



2019 Volleyball

Regular-Season Regulations

1.0 Sponsorship

1.1 The following member institutions sponsor volleyball as a varsity intercollegiate sport:

The Citadel
East Tennessee State University
Furman University
Mercer University
UNC Greensboro
Samford University
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Western Carolina University
Wofford College

2.0 Regular-Season Competition

2.1 **Scheduling:** NCAA policies regarding scheduling requirements are the official policies of the Southern Conference.

2.1.1 **Conference Scheduling:** The conference master schedule will consist of a 16-game double round-robin schedule with no divisions for 2019. *(Effective 6/13)* The Southern Conference office shall produce a league master schedule prior to the start of each season. In 2019, conference playing days will be Friday/Saturday. *(Approved 6/12)* Teams reserve the right to make changes to the Conference master schedule as long as participating athletics directors are agreeable and the changes are approved by the conference office. Coaches shall confirm all match dates and times by the third Friday in August via e-mail. *(Approved 06/09)* Match start times and locations shall be the prerogative of the home institution. The last regular-season Conference match for each team must be completed by the Sunday prior to the Conference championship. A finalized home schedule must be submitted to the conference office and the coordinator of officials by January 15th prior to each season.

2.1.2 **Non-Division I Opponents:** Each Southern Conference school may play one NCAA non-Division I opponent during the regular season.

2.2 **Championship Determination:** The Southern Conference champion shall be the team that finishes with the best won-loss percentage in Conference games during the regular season. In case two or more schools finish with identical won-loss records, they shall be declared co-champions. *(Updated 8/13)*

2.3 **Regular-Season Finish:** League standings in the regular season shall determine the seeding position of teams for the Southern Conference Championship. League standings shall be determined by each team's won-loss record in all Conference matches during the regular season. Ties for seeding purposes shall be broken using the Southern Conference tie-breaking system.

2.4 **Playing Rules:** Playing rules as adopted by the NCAA shall be in effect for all Southern Conference matches.

2.5 **Match Format:** All Conference matches shall be best-of-five sets utilizing the rally point system. The rally point system awards a point on each service that does not involve a playover. Sets 1-4 shall be won when one team scores 25 points and has at least a two-point advantage over its opponent. Set 5 shall be won when one team scores 15 points and has at least a two-point advantage over its opponent. There shall be no point cap on any set of a match.

- 2.6 Official Ball:** The “official” volleyball as designated by the Conference shall be used during regular-season Southern Conference matches, unless a school has an independent agreement with another ball manufacturer for its home games. The official ball for the 2019 season is the Molten IV58 L-N Super Touch blue/silver/white leather volleyball.
- 2.7 Official Scorer:** The home team shall provide an official scorer for all Southern Conference matches. The visiting team may provide a scorer for the purpose of improving the accuracy of data collection during a match. The home team scorer shall always be designated the official book.
- 2.8 NCAA Box Score:** The home team shall be responsible for recording NCAA statistical information for both teams and compiling an official NCAA box score. The home institution must send a completed final NCAA box score via e-mail to the Southern Conference office on the same day that a Southern Conference match is completed. The visiting head coach should receive a copy of the official NCAA box score after the conclusion of each set during a Conference match.
- 2.9 Scouting Information:** Southern Conference teams shall not share scouting information on other Southern Conference teams with non-conference or other Conference schools.
- 2.10 Uniforms:** For all Conference games, the home team shall normally wear light-colored uniforms and the visiting team shall wear uniforms of contrasting color. If a team is playing back-to-back conference matches on the road before returning home, then it shall wear dark-colored uniforms for the first match and light colored uniforms for the second match. The home team would then wear dark-colored uniforms for the visiting team’s second match. It is required that all conference schools place a Southern Conference logo on their game uniforms. The recommended placement is on the left or right side of the chest, facing front.
- 2.11 Complimentary Tickets:** The home team shall provide the visiting team with 50 complimentary tickets for each Conference match, provided that the home team is charging admission. The 50 complimentary tickets should be provided from a pass list given to the home institution by the visiting institution upon its arrival. In accordance with Southern Conference Sportsmanship Code Regulations, a buffer section of visiting team seats or empty space must be provided in the area immediately behind the visiting team bench as it may be appropriate for each particular venue. The 50 complimentary tickets for the visiting team must be located within the buffer zone area. *(Revised 5/13)*
- 2.12 Student-Athlete Eligibility:** Each institution is responsible for having all of its student-athletes eligible prior to the season. All student-athlete eligibility profiles shall be transmitted to the Conference office prior to a school’s first day of competition. This information shall be filed and in accordance with the instructions of the Southern Conference Associate Commissioner for Compliance. If any questions arise, the Conference compliance administrator shall have the details on all student-athletes who are eligible for Conference regular-season and tournament competition.
- 2.13 Pre-Match Format:** The competition area (court) shall be available at least one hour prior to a match to allow for warm-ups. All matches will begin at a time determined by the host institution. The home team shall be responsible for supplying at least 20 official (Molten IV58 L-N Super Touch blue/silver/white leather volleyball) balls for both teams to use during warm-ups. All balls should be of competition quality. The same amount of warm-up time must be made available to both teams. Ball retrievers should be reminded to extend the same courtesies to the visiting team as they do for the home team during warm-ups. The host institution shall provide the visiting head coach with a pre-match protocol and/or time line upon the visiting team’s arrival on site. The NCAA pre-match protocol is required for all Conference matches.
- 2.14 Substitutions:** A maximum of 15 substitutions per set shall be allowed for both teams during Southern Conference matches.
- 2.15 Ball Rotational System:** A three-ball rotational system shall be used during Southern Conference matches.
- 2.16 Set Intervals:** Intervals in play during Conference matches shall be three minutes between all sets, except that a five-minute break shall occur between sets two and three. Timeouts in all conference matches will be 75 seconds in length. *(Approved 6/12. Updated 7/18)*

