies.
8. Tickets – Each official assigned to a competition is entitled to a maximum of two complimentary tickets to that competition. Officials shall contact the ticket offices directly. The deadline for ticket requests is ten days prior to the competition.

Playing Rules. During conference games, umpires shall administer and address the NCAA Softball Playing Rules as written without requiring the opposing coach to bring the issue to the umpire's attention.

Practice. The visiting team representative is responsible for contacting the home team's representative to coordinate practice time on the field the day before the series begins. Visiting teams shall be limited to two hours of practice time; weather permitting, no other restrictions shall apply. Due to field preparations on the day of the game, game day field access may be limited or restricted. [Revised 12/15/15]

Pre-Game Protocol. Games will follow a pre-game protocol (see Supplement B of this section) that allows both the home team and the visiting team a 35-minute warm-up period and a seven-minute in-field period. The pregame protocol will also include a period for player and coach introductions and the National Anthem. Coaches are required to turn in line-ups 30 minutes prior to the start of the game.

The home team shall designate the space provided for home and visiting teams to conduct its 35-minute batting practice/warm-up. Home and visiting teams shall be permitted to do offensive and defensive drills, or any combination thereof, during its designated 35-minute batting practice/warm-up. If the home team designates the playing field as the batting practice/warm-up area, they must provide a suitable and convenient alternative site for the visiting team to stretch and throw during the home team's batting practice/warm-up period. This site will be available for stretching and throwing only.

Each institution may establish field rules related to permissible activities for a team not in a designated warm-up period. This will assist the home team with implementing a policy that is respectful of the grounds' crew time to prepare the field for play. As an example, if Team A (home) is in the designated 35 minute warm-up at the one hour and 45 minutes prior to first pitch, then Team B (visitor) will follow Team A's established protocol for what activities may or may not occur on the field, inside/outside the lines, etc.

The established pre-game protocol specific to each stadium must be followed by the home and visiting team. Additionally, the institution's established stadium protocol must be the same for each visiting Conference institution. Home teams must provide visiting teams with the established pre-game rules and regulations at the same time practice times are coordinated.

Lastly, there is a two minute “turnover” period that occurs between home and visiting team warm-up. The home team must be free and clear of the field and batting cages following this two minute warm-up period in order for the visiting team to receive a full 35 minute warm-up period.

Public Address Announcer. A public address announcer shall be present at all Conference games. The announcer must be impartial and give only necessary information in good taste and acceptable language.

Regular-Season Competition/Scheduling. The regular-season Conference schedule shall be a revolving schedule with each team playing eight, three game series for a total of 24 games. Unless otherwise permitted by administrative action of the Conference, the three-game series will be played on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. On Easter weekend, coaches may mutually agree to play a double –header on Friday or Saturday if they prefer not to play on Easter Sunday. When the visiting team is on spring break during the weekdays immediately prior to a series, the participating teams may mutually request the series begin on Thursday and conclude on Saturday. The Conference schedule is set by administrative action of the Conference. Institutional administrators may change the date of a Conference game with mutual consent and upon approval by the Conference staff liaison. Revisions to a Conference schedule that are associated with spring break require the approval of the Commissioner. In no case shall a team stay over on Monday to start or complete a Conference game or series (unless otherwise permitted by administrative action of the Conference).

There must be a minimum of 20-minutes between games in a double header and game management personnel shall be available to escort umpires during this interval period.

Rosters. For each series and prior to the first game of the series, teams shall submit a roster designating its 22 players. This roster is submitted to the home plate umpire prior to the first game and cannot be changed during the series. *[Revised 8/18/15]*

Scouting. Coaches shall not share scouting information on other SEC teams with anyone.

Squad Size. *[See Supplement D of the General Administration section]* The home team may dress all eligible student-athletes in uniform, but only 22 student-athletes may participate in a Conference contest. *[Revised 8/18/15]*

Suspension/Ejection Policy.

1. Any game official may eject a student-athlete, coach or team representative for misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct.
2. If an individual is ejected from the contest, the ejected individual shall leave the dugout and field area immediately without further communication with the teams or game officials. The ejected individual shall remain out of sight and sound of the contest for the remainder of the contest. “Out of sight and sound” means that the ejected individual(s) may not view the contest, communicate with his or her team, or be in a location where the game officials can hear him or her. The ejected individual may not return to the dugout, field, or grandstands until all game officials are escorted to their dressing area by security or game management. In the event that an ejected individual does not comply with the ejection policy set forth in this subparagraph 2 in a timely manner (as determined in the game officials’ sole discretion), the game will be forfeited.
3. Upon first offense, a student-athlete, coach, or team representative ejected for misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct shall receive a written warning cautioning further like conduct. Upon second and subsequent offense(s) in the same academic year, a student-athlete, coach, or team representative ejected for misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct shall be suspended for the team’s next previously scheduled and completed contest. If a previously scheduled contest is postponed or halted, that make-up contest against the originally scheduled opponent will count as a regularly scheduled contest. Contests may not be added after the incident in order to fulfill the requirements of this policy. End of season suspensions will be carried forward to the next season.
4. A suspended individual shall remain out of sight and sound of the applicable contest (as defined in subparagraph 2). Additionally, a suspended individual may not:
 - A. Be dressed in game uniform;
 - B. Communicate with any team personnel or umpires;

C. Take part in any pregame activities at the site of competition; or

D. Be in the stadium or on the field once pregame activities have started.

In the event that a suspended individual does not comply with the suspension policy set forth in this subparagraph 4 in a timely manner (as determined in the game official's sole discretion), the game will be forfeited. In the event that a suspended individual participates in a game during the prescribed suspension, the game will be forfeited.

5. This policy is in effect for all regular season games and the Southeastern Conference Tournament only.

Tickets. The home team shall provide up to 75 complimentary tickets/admissions to the visiting team for each game in a Conference series.

Tie-breaker. In regular season Conference games, the NCAA tie-breaker rule, as defined by NCAA Softball Rule 6.15, will not be utilized.

Uniforms. During Conference series, the home team shall wear its light/white uniform on the first day of the series, its dark uniform on the second day, and its light/white uniform on the final day. The visiting team will wear its dark uniform on the first day of the series, its light/white uniform on the second day, and its dark uniform on the final day. Head coaches will verify the color of uniform to be worn when they discuss practice times.

Video Boards/Replays. Institutions are not limited in the use of replays (including number of replays shown), except as set forth in NCAA Softball Playing Rules (See Appendix H - Rules for Video, Audio, or Matrix Boards). The time during which permissible replays may be shown is from the end of a play until the next batter enters the batter's box. Replays may also be shown at a later time during the game as part of a package of highlights during a middle-of-inning or end-of-inning break. In no circumstances will the in-stadium video system be used to embarrass, humiliate, or disgrace an umpire or visiting team members or coaches, incite the crowd or distract a participant or coach. Each school must designate a full-time staff member with a high degree of accountability to be responsible for determining what video appears on the stadium video board.

Video and Electronics Equipment. An institution may only videotape its own contests. The home and visiting teams may video the contest from a centerfield camera location. The home team may also video the contest from any location outside the team area. If the home team elects to video from a location or angle other than centerfield, the home team must video the game in its entirety from that location or angle. The home team shall provide the same video including all angles to the visiting team. The home team shall provide a video feed from its equipment to the visiting team or, if providing the video feed is not possible, a DVD or external drive copy of the video captured during the contest to the visiting team. If the home team does not utilize a camera angle or a camera is not operating properly, the home team must cover the camera to indicate that the angle is not available and neither team has access. Cameras may not be manned during play. Teams may only access such cameras during warm-up and between innings. Under no circumstances may institutional videographers capture film for scouting purposes.

The home team must provide video produced on the digital platform to the visiting team, when available.

No electronic equipment (*e.g.*, phones, tablets, palm pilots, iPhones, iPads, etc.) is permitted inside the dugout. Exceptions shall be limited to medical personnel for medical necessity and credentialed media (*e.g.*, television cameras). Information (*e.g.*, tagging video, etc.) from training programs such as Right View Pro and Dartfish may only be gathered from outside the team areas. There is absolutely no evaluating of video or other technology devices during the game.

CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT

Administrative Teleconference. Coaches and administrators from each institution competing in the Conference tournament shall participate in a mandatory teleconference prior to the start of the tournament to review policies and procedures.

Awards.

1. **All-Tournament Team.** After each semifinal game, the losing coach will submit two individual players from their team for selection on the All-tournament Team. Three players will be submitted from the losing team in the championship game and four players will be submitted by the winning team in the championship game for a total of 11 players.
2. **Tournament MVP.** The Tournament MVP will be chosen by the championship winning coach.

Credentials. Each team will receive 28 participant credentials for the official members of their travel party.

Dates and Sites. The Conference tournament shall be conducted the week prior to the first round of the NCAA Division I Women's Softball tournament. The 2016 tournament will be held May 11-14, in Starkville, Mississippi, hosted by Mississippi State University.

2017	Tennessee	2020	Alabama	2023	Georgia
2018	Missouri	2021	Florida	2024	Auburn
2019	Texas A&M	2022	Arkansas		

Dugouts/Home Team Determination. The home team shall occupy the third base dugout, warm-up first and wear light uniforms. The visiting team will wear a contrasting color.

The higher seed in each game of the tournament will be designated the home team.

Format. The tournament shall be a 12-team, single-elimination format, beginning on Wednesday and concluding with the championship game on Saturday. The 12 tournament teams shall be determined based on the highest percentage of wins during regular-season Conference competition. The winner of the tournament receives the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Championship.

Game Times. The Conference administrator in consultation with the host institution will determine the game times. The host institution will have first choice of the time it prefers to play its first game of the tournament and the bracket will be adjusted accordingly throughout the remainder of the tournament. All times are local to the host institution. Start times may be adjusted to accommodate television schedule, weather delays or other unforeseen situations.

Host Institution Responsibilities. The responsibilities of the host institution's tournament director and sports information contact are listed in the On-Campus Hosting Manual that is produced by the Conference staff and is under separate cover.

Lodging. Each institution is responsible for arranging its own lodging for the tournament.

Length of Game. All games shall be seven innings, unless a team holds at least an eight-run lead after five innings of play, at which time the game shall be declared complete. If play has been stopped before a seven-inning game has been completed, it shall be resumed at the point of interruption, with the exception of the eight-run rule. If the eight-run rule does not apply, at least five innings must be played in order for the game to be considered regulation or complete.

Manual. The tournament host shall distribute a tournament manual outlining the policies and procedures for the tournament, as well as information specific to the host site, to each institution no later than four weeks prior to the tournament.

Pre-Game Warm-up. The tournament field shall be available (weather permitting) two and a half (2.5) hours prior to each team's game and may be available for throwing and stretching. Each team will have 35 minutes in the batting cages.

Seeding. The team with the highest percentage of wins during the regular season Conference competition will be the No. 1 seed; the remainder of the tournament field will be seeded 2-10 based on the Conference winning percentage. Ties shall be broken in the following manner:

1. **Two-Team Tie.** The following procedure will be used in the following order until the tie is broken:
 - A. Won-lost record of head-to-head competition between the tied teams.
 - B. Won-lost record of the two teams versus the highest seeded common opponent.
 - C. Fewest runs allowed in head to head competition. If head to head competition between two tied teams did not occur, then fewest runs allowed against all common opponents.
 - D. Fewest runs allowed versus all opponents.
 - E. Coin flip by the Commissioner.

2. **Three-Team Tie (or more).** If three or more tied teams have three different records against each other, they shall be seeded in best percentage order. Otherwise, once the tie has been reduced to two teams, the two-team tie breaker procedure shall be utilized. The following procedure will be used in the following order until the tie is broken:
 - A. Total won-loss percentage of games played among the tied teams.
 - B. Won-loss percentage of the tied teams versus the highest seed common opponent.
 - C. Fewest runs allowed in head to head competition. If head to head competition between the tied teams did not occur, then fewest runs allowed against all common opponents.
 - D. Fewest runs allowed versus all opponents.
 - E. If three or more teams are still tied, the Commissioner will conduct a draw.

