

**Intercollegiate Rowing Association
Eligibility and Infractions Committee**

Medical Hardship Waiver

Case Number: 2019-07

Decision Date: September 23, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I 12.8.4 – Hardship Waiver

Facts of the Case: During the 2017-18 academic year, the student-athlete competed in two fall races before injury. The student-athlete was not able to return to competition.

Institutional Action: Institution sent contemporaneous medical documentation citing a season-ending injury along with all applicable doctor notes.

Decision: Student-athlete met all waiver requirements. Student-athlete received an extra year of eligibility.

Rationale: All criteria was met for the waiver to be approved.

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Legislative Relief Waiver

Case Number: 2019-08

Decision Date: September 26, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: IRA Bylaw Article III, Section 2, Delayed Enrollment (page 5 of the IRA Eligibility and Operating Bylaws)

Facts of the Case: Student-athlete competed in seven rowing competitions after 20th birthday. These competitions were discovered when the student-athlete arrived on campus and completed the non-NCAA amateurism form. The institutional coaches explained they had not appropriately conveyed the rule to the student-athlete. The institution cites misinformation and mis advisement.

Institutional Request: To allow the student-athlete to be immediately eligible and not utilize a year of eligibility.

Decision: Denied by full Eligibility & Infractions Committee

Rationale: The committee applauds the institutional compliance staff for catching the participation history during their certification process. However, there is concern that the compliance office has a grasp on the Association's rules and the institutional coaches do not.

It is to be noted that knowledge of IRA and NCAA rules is ultimately the responsibility of the Head Coach. It is their responsibility to stay current on any changes to policy and communicate such changes to staff as appropriate. Additionally, this particular rule has been in place and enforced since June of 2013. Any questions regarding IRA rules should always be brought to the attention of the Commissioner.

Further, it is to be noted the Association has only granted one waiver for this particular rule. The waiver was granted in 2013 for a student-athlete that competed after his 20th birthday when it was still permissible to do so and subsequently getting caught in the crosshairs of the legislative cycle. Since its implementation, no other waivers have been granted for the Delayed Enrollment legislation.

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Medical Absence Waiver

Case Number: 2019-09

Decision Date: October 2, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: 14.4.3.7 (a)

Facts of the Case: Student-athlete had to withdraw from school and was unable to complete credit hours. Utilizing the medical absence waiver will allow the institution to pro-rate credits toward degree completion and allow for the student-athlete to be eligible to compete.

Decision: Processed by primary conference office, Approved. On file with IRA office.

Rationale: Follows set NCAA precedent through LSDBi and conference office.

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Progress Towards Degree Waiver

Case Number: 2019-10

Decision Date: October 10, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I 14.4 Progress Toward-Degree Requirements

Facts of the Case: The SA has transferred to current institution from an international university. The certification coordinator did not engage in conversations with the compliance office or academic office, with resulted in the certification falling just below the required percentage benchmark. Further, the institution missed one transfer credit as well in the evaluation. The SA would have been able to enroll in an additional course to earn the 1 needed credit had the oversight been caught earlier in the process.

The SA is on track to graduate within 5 years and is a good student. SA has not been the subject of a prior PTD waiver.

Institutional Action: Staff submitted thorough paperwork and precedent from cases archived on LSDBi.

Decision: Approved

Rationale: The student-athlete has not been subject to a progress toward-degree waiver in the past and has a good overall academic record. Additionally, the SA's review of credit transfer was an administrative error and of no fault to the student-athlete.

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Initial Eligibility Waiver

Case Number: 2019-11

Decision Date: October 17, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: 14.3.1.5 Initial Eligibility Waivers

Facts of the Case: The student-athlete falls below NCAA initial eligibility requirements (GPA deficiency). Institution feels that due to the timing of the recruiting process there was not enough time to have the SA take additional courses to increase GPA and meet outlined standards.

Institutional Request: To grant relief from this legislation and allow the SA to be immediately eligible without serving a year in residence.

Decision: Denied.

Rationale: The IRA recognizes the intent of initial eligibility guidelines is to ensure success in the classroom. The committee would reconsider the case in the spring (after a full semester at the institution) and after the SA has the opportunity to perform well academically. The IRA would also like to see reference case precedent from similar situations via LSDBi before granting such flexibility or relief.

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Progress Towards Degree Waiver

Case Number: 2019-12

Decision Date: October 24, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I 14.4.3.1 (b) and (c)

Facts of the Case: The student-athlete was required to withdraw from the institution in the middle of a term and subsequently did not earn any credits for an academic year. However, the student-athlete is on track to graduate within five years.