2.17 Video Exchange Policies: Video Exchange Policies: Each Southern Conference institution shall exchange conference game video via the conference's Internet video exchange program (VolleyMetrics). All conference and non-conference matches will be available on an open exchange basis to all conference members and the conference office. All game film should include each match in a continuous fashion (i.e., no breaks between points), should be filmed from an end zone location (elevated 6' to 20') and should include sound. Footage shot for video streaming does not qualify as appropriate exchange video. All lockers should contain the date of the game and the name both institutions, in that order. Score sheets, box scores and a libero tracking sheet should be uploaded along with the video. The uploading of this additional content should follow the same deadlines as the video. *(Approved and Effective 07/09; Revised 6/12)*

2.17.1 Uploading Deadlines: For Conference matches, game files of weekend matches must be uploaded by both teams by noon (ET) of the following Monday for home teams and by 5:00 p.m. ET the following Monday for the visiting team. The uploading of these weekend Conference matches shall not take place between Friday at 4:00 p.m. ET until Sunday at 4:00 p.m. ET. This lockout of uploads will currently be handled by the head coaches until the Conference electronic video exchange system has the ability to isolate the blocking of uploads with the allowance of downloading to still take place. Game files of mid-week matches must be uploaded by both teams by noon (ET) of the following day. For non-conference weekend matches, game video must be uploaded by noon ET of the following Tuesday. Non-conference mid-week matches must be uploaded by noon ET of the following day. *(Approved and Effective 07/09; Revised 6/12)*

2.18 Practice Times: Three days before each Conference match, the home team will provide the visiting team with an available practice time, provided that the visiting team will be arriving on site the day before the scheduled match. If there should be changes necessitated by the availability of facilities that is beyond the control of the host institution, revision to the stated time would be acceptable. It is to be understood that times cannot be changed for the mere convenience of the home team. On match days, practice sessions should be made available to both competing teams if possible. The home team shall be granted the first available practice session and the visiting team the second available practice session. Each of these practice sessions shall be equal in terms of time allowed.

3.0 Volleyball Committee

3.1 The Southern Conference Volleyball Committee shall consist of at least one athletics director, one faculty athletics representative, one senior woman administrator, and one head coach. The sport committee shall perform the following duties:

3.1.1 Review the sport regulations for volleyball;

3.1.2 Make recommendations to the Southern Conference Senior Woman Administrators Association and Athletics Directors Association as situations warrant;

3.1.3 Ensure that coaches are informed about league rules and matters affecting volleyball in the Southern Conference;

3.1.4 Conduct surveys, etc;

3.1.5 Administer, in general, the sport of volleyball in the Southern Conference.

4.0 Head Coaches Meetings

4.1 Southern Conference head coaches shall meet once a year in person or via teleconference to address all matters relating to the sport of volleyball and to make recommendations to the Southern Conference Volleyball Committee. This meeting shall normally take place in either January or February.

