No sports until 2021 for PSAC schools, including Millersville

JOHN WALK | Sports Writer

Jul 16, 2020

MU head coach J. C. Morgan, right, walks back to the sideline after a conference on the field with the team. College football - West Chester at Millersville. Saturday, September 28, 2019

DAN MARSHKA | Staff Photographer

The member schools of the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference, which includes Millersville University, announced Wednesday morning that its Board of Directors voted Tuesday night to suspend all of the conference's athletic events and championships through the fall semester.

Millersville director of athletics Miles Gallagher also confirmed the start of winter sporting events will be pushed back to January, essentially resulting in the suspension of any PSAC contests through the remainder of 2020.
Another factor to consider with fall sports possibly moving to the spring is seniors looking to graduate early. They may be faced with a decision to delay starting their professional careers in order to finish their collegiate athletic careers. For instance, Millersville third-year football coach J.C. Morgan said he has six seniors who are on track to graduate in December. It's a topic he discussed over a video conference Tuesday night, when he informed his players of the conference’s decision.

“It was tough,” Morgan said. “We kind of saw it coming a little bit just based on the events happening around us with other leagues and the region. It was tough to break it to our young men last night.”

The Patriot League on Monday announced the cancelation of its fall sports schedule. Last week, the Centennial Conference, of which Franklin & Marshall College is a member, announced the suspension of its fall sports, with a re-evaluation among conference leaders slated for late September on the possibility of playing those sports later in the fall. The lone exception to that is football, which won’t be played this fall, but could be played in the spring.

Meanwhile, the Big Ten Conference and the PAC-12 Conference have announced they will play conference-only schedules this fall, and the Southeastern Conference has postponed fall sports contests through the end of August.

PSAC fall sports include men's and women's tennis, men's and women's golf, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's soccer, field hockey, football, and women's volleyball. The conference's winter sports include men's and women's swimming, men's and women's indoor track & field and men's and women's basketball.

The PSAC's decision comes about three weeks before football practices were to begin and about a month before practices for other fall sports teams were slated to start.

Gallagher said Millersville, like other PSAC institutions, is working on a plan for student-athletes on fall and winter sports teams to participate “in individual or small-group workouts” this fall where, "social distancing is possible and to work with strength and
"The circumstances we find ourselves in are unprecedented and thus we are taking unprecedented measures," PSAC Commissioner Steve Murray said via a press release. "The contraction of COVID-19 and its viral spread are not the types of risks those involved with sports activities face under normal circumstances. Therefore, we cannot expose our student-athletes, coaches and university personnel to those risks. It is a painful step we are taking, but we feel it is the right one."

Gallagher said the conference is looking at playing fall sports in the spring, and having its winter sports play a conference-only schedule starting in January. Though, playing fall sports in the spring is easier said than done.

“There's no doubt it's going to be a challenge for us but we feel like we have the appropriate facilities to pull it off,” Gallagher said by phone Wednesday morning. “We’ll have to make sacrifices. But our staff is willing to do whatever it takes to make sure our student-athletes get the ability to compete.”
conditioning coaches.”

Millersville plans to reopen in the fall under a hybrid model of in-person and remote courses.

“It was heartbreaking to be on the calls last night with student-athletes and for them to hear the news,” Gallagher said. “My heart goes out to them. We have to remain positive and focus on what we can control. There will be a day soon where we'll be able to compete for conference championships again.”

PSAC’s full press release

BLESSEDMVP
@Micah Parsons11

My heart goes out to all my brothers!!! i know how hard they worked

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