Decision: Processed and approved by primary conference office, no further action required.

Rationale: Based on the facts of this case and NCAA case precedent, the request for a waiver has been approved. Evaluation of the student-athlete satisfying NCAA continuing eligibility requirements should be made on this basis

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Secondary Violation – Requirements for Official Visit

Case Number: 2019-13

Decision Date: November 26, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: 13.6.3- Requirements for Official Visit & 13.6.4- Length of Official Visit

Facts of the Case: The institutional coaching staff submitted the official visit form late and the PSA was not added to the institution's IRL prior to the visit. Further, the itinerary fell outside the institution's official visit policies and exceeded 48 hours in length.

Institutional Action: Rules education to the entire rowing coaching staff.

Additional Steps: None. Approved by primary playing conference and on file with the IRA.

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MEMO – Delayed Enrollment

Case Number: N/A

Date Issued: December 10, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: IRA Rule: Article III E-2, Delayed Enrollment

Contents of Memo: The IRA clarified the Delayed Enrollment rule to the membership and provided additional educational resources for both compliance officers and coaches.

Specific exceptions to the rule were also cited from the NCAA manual (as they would apply to women's rowing except as noted per IRA interpretation relating to 12.8.3.2.1.2).

This memo was also posted to the IRA website for ease of access by the membership.

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MEMO – Competition in Year of Transfer

Case Number: N/A

Date Issued: December 19, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Bylaw 14.5.5.3

Contents of Memo: The IRA office confirmed that Bylaw 14.5.5.3 (Competition in Year of Transfer) does not apply to women’s rowing. Therefore, men’s rowing transfer SA’s that competed for one institution in the fall are permitted to compete for a different institution in the spring semester if they are deemed otherwise eligible.

The IRA provided institutions with the NCAA official interpretation and corresponding educational column. This legislation became effective on August 1 and subsequently applies to all IRA member institutions.

Institutions were reminded, the IRA applies NCAA legislation and subsequent interpretations unless the Association has adopted a different rule. Since the Association has not adopted its own policy regarding competition in year of transfer, we must utilize this interpretation and bylaw. If the Association sought a more restrictive bylaw, it could be sponsored and subsequently voted on by the membership.

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Secondary Violation – Impermissible Contact

Case Number: 2019-14

Decision Date: December 11, 2019

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division II: **13.1.1.2**- Four-Year College PSA

Facts of the Case: Assistant Men's Rowing Coach made contact with a current 4-year college student-athlete at another institution who was not listed on the transfer portal.

A recruiting database was used to send a mass communication to a group of PSA's, but the coach did not know the group included current SA's as the group was created in the database by the previous coaching staff.

Institutional Action: Rules education with coach.

Additional Steps: None. Follows NCAA precedence with similar circumstances cited from LSDBi archived cases.

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Initial Eligibility Waiver - Appeal

Case Number: None

Request Date: January 9, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: 14.3.1.5 Initial Eligibility Waivers

Facts of the Case: Institution is asking the IRA Eligibility and Infractions Committee to revisit a decision from earlier this academic year regarding student-athlete eligibility. The SA in question performed well academically in the fall and is seeking immediate eligibility.

Institutional Request: To grant relief from this legislation and allow the SA to be immediately eligible for the spring.

Decision: Not reviewed, lack of information.

Rationale: The IRA cites lack of precedent to review this request again. The IRA empowered the institution to find precedent on LSDBi where the NCAA would approve a similarly situated athlete in another sport.

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Medical Absence Waiver

Case Number: 2020-01

Decision Date: January 24, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division II: 14.4.3.7 Medical Absence Waiver

Facts of the Case: Student-athlete was unable to attend a collegiate institution as a full-time student based on provided medical documentation to the primary conference office.

Decision: Approved. Processed by primary conference office, no further action required.

Rationale: The student-athlete met all criteria to issue the waiver based on NCAA legislation and precedent.

**Intercollegiate Rowing Association
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Secondary Violation – Impermissible Contac

Case Number: 2020-02

Decision Date: February 26, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: 13.6.1 Official Visits

Facts of the Case: PSA did not receive the Policy for Official visits for PSA's before the official visit. Assistant Coach did not submit required pre-official visit paperwork to the compliance office.

Institutional Action: Letter of admonishment to Coach and review of official visit protocol.

Additional Steps: None, approved by primary playing conference based on NCAA precedent and on file with IRA office.