5.0 Officiating

5.1 Coordinator of Officials: The Southern Conference Coordinator of Volleyball Officials, under the direction of the Southern Conference Volleyball Committee, the Southern Conference Men's and Women's Officials Committee, and the Southern Conference Commissioner, shall establish a pool of officials for all Conference matches and assign all volleyball officials.

5.2 Officials' Assignments: Two officials shall be assigned to each Conference match. Officials assigned to conference matches may be national, junior national, regional or state-rated officials.

5.2.1 Officials' Fees: Officials shall be paid a flat fee of \$290 per official per match. *(Approved and Effective 6/14.)* Future Fees – 2020 season = \$300 per official and 2021 season = \$310 per official per match. *(Approved 10/18)*

5.2.2 Lodging: If overnight lodging is necessary the host institution is responsible for securing one hotel room for one night, double occupancy for same gender crews, or two rooms for mixed gender crews.

5.3 Evaluations: Coaches shall have the opportunity to evaluate officials working Conference matches through the conference's officiating website. Evaluations should be completed by the head coach via the website on the first working day following a Conference match.

5.4 Officials' Uniforms: Officials' uniforms for all Southern Conference matches shall be a white, collared shirt, navy slacks and white tennis shoes.

5.5 Line Judges: The home team is required to secure a minimum of two competent line judges to work Conference matches. Line judges should arrive on site at least 30 minutes prior to match time in order to meet with the officials. Line judges should be dressed in appropriate and neutral attire (i.e., navy slacks or shorts, white shirt with collar, white tennis shoes). It is not acceptable for the home team to switch line judges during a match.

6.0 Match Management

6.1 The home athletics director (or his or her designee) shall serve as the match management director for all Southern Conference matches. It is suggested that the match management director visit briefly with the officials and the visiting head coach prior to the match to answer any questions and inform them of his or her availability. The home athletics director and/or match management director also has the direct responsibility for crowd control as outlined in the Southern Conference Sportsmanship Code Regulations.

6.1.1 Game Management Provisions: The following provisions shall be provided to the visiting team by the home team:

- A. Bench: One 10-gallon cooler of water, one ice chest with ice and bags, two sleeves of cups, bench towels, one biohazard box.
- B. Dressing Room: A dressing room with showers if requested in advance. Shower towels as needed if requested in advance.

7.0 Public Address Announcer

7.1 Only the designated public address announcer may use a microphone during a Southern Conference match. The public address announcer is responsible for whatever is said over the PA system. The primary function of the announcer is to give specific information to the fans, not to incite them by unnecessary inflection of voice beyond the pre-match introduction of the home team.

8.0 Cheerleaders, Pep Bands, Dance Teams, Mascots

8.1 Cheerleader Responsibilities: Cheerleaders should be encouraged to help maintain good sportsmanship among the students and others in attendance. The head cheerleader should be ready at all times to instigate the most popular cheer in case an unpleasant situation should occur.

- 8.2 Cheerleader Restrictions:** Megaphones may never be turned toward the playing court. Amplified microphones are prohibited. Cheerleaders shall adhere to all rules as outlined by the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators (AACCA). Cheerleaders should never be located behind an opposing team's bench.
- 8.3 Pep Band Restrictions:** Bands are allowed to play only during pre-match, between sets, post-match and during timeouts.
- 8.4 Dance Teams and Mascots:** Regulations as they apply to cheerleaders also apply to dance teams and mascots.
- 8.5 Travel Restrictions:** Cheerleading squads, pep bands and dance teams may travel during volleyball season only on weekends.