Squad Size. [See Supplement D of the General Administration section] Only 22 student-athletes will be allowed to participate but all eligible student-athletes will be permitted to receive expenses to attend the SEC Championship event. Non-participating student-athletes will not be permitted to access the competition area immediately prior to and during any of their team's Championship contests. [Revised 8/18/15]

Tickets. The host institution of the tournament may decide whether or not to charge for ticketed admission. If an institution chooses to charge for admission, ticket prices shall be set by the host institution, but must be approved by the Conference office. In addition, if admission is charged, the host institution must make contact with each participating school to communicate the ticket policy for the tournament, including payment instructions and player/pass gate information. Institutions are not required to purchase a specific number of tickets.

Uniforms. Teams must be prepared to wear light and dark uniforms. The higher seeded team in each game will wear light uniforms.

Videotaping. Participating teams may only videotape the games in which they are competing in and only from pre-determined assigned areas. Each team must provide its own video equipment and appropriate accessories (e.g. cords).

**SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE
SOFTBALL BARREL COMPRESSION TESTING (BCT) PROTOCOL**

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Southeastern Conference institutions shall follow the NCAA Bat Compliance Testing Program. The SEC Barrel Compression Testing (BCT) protocol is meant to work in concert with the NCAA Bat Compliance Testing program except where policies are specific to the SEC.
2. Coaches and administrators of Conference institutions are obligated by the NCAA Softball Rules to play with legal equipment and to remove any illegal equipment from play.
3. Barrel compression testing will be conducted prior to each Conference game in the SEC regular season. Testing will occur prior to each game in the SEC Tournament.
4. Each SEC institution is required to use the LV Sports (formerly WSU) bat testing machine for the SEC softball season.

BCT EQUIPMENT TO BE USED

1. The home team's machine is used for testing.
2. If home team does NOT have a working BCT machine but the visiting team does have a working BCT machine – the visiting team will travel with machine to the series and the visiting team's machine shall be used for testing.
3. If neither the home team nor visiting team has a working BCT machine –the home team will make every attempt to borrow a machine.
4. If neither team has a working BCT machine AND the home team cannot borrow a machine – the home team will notify Leslie Claybrook at the SEC office and the visiting team's head coach and SWA (or softball sport administrator) no later than 48 hours prior to the first game of the series. In this instance, bat testing will not take place. However, institutions are reminded that all NCAA softball playing rules (including playing with legal equipment) must be followed.

LOCATION AND TIME OF TESTING

1. The home team shall designate the sport administrator, event manager or other administrative designee to oversee the administrative process of the testing (e.g., conducting and overseeing the meeting and filling out the form).
2. The head coach (or one of the full-time assistant coaches or other staff member appointed by the head coach to represent the team) will be responsible for actually testing his/her team's bats (e.g., physically placing the bats in the machines). The home team's administrator will serve as the observer and record the results.
3. Both coaches (or appointed designee(s)) will bring all bats to the testing location, as well as their logo stickers provided by the SEC.
4. Bat testing must be conducted during a four-hour window prior to the scheduled start time of each game of the series. After the first game of the series, institutions will work together to coordinate a window of time that works best for each team and the home team's game administrator responsible for BCT. In the event of a doubleheader, BCT will only be conducted prior to the first game of the doubleheader.
5. Location of the testing will be determined by the home team and communicated via email to the visiting team's head coach no later than 48 hours prior to the first game of the series.

6. Umpires do not have to be present during testing but should be made aware of when/where testing will take place.
7. Testing shall not be conducted in public view or near fans/media.