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MEMO – Waivers & Rules in response to COVID-19

Case Number: N/A

Date Issued: March 16, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: N/A

Contents of Memo: The IRA office reviewed NCAA divisional actions regarding eligibility, recruiting dead periods and NLI suspension and its impact on IRA members.

The IRA strongly encourages its institutions to delay any planning or pre-payments as it relates to Henley training, travel and participation for summer of 2020.

The Commissioner, in conjunction with the Board of Stewards and Eligibility and Infractions Committee, will determine if student-athletes that compete at Henley in summer of 2020 will still be eligible for a season of eligibility waiver.

An update will be provided by April 15.

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MEMO – Updated Waivers in Response to COVID-19

Case Number: N/A

Date Issued: April 1, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: N/A

Contents of Memo: The purpose of the memo was to communicate to the membership that the IRA would not be taking a more restrictive stance regarding eligibility waivers issued by the NCAA. Therefore, current issued NCAA waivers will also apply for men’s rowing.

The NCAA Division I Council has voted to provide spring-sport student-athletes an additional season of competition and an extension of their period of eligibility.

Schools may self-apply waivers to restore one of those seasons of competition for student-athletes who had competed while eligible in the COVID-19-shortened 2020 spring season.

The Council also will allow schools to self-apply a one-year extension of eligibility for spring-sport student-athletes, effectively extending each student’s five-year “clock” by one year.

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Secondary Violation – Impermissible Contact

Case Number: 2020-03

Decision Date: May 8, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: 17.02.19

Facts of the Case: A photo of a student-athlete's workout was posted to the program's social media account. The account is run by the team and coaches are not involved with what is posted. Coach stated having past conversations with the team as to what was allowed to be posted to the account. Coach called the team and had post removed immediately.

Institutional Action: Post was deleted, and rules education was given to coach.

Additional Steps: Primary playing conference requests written notification be given to all staff involved in the violation. Otherwise, steps deemed appropriate and approved by primary playing conference. On file with IRA office.

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Secondary Violation – Impermissible Contact

Case Number: 2020-04

Decision Date: June 5, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: 13.4.1 Recruiting Materials & Electronic Correspondence

Facts of the Case: A member of the coaching staff sent an impermissible electronic correspondence to a prospective student-athlete (PSA) prior to permissive contact date. Coach misread the PSA's graduation year in an email from PSA's current coach

Institutional Action: Rules education to all coaches. Coaches will not be permitted to communicate with this PSA for two weeks once it becomes permissible to do so.

Additional Steps: Steps deemed appropriate and approved by primary playing conference. On file with IRA office.

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Progress Toward Degree - Interpretation

Case Number: 2020-05

Decision Date: June 16, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: PTD Waiver Committee, Previously Approved Waiver Checklist

Institutional Request: Institutions is seeking clarification as to whether they can self-apply a waiver that appears on the NCAA's previously approved waiver list.

IRA Interpretation: It was communicated to the requesting institution that they are permitted to self-apply any pre-approved waivers listed as long as the IRA does not have a more restrictive bylaw.

In this specific case, the legislation in question followed NCAA precedent. Therefore, the institution could self-apply the waiver for the student-athlete and move forward.

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Secondary Violation – Impermissible Contact

Case Number: 2020-06

Decision Date: June 20, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: NCAA Division I: 13.4.1 Recruiting Materials & Electronic Correspondence

Facts of the Case: A member of the coaching staff sent an impermissible electronic correspondence to a prospective student-athlete (PSA) prior to permissive contact date. The prospect was misclassified in the department's recruiting database.

The coach is aware of the proper timeline to communicate with PSA's and alerted the compliance office as soon as the error was realized.

Institutional Action: Rules education has been provided. The program will be prohibited from communicating (any form) with the prospect for two weeks once it is permissible to contact.

Additional Steps: None. IRA office deemed steps were appropriate.

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Secondary Violation – Impermissible Contact

Case Number: 2020-07

Decision Date: June 20, 2020

Applicable Bylaws: IRA Article I – Letter A. (Time Period for Phone Calls)

Facts of the Case: Member of the coaching staff called a PSA prior to the first permissive date allowed for phone communication. The coach misinterpreted the IRA-specific rule regarding phone calls to prospects.

Institutional Action: Rules education has been provided. The program was prohibited from communicating (any form) with the prospect for two weeks once it was permissible to contact.

Additional Steps: None. IRA office deemed steps were appropriate.