9.0 Conduct

- 9.1 Coaches' Conduct:** All head and assistant coaches are to conduct themselves in such a manner during a match as to ensure or promote good crowd control. They also are responsible for the conduct of the players and other staff on the bench. Coaches (head and assistant) must follow Southern Conference Sportsmanship Code Regulations at all times.
- 9.2 Ejection/Suspension Policy:** A coach or player removed from a contest for any unsportsmanlike act shall be subject to potential disciplinary action by the conference office, including suspension from future contests. (Revised 5/19)
- 9.3 Unsportsmanlike Behavior:** Acts of unsportsmanlike behavior or unethical conduct including but not limited to those described below shall make the offending party subject to sanctions by the conference.
 - 9.3.1 Fighting:** Any attempt by a person to strike an opponent or contest participant in a combative manner unrelated to the sport involved or any act that incites an opponent to retaliate by acting in a similar manner shall be described as unsportsmanlike behavior.
 - 9.3.2 Aggressive Behavior:** The use of obscene gestures, profane language, or the display of hostile action towards officials, spectators, or opponents shall be described as unsportsmanlike.
 - 9.3.3 Ejection:** The removal by an official from a competitive sport activity shall require the ejected participant to leave the vicinity of the competitive activity immediately.
 - 9.3.4 Suspension:** A penalty that denies the involved participant from being in the vicinity of the contest beginning one hour prior to the scheduled contest until the conclusion of the contest. Suspension does not affect practice opportunities outside of the above time limitations.
 - 9.3.5 Vicinity of Contest:** The immediate area/site of the competition extended to include any point or place from which the ejected/suspended individual could observe, supervise, or participate in any manner in the contest from which the participant is being ejected or suspended.
 - 9.3.6 Competitive Conditions:** The failure of an institution to provide an environment for a contest that is safe and fair to competition shall be described as unsportsmanlike behavior.

10.0 Regular-Season Awards

- 10.1** The following awards shall be provided by the Conference and distributed to the appropriate institution following the conclusion of the Conference regular season:
 - 10.1.1 Championship Trophy:** One trophy, presented to the team with the best won-loss percentage in conference matches. In case of a tie, all tied teams shall receive a trophy.

10.1.2 All-Conference Team: Fourteen plaques presented to the members of the All-Conference Team (seven first-team members and seven second-team members). The All-Conference Team shall be voted on by the head coaches and the balloting shall be conducted by the Conference office. Coaches should nominate their players in order of coaches' preference with No. 1 being the best player, No. 2 the second-best player, etc. This ranking is shown on the ballots for postseason award voting. Coaches are not allowed to vote for their own players; *(Approved 06/09; Revised 6/10)*

10.1.3 Player of the Year: One plaque presented to the player voted Player of the Year. The Player of the Year award shall be voted on by the head coaches and the balloting shall be conducted by the Conference office. Coaches are not allowed to vote for their own player;

10.1.4 Libero of the Year: One plaque presented to the player voted Libero of the Year. The Libero of the Year award shall be voted on by the head coaches and the balloting shall be conducted by the Conference office. Coaches are not allowed to vote for their own player. A student-athlete must have competed as a libero in 50 percent of her team's matches to be considered for the Libero of the Year award;

10.1.5 Freshman of the Year (Rayna Matea Taylor Award): One plaque presented to the player voted Freshman of the Year. The Freshman of the Year award shall be voted on by the head coaches and the balloting shall be conducted by the Conference office. Coaches are not allowed to vote for their own player;

10.1.6 Coach of the Year: One plaque presented to the person voted Coach of the Year. The Coach of the Year award shall be voted on by the head coaches and the balloting shall be conducted by the Conference office;

10.1.7 Players of the Week: Eight certificates presented to student-athletes named Player of the Week during the regular season. The Players of the Week shall be selected by the Conference office. Certificates shall be presented to student-athletes named Offensive, Defensive and Freshman Player of the Week during the regular season. The Players of the Week shall be selected by the Conference office. *(Approved 6/10)*

10.1.8 Players of the Month: A Player of the Month award shall be selected at the end of each month during the regular season. The Player of the Month shall be selected by the Conference office.

10.1.9 All-Freshman Team: Seven All-Freshman Team members shall be named consisting of freshmen, redshirt or otherwise. Balloting will be done as it is for All-Conference voting. *(Effective 5/08)*

11.0 Two-Year Moratorium of Approved Sport Regulations: Sport regulations approved by the membership must be implemented for two full seasons before they may be considered for amendment, except in instances where changes are made to the regulation on a national level (i.e. an NCAA rule or a national governing body policy). Coaches' recommendations that are not approved by the membership are subject to the moratorium and may not be reconsidered by the membership for two years. A 75% vote of the athletic directors may overrule the two-year moratorium on a case-by-case basis. *(Approved and Effective 6/10)*

Conference Championship Regulations

1.0 Championship Format

- 1.1 At the conclusion of the regular season, a single-elimination Conference tournament shall be conducted to determine the Southern Conference Tournament champion and the recipient of the league's automatic bid to participate in the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship. The Conference tournament will be conducted over three consecutive playing days.

