

Athletics halted for fall



Clark College has carefully reviewed the Northwest Athletic Conference's recently announced Return to Play for Fall Sports and made the difficult decision to not offer sports programming during the 2020 fall term.

This decision was based on the impact of the NWAC guidelines on Clark's students and staff, as well as the continued increase of COVID-19 cases in Clark County and surrounding areas. As always, the safety of our students, employees, and greater community remains paramount.

This decision will directly affect the Men's and Women's Cross Country competition season, currently scheduled to begin this Fall. Clark will forego entering teams into scheduled NWAC competitions for the 2020 season. If future decisions are made, delaying the Cross Country season to winter term, there is a possibility for Cross Country to compete in the winter.

This decision also includes training and practice components for the Volleyball, Men's and Women's Soccer, as well as the training and practice components for Men's and Women's Basketball, Baseball, Softball, and Track and Field. The college will continue to closely monitor guidance from NWAC for changes to their 2020-2021 sports calendar.

"This is by far the most difficult decision I have had to make, since taking on this role," said Clark College Director of Athletics Laura LeMasters. "Ultimately, the student safety and experience was at the forefront of our conversation, along with the safety of our coaches, trainers, and department staff. We are prepared to work with local health authorities and college administrators to return to play, when our campus and community can provide the safety and experience expected by those who attend Clark College."

LeMasters added that the college appreciates each student-athlete who chose to attend Clark College and represent the Penguins in competition this fall, and will honor their athletic aid. "Should a student-athlete decide that another situation will allow them to be successful elsewhere, Clark College stands ready to assist in that transition," she said.

Clark College will consider the status of subsequent 2020-2021 sport seasons for winter and spring at an appropriate time in the future and in accordance with the most current version of NWAC protocols for return.

As always, Clark College will continue to center its decisions on the health and safety of its student-athletes, coaches, athletic staff, support members, and fans as it responds to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley