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Basketball Scheduling Limits

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The total number of games an institution's basketball program can schedule during a given academic year is always a common question this time of year. The following information addresses the total contest limits, the impact of exhibitions and scrimmages, accounting for junior varsity participation and the implications of international competition.

Varsity Contest Limits

An institution may schedule a maximum of 30 varsity intercollegiate basketball games that must occur during the team's 24-week season. An intercollegiate contest is any basketball competition against competitors not identified with your institution (alumni contests and intra-squad games are considered to be competition within the institution and not recognized as intercollegiate).

To count toward the NAIA National Statistical Service (i.e. included in statistics, won-loss records, and coaching records) the opponent in an intercollegiate contest must be an active or associate member of the NAIA, or meet all of the following criteria:

1. The institution must be accredited by one of the six recognized regional accrediting bodies in the U.S. or the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, or hold active membership in the National Christian College Athletic Association.
2. The institution must be a four-year (or upper-level two-year) degree-granting institution.
3. The team must be a varsity program.

Scrimmage Dates

An institution may schedule a total of two scrimmage dates in basketball in addition to the maximum number of varsity games the institution may schedule and in which a student may compete. The use of the term dates in this section of the bylaws is intentional. The intent is to allow for "jamboree" scrimmages which include playing against several other schools on a given date." Therefore, a basketball team may schedule and play three scrimmages on the same date, yet only use one of the two allowable scrimmage dates.

An institution that does not schedule or participate in the maximum number of allowable varsity games (30) may instead conduct additional scrimmages. At no time can the combined number of scheduled games and scrimmages exceed the maximum of 30 varsity games and two scrimmage dates.

For example, an institution uses its two scrimmage dates and only plays in 25 varsity games. The institution could participate in five additional scrimmage contests to reach the 30-contest maximum. (Note that here the scrimmage is taking the place of a game, measured by each individual contest rather than by dates.)

Exhibitions

Unlike other sports, an institution is not limited to one exhibition contest in the sport of basketball. An institution, if it so chooses, may substitute exhibition contests for varsity basketball games or scrimmage dates. An institution is allowed one or more exhibition basketball competition(s) per season so long as the total number of games, exhibitions and scrimmages does not exceed the maximum of 30 varsity games and two scrimmage dates.

Junior Varsity Limits

The number of junior varsity or freshman games scheduled during a given term cannot exceed the number of varsity games scheduled during that term. In basketball a junior varsity team may schedule a total of 30 games, but the junior varsity team may not schedule more games in a particular semester or quarter than the varsity team.

Individual Limits

A student is limited to participating in no more than 40 basketball games during the team's 24-week season. A student who participates in a varsity contest and a junior varsity contest on the same day and at the same location is considered to have participated in only one game. A student may participate in 40 games plus two additional scrimmage dates if the student's institution schedules the two scrimmage dates allowed in Bylaws Article I, Section F, Item 2.

International Competition

A maximum of two contests against teams from foreign countries (excluding Canada and Mexico) played in the United States and/or Canada/Mexico will be permitted without counting against the frequency of play limits. Contests held in a foreign country, except Canada and Mexico, will not apply to a team's frequency of play limits. The NAIA President/Chief Executive Officer shall be notified prior to such participation via the [form](#) available at NAIA.org

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