2.0 Championship Dates

- 2.1 The Southern Conference Championship will be conducted prior to the NCAA Championship on the dates recommended by the Southern Conference Senior Woman Administrators Association and Athletics Directors Association. The dates for the 2019 Conference Championship shall be Friday through Sunday, November 22-24. The first-round match between the No. 8 and No. 9 seeds shall take place on the Monday or Tuesday prior to the start of championship and hosted by the No. 8 Seed.

3.0 Championship Location

- 3.1 **Bid Process:** The location of the tournament shall be determined by a bid process conducted by the Volleyball Committee. All bids shall be reviewed and voted on by the Senior Woman Administrators Association and Athletics Directors Association.

3.1.1 2019 Championship Location: The 2019 Southern Conference Volleyball Championship shall be at the Jerry Richardson Indoor Stadium in Spartanburg, SC and hosted by Wofford College.

3.1.2 Future Championship Locations: Samford (2020).

4.0 Championship Schedule

- 4.1 **Championship Bracket and Match Times:** The championship bracket and match times shall be set by the Southern Conference Volleyball Committee. Matches may not start before announced times.

5.0 Tournament Administration

- 5.1 **Volleyball Committee Involvement:** The Southern Conference Volleyball Committee shall provide general oversight of the tournament. The Volleyball Committee shall have the authority to discipline and/or fine any member institution that does not abide by Conference regulations.

- 5.2 **Games Committee:** A Games Committee shall be appointed for the tournament consisting of Volleyball Committee members on site, the athletics director of the host institution or his or her designee, the Southern Conference championships administrator on site (who shall serve as chair of the committee), the tournament director, and the head official as designated by the Coordinator of Volleyball Officials. The Games Committee shall:

- A. Ensure that the tournament is conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Southern Conference as contained in the Southern Conference Championship manual and these sport regulations;
- B. Make decisions regarding situations that occur where resolution is not covered in the rules and regulations of the NCAA or the Southern Conference as stated in the Championship Manual or these sport regulations;
- C. Inspect the playing facilities prior to the start of the event.

- 5.3 **Tournament Director:** The host institution or agency for the championship shall appoint a tournament director who, along with the conference liaison, shall perform the following functions under the direction of the Volleyball Committee:

- A. Serve as supervisor of the tournament;
- B. Plan and coordinate all activities of the tournament in conjunction with the Southern Conference Volleyball Committee and local organizing committee(s);
- C. Provide relevant tournament information to all coaches, athletics directors, senior woman administrators, chief executive officers, faculty representatives and other necessary personnel of competing institutions;
- D. Coordinate and supervise the activities of the officials;

- E. Oversee servicing the needs of the participants and spectators as prescribed in the championship manual;
- F. Delegate duties and responsibilities to tournament personnel;
- G. Secure a certified trainer and other medical personnel for the tournament.

5.4 Media Coordinator: The tournament director shall appoint a tournament media coordinator, who shall perform the following duties:

- A. Coordinate and administer all media working areas and media hospitality areas;
- B. Process all media requests for working credentials;
- C. Coordinate the activities of the stats crew and make sure that statistics are made available to all media and teams after each set;
- D. Write and distribute all releases as necessary prior to and during the tournament;
- E. Be responsible for all-tournament balloting;
- F. Provide seating charts for the media on each day of the tournament;
- G. Coordinate the installation of phone lines as necessary for radio, television and print media on press row and in other media working areas;
- H. Make sure that all teams and electronic media are provided with pre-game itineraries and/or time lines at least one hour prior to each match;
- I. Fulfill the needs of Conference sports information directors not on site.

5.5 Medical Personnel: All medical staff for the tournament shall be appointed by the tournament director, who shall ensure that the following occurs:

- A. That a certified athletics trainer is present for all practices and at all matches;
- B. That a general practice or orthopedic physician is on call for all matches;
- C. That an EMS unit is on call during all matches;
- D. That there is planned and pre-arranged access to medical facilities;
- E. That training facilities and training supplies are available for all tournament events;
- F. That information concerning medical and training accommodations is distributed to all head athletic trainers and head coaches prior to their arrival at the tournament site.