TESTING PROCEDURE

1. On the WSU or LV fixture, 1550psi shall be the lowest (softest) passing score except as noted on the current NCAA Approved Softball Bat List for specific models granted a lower passing score.
2. Each bat will be tested until it receives two pass results or two fail results whichever comes first.
3. Each bat will be tested approximately 6 inches from the end of the barrel. The bat will then be rotated 90 degrees and tested again.
4. If after the first two tests:
 - A. The bat has two pass results, the bat receives the appropriate sticker and is ready to be used in competition;
 - B. The bat has two fails, the bat is surrendered and will not be returned for use; or
 - C. The bat has one pass result and one fail result after the second test, the bat will be removed from the machine and inspected for cracks. If none is found, the bat will be inserted into the machine and tested the third and final time.
 - (1) If the bat has a second pass result, the bat will be identified as passed and the sticker affixed.
 - (2) If the bat receives a second failed result, the bat will be deemed unacceptable and surrendered to the testing team.
5. Bats passing both tests will receive a tamper-proof sticker to be placed on the taper of the bat so that it is easily visible.
6. The opponent's sticker will be placed on bats that have passed. (e.g., if Arkansas is playing Georgia, the Arkansas sticker is placed on the passing Georgia bat and the Georgia sticker is placed on the passing Arkansas bat.)
7. The visiting team shall always travel with its own stickers to be used during the testing. The home team is not responsible for stickers of the opposing teams.
8. The stickers should be removed after the series has been completed.
9. The SEC staff will purchase each institution's stickers and ship to each head coach prior to the start of SEC play.

PROCEDURES FOR FAILED BATS

1. A bat that fails the BCT testing during a series will be deemed illegal and remain in the immediate possession of the home team's event manager until the end of the series.
2. If a bat fails testing, the bat is dead for that series and cannot be re-tested for that series.
3. The home team's sport administrator, event manager or appointed administrative designee will return a visiting team's illegal bat to the visiting team head coach at the conclusion of the last game of the series.
4. The home team's sport administrator, event manager or appointed administrative designee will give a home team's illegal bat to the home team's SWA.

5. For each failed bat, the home team event manager (or administrative designee) will complete the SEC Failed Bat Form and submit the form via email *no later than 48 hours after completion of bat testing for the series* to the SEC office, with copies of the form sent to the head coach and SWA of the affected institution.
6. It is the responsibility of the head coach to give the failed bat to his/her SWA upon the team's return to campus.
7. All failed bats shall not be used in any subsequent game.
8. The SEC office will submit failed bat information to Dee Abrahamson, NCAA Softball Secretary Rules Editor.

SOFTBALL PRE-GAME TIMING PROTOCOL
(EXAMPLE)
UPDATED 11-19-13

1:00 p.m. Start		Time Prior to Game
11:15 A.M.	HOME TEAM WARM-UP (35 MINUTES)	1 HOUR, 45 MINUTES
11:50 A.M.	TURNOVER (2 MINUTES)	1 HOUR, 10 MINUTES
11:52 A.M.	VISITING TEAM WARM-UP (35 MINUTES)	1 HOUR, 8 MINUTES
12:27 P.M.	FIELD PREP (3 MINUTES)	33 MINUTES
12:30 P.M.	HOME TEAM INFIELD (7 MINUTES)	30 MINUTES
12:37 P.M.	VISITING TEAM INFIELD (7 MINUTES)	23 MINUTES
12:44 P.M.	FIELD CREW PREP (6 MINUTES)	16 MINUTES
12:50 P.M.	UMPIRE/COACHES MEETING (2 MINUTES)	10 MINUTES
12:52 P.M.	INTROS (5 MINUTES)	8 MINUTES
12:57 P.M.	NATIONAL ANTHEM & CEREMONIAL FIRST PITCH (3 MINUTES)	3 MINUTES
1:00 P.M.	FIRST PITCH PLAY BALL!	

- If possible, institutions should combine field crew prep and umpire meeting.
- As a reminder, intro videos are limited to 60 seconds in length.
- If televised game, media relations and marketing will work with producer to adjust pre-game timing protocol to accommodate timing of requested first pitch. In most cases, the national anthem and intros will be reversed as to allow time to conclude anthem before start of live broadcast.
- Weather issues may dictate a need to adjust the recommended protocol. For example, if there is rain or has been rain, then the field crew may need more than 5 minutes to get the field ready. Coaches, umpires, field crew, media and marketing will need to work together to coordinator any adjustments to the pre-game protocol.
- If mutually agreed upon, senior day activities may occur prior to the start of intros. The timing sheet will need to be adjusted to account for these activities.