MAC Announces Fall Sports Operational Plan
The plan, approved by the MAC Council of Presidents, includes recommendations for each of the fall sports to conduct a substantial conference season, while mitigating health and safety concerns related to COVID-19.

CLEVELAND, Ohio – The Mid-American Conference announced Monday a spring operational plan for the Fall Olympic Sports of Volleyball, M/W Soccer, Field Hockey to return to play beginning in the winter/spring season of 2021. Men’s and Women’s Cross Country plans are still under consideration. The plan, approved by the MAC Council of Presidents, includes recommendations for each of the fall sports to conduct a substantial conference season, while mitigating health and safety concerns related to COVID-19.

The MAC Council of Presidents and Directors of Athletics reviewed recommendations from individual sport working groups consisting of Administrators, Coaches, Student Athletes, Faculty, Facility, and Medical Personnel in order to support competitive opportunities for all teams. The MAC Coordinating Committee, chaired by Ohio Director of Athletics Julie Cromer, oversaw the working groups effort to ensure a consistent approach for integration of fall sports to spring competition.

“Significant effort went into devising plans to provide meaningful competitive opportunities for the fall sports student-athletes,” states MAC Commissioner Dr. Jon Steinbrecher, “Teams will have the chance to compete not only for a Conference championship but also to participate in NCAA championship competition. I want to commend the many individuals – administrators, coaches, student-athletes, faculty, facility and medical staff who contributed to this endeavor. The working groups were thoughtful in developing the operational plans and making sure the plans provided for managing the health and welfare of the participants.

Each fall team sport (Volleyball, M/W Soccer, and Field Hockey) will participate in a modified Conference season that will allow for balancing of contests to minimize facility and staff conflicts. In accordance with NCAA guidelines, schedules will also position teams and fall student-athletes to participate in NCAA competition.

“I want to commend our committee members, including staff, faculty, coaches and student-athletes throughout our conference, for their countless hours of hard work contributed to this process,” states Julie Cromer, “We look forward to providing a safe environment for our fall student-athletes to return to the fields and courts this spring to compete for MAC Championships.”

A full list of recommendations for each sport can be found below. These recommendations are and will be subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in accordance with state and local health guidelines.
**Volleyball**

- To compete in 22 Conference matches in a double round robin format over a 10-week period between January 22nd and March 27th.
- Teams will face the same opponent twice in one weekend at one site.
- Travel partners will play midweek the two weeks following the MAC Basketball Tournament.
- Matches will take place on Thursday/Friday.
- A four team Championship will take place on Friday, April 2nd and Saturday, April 3rd at the site of the highest seed (best overall conference record) to determine the Conference automatic qualifier to the NCAA Tournament.

**Women’s Soccer**

- To compete in 10 Conference matches in a Divisional double round robin format over a six-week period between March 4th and April 11th.
- Matches will be played on Thursday/Sunday.
- A single-match Championship will take place on Saturday, April 17th at a campus site (best overall Conference winning percentage) between the two Division winners to determine the Conference automatic qualifier to the NCAA Tournament.

**Men’s Soccer**

- To compete in 10 conference matches in a double round robin format over a seven-week period between March 7th and April 18th.
- The regular season champion will receive the Conference automatic qualifier to the NCAA Tournament.
- Matches will be played on Wednesday/Sunday.

**Field Hockey**

- To compete in 12 Conference matches in a double round robin format over a seven-week period between March 12th and April 24th.
- Teams will face the same opponent twice in one weekend at one site. Also, each team will schedule Bellarmine University (incoming MAC member in 2021-22) during its bye week, providing a total of 13-14 matches. The regular season champion will receive the Conference automatic qualifier to the NCAA Tournament.
- Games will be played on Friday/Saturday.