5.6 Officials: The Southern Conference Coordinator of Volleyball Officials, working in conjunction with the Southern Conference Assistant Commissioner for Championships and the Volleyball Committee, shall contract all officials to work the tournament and shall:

- A. Assign a pool of officials to work the tournament and make individual match assignments. The pool of officials should include officials recommended by the head coaches whenever possible. Coaches' recommendations will be solicited during the annual meeting of the head coaches. Head coaches do not possess scratch power when it comes to the assigning of any official;
- B. Conduct pre-game and post-game meetings as necessary with officials;
- C. Conduct pre-game and post-game meetings as necessary with scorer's table personnel.

5.7 Additional Tournament Personnel: The following additional personnel shall be appointed by the tournament director and/or tournament media coordinator:

- A. Stats crew;
- B. Public address announcer;
- C. Official scorer;
- D. Clock, scoreboard and matrix board operators;
- E. Ball persons (at least two for each match);
- F. Dressing room attendants;
- G. In addition, Southern Conference Volleyball Committee members (excluding the head coach representative), may be assigned specific duties as necessary to ensure the orderly operation of the event.

5.8 Promotions Director: The tournament director shall appoint a promotions director, who shall ensure that a marketing and promotions plan is created to promote awareness and ticket sales to fans of member institutions and their local communities, as well as the local community that the tournament is being played in.

6.0 Championship Manual

- 6.1 The Southern Conference staff liaison shall send a Championship manual to all conference chief executive officers, faculty athletics representatives, athletics directors, senior woman administrators, head coaches and sports information directors at least one month prior to the tournament. The following information shall be contained in the manual:
- A. Facilities information;
 - B. Telephone numbers and addresses of key tournament personnel;
 - C. Local maps;
 - D. Dates, times and location of the tournament and related activities;
 - E. Information on team and institutional credentials and parking passes;
 - F. A tournament itinerary;
 - G. Medical and training information;
 - H. Media information;
 - I. Information on hospitality and social functions;
 - J. Names and responsibilities of Local Organizing Committee personnel;
 - K. Names and responsibilities of host institution personnel;
 - L. A tournament emergency plan and emergency telephone numbers.

7.0 Tournament Procedures

- 7.1 **Seeding:** The seeds for the tournament shall be determined based on each team's regular-season Conference finish. In the event of a tie for a particular seed, the seed will be determined as follows: *(Effective 10/13)*:
- 7.1.1 If one team has a head-to-head win advantage over the other, that team shall be awarded the higher seeded position;
 - 7.1.2 If each team has won one game against the other, the higher position will be awarded to the team with the best set winning percentage against each other;
 - 7.1.3 If the two teams have the same set winning percentage, the higher position will be awarded to the team with the highest total points in the combined matches;
 - 7.1.4 If each team has won one game against the other, the higher position will be awarded to the team that has the best winning percentage against the highest-seeded team not involved in the tie;
 - 7.1.5 If each team has the same record against the highest-seeded team not involved in the tie, then the winning percentage against the next highest-seeded team not involved in the tie would be considered and so on down the line until the tie is broken;
 - 7.1.6 If the records are the same against all teams, then the tie will be broken by comparing each team's Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) as published by the NCAA after completion of the regular season;
 - 7.1.7 In the event of a three-way tie, the set winning percentage of the tied teams against each other is first considered;
 - 7.1.8 If each team has the same set winning percentage, the higher position will be awarded to the team with the highest total points in the combined matches;
 - 7.1.9 For all multiple ties, the tie is broken by first deciding the highest-seeded team involved in the tie before deciding other seeding positions.
- 7.2. **Ticket Prices:** Prices for the 2019 Southern Conference Championship shall be established by the host institution and approved by the Volleyball Committee
- 7.2.1 **Complimentary Tickets:** Schools shall receive no complimentary tickets for the 2019 Southern Conference Championship.
- 7.3 **Match Balls:** The "official" ball (Molten IV58 L-N Super Touch blue/silver/white leather volleyball) as adopted by the Southern Conference shall be used during all tournament matches. The Conference office shall be responsible for ordering a minimum of one dozen new balls for use during the tournament. Six balls shall be available for each team to use during warm-ups.
- 7.4 **Playing Rules:** The playing rules for the Southern Conference Championship shall conform to those rules adopted for NCAA Division I Volleyball and the Southern Conference as stated in the Southern Conference Championship Manual and these sport regulations.

- 7.5 Uniforms:** For all tournament matches, the higher-seeded team shall wear home or light-colored uniforms. The visiting team shall wear road or dark-colored uniforms. All competitors must wear exclusively the official uniform of their institution in competition, warm-up and during the post-tournament awards ceremony. In accordance with NCAA rules, the institution's official uniform (including warm-ups) and all other items of apparel (socks, head bands, t-shirts, wrist bands, towels, etc.) should bear only a single manufacturer's or distributors normal label or trademark. The label or trademark may not exceed 2 1/4 inches square in size. Equipment (i.e., shoes) may bear only the manufacturer's normal label or trademark as it is used on all such items for sale to the general public. Failure to comply with this regulation may cause disqualification or may jeopardize a student-athlete's eligibility.
- 7.6 Student-Athlete Eligibility:** Each institution is responsible for submitting a list of competing student-athletes to the Conference compliance administrator no later than three (3) days prior to the start of the tournament. The Conference office will verify the eligibility of these student-athletes and will notify an institution if a problem arises with any of its student-athletes. Student-athletes not deemed eligible to compete may not be in uniform during the Conference championship.
- 7.7 Head Coaches Meeting:** A Southern Conference head coaches meeting will be conducted by conference call on the Tuesday prior to the start of tournament competition. The chair of the Volleyball Committee will conduct the conference call and review information pertinent to the championship. The head coach of each institution is required to participate on this call. Head coaches who do not participate are subject to disciplinary action as imposed by the Volleyball Committee and enforced by the Commissioner.
- 7.8 Pre-Match Format:** Pre-match format shall adhere to NCAA Tournament policies for single or double match protocol. The following items address the issue of pre-match format:
- A. Teams involved in the first match of each session shall have access to the tournament court one hour prior to the start of their match; Teams involved in the second match of each session may begin warm-up on a secondary court one hour prior to their scheduled start time. These teams will be allowed a minimum of 30 minutes of warm-up on the main court regardless of when the first match finishes.
 - B. The official timeline and pre-match clock countdown shall begin one hour prior to match time for the first match of each session and a minimum of 30 minutes prior to match time for the second match of each session;
 - C. A national anthem shall be played prior to the first match of each session.
- 7.8.1 Player Introductions:** Pre-match player introductions shall adhere to NCAA Tournament procedures:
- A. Teams stand at their benches for the national anthem (if applicable);
 - B. Players proceed from team bench to end line as their names are announced. The visiting team non-starters, then starters, then coaches will be introduced first; followed by the home team in the same order;
 - C. The referee shall whistle for the captains and remaining starters to go to center court and shake hands. Play will then begin.
- 7.9 Squad Size Restrictions:** An institution may designate any combination of student-athletes as eligible for competition and no more than nine additional persons in the team bench area. Team benches will be set for 16 individuals. A student-athlete will need a valid participant credential to enter the tournament venue. Coaches, trainers, managers and student-athletes not in uniform will need to display a visible participant credential to be allowed on the team bench during a match. *(Amended by NCAA 6/12)*
- 7.10 Practice Policies:** It is the policy of the Southern Conference to make as many practice opportunities as possible available to competing teams during the Southern Conference Championship. Each participating team shall be ensured a one-hour practice time on the competition court on the day prior to the tournament. All pre-tournament practices shall be arranged by the Conference office based upon distance traveled to the championship site. *(Revised 6/16)* All practices taking place the day of the semifinal matches will be assigned based upon team finish the previous day and will take place on the Championship court. *(Approved 05/15)*
- 7.11 Set Intervals:** All breaks between sets shall be three minutes in length, except the break between sets two and three shall be five minutes in length. The clock counting down the time between changeovers shall begin when both teams have left the court or gathered in the bench area, or as instructed by the head official or Conference television coordinator.

7.12 Media Policies: All coaches and student-athletes shall be available for interviews with the media following each match after a 10-minute cooling-off period has been observed.

7.12.1 Cooling-off Period: The cooling-off period will begin when all coaches and players have entered the dressing room following a match. The cooling-off period will not be extended to allow coaches or players to do interviews with a broadcasting television network. In the event that these interviews take place, the cooling-off period will begin when the majority of a team's players and coaches have entered the dressing room.

7.12.2 Dressing Rooms: The dressing rooms of teams competing in the Southern Conference Tournament will be considered closed unless a media member states a desire to enter the dressing room area prior to the conclusion of a match. This request must be made to the tournament media coordinator or the sports information director of the participating team.

7.13 Officials Responsibilities: Officials and their duties are outlined in the NCAA Volleyball Rules.

7.14 Bench Assignments: The higher-seeded team shall start each match by occupying the bench to the right-hand side of the official scorer.

8.0 Tournament Awards

8.1 Awards Ceremony: Immediately following the conclusion of the championship match, a tournament awards ceremony shall be held near mid-court. The head coach and student-athletes of the winning team shall remain on the court for the awards ceremony. The head coach and student-athletes of the losing team shall have the option of immediately exiting the court following the match or remaining for the awards ceremony. The following awards shall be provided by the Conference office and distributed at the awards ceremony:

8.1.1 Championship Trophy: One trophy presented to the head coach and captains of the winning team;

8.1.2 Runner-up Trophy: One trophy presented to the head coach and captains of the runner-up team.

8.1.3 All-Tournament Team: Seven plaques presented to members of the All-Tournament Team. The All-Tournament Team shall be selected by the coaches in a format that will allow one student-athlete from each losing semi-final round team to be named to the All-Tournament team, two from the losing final team and three from the winning championship team for a total of seven. The Most Outstanding Player will be one of the seven and selected by the winning coach. The balloting shall be conducted by the tournament media coordinator. (*Effective 5/08*)

8.1.4 Most Outstanding Player: One plaque presented to the player selected as the Most Outstanding Player of the tournament. The Most Outstanding Player shall be one of the seven members of the All-Tournament Team and selected by the winning coach (*Effective 5/08*). The balloting shall be conducted by the tournament media coordinator.

8.1.5 NCAA Championship Automatic Bid: One certificate will be presented to the athletics director or senior woman administrator of the winning school. The certificate shall signify the school's earning of the Southern Conference's automatic bid to the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.

8.2 Other Awards: Other awards presented in conjunction with the Southern Conference Tournament are as follows:

8.2.1 Individual Championship Team Plaques: Fifteen (15) individual plaques will be presented to the head coach of the championship team for presentation to the student-athletes of the championship team. These plaques will be presented at the head coach's discretion.

8.2.2 Southern Conference Pinnacle Award: The Conference annually recognizes the student-athlete with the highest cumulative GPA from the team winning the Conference post-season tournament or meet in each sport. The criteria for the Pinnacle Award are as follows: the student-athlete must be an active member on the team roster, present at the championship and eligible to compete; the student-athlete is permitted to win only once per year, even if the student competes in more than one sport; the student-athlete must have a 3.0 GPA or better; the student-athlete should be at least a sophomore in academic standing (minimum two completed semesters at the Conference institution). For tiebreaking purposes, the following considerations shall be used (in order): 1) current cumulative GPA (calculated to hundredths, e.g. 3.54) based on all semesters completed up to the point of the championship, including January terms; and 2) percentage of credit hours the student-athlete has completed toward their major. *(Approved 6/16)*

9.0 Institutional Passes

- 9.1 VIP Hospitality Passes:** Each member institution shall receive VIP Hospitality passes for use during the Southern Conference Championship, provided that VIP functions are conducted. These passes shall be provided in a number as approved by the Volleyball Committee. The passes may be distributed at the discretion of each school's athletics director or senior woman administrator.
- 9.2 VIP Parking Passes:** Each member institution shall receive VIP Parking passes for use during the Southern Conference Championship. These passes shall be provided in a number as approved by the Volleyball Committee. The passes may be distributed at the discretion of each school's athletics director or senior woman administrator.
- 9.3 Team Bus Parking Passes:** If necessary, each competing team shall be awarded bus passes as needed for use during the Southern Conference Championship. The bus passes shall be distributed by the tournament director and are non-transferable.