

Wednesday, May 14, 2008  
Updated: May 15, 4:52 PM ET

## Big Ten discusses but doesn't vote on taking recruiting break

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ESPN.com

CHICAGO -- Big Ten Conference football coaches hope to spearhead a proposal that would add a two-week dead period each summer to the NCAA's recruiting calendar.

Introduced this week at the Big Ten's annual meetings of coaches and athletic directors, the proposal requires each school to set aside two weeks during the summer as a dead period, which prohibits in-person contact with recruits either on or off campus. The period would afford coaches, particularly assistants, a respite before training camp and the season.

The league's athletic directors and faculty representatives discussed the proposal Wednesday and Thursday but did not vote on it. They returned to campus for further discussion and will review the proposal at a later date.

If approved, the proposal would be taken to the NCAA.

The current recruiting calendar lists June 1-July 31 as a quiet period, which permits in-person contact with recruits on campus.

"We've gone to a policy where three coaches have to be in the office at all times," Purdue coach Joe Tiller said Wednesday. "God forbid you're not there when you've got a pretty good prospect and his parents standing outside the door. A dead period means nobody's going to drift into your office.

"We always talk about quality of life and assistant coaches and the ability for them and for us to get away and recharge our batteries, totally get away from the sport, but we can never get away from the sport because of year-round recruiting. [The proposal] would make a difference."

Tiller said the proposal initially called for a month-long dead period but was scaled back to two weeks. Because of varying academic calendars, each school would determine its own dead period.

"Right now, it's very difficult for your coaches to get away for any set time," Michigan State coach Mark Dantonio said. "It would allow everybody to just sort of get a breath, a huge breath. It's the first time I've ever heard that proposal, which I think everybody was fully supportive of."

Wisconsin athletic director Barry Alvarez supports the plan and noted the benefit of having dead periods, like the one during the annual American Football Coaches Association convention.

Before a dead period was implemented, many coaches would spend those days recruiting. As a result, convention attendance plummeted.

"It would be nice if there would be a period of time where everyone knows that you can be gone," said Alvarez, who coached Wisconsin from 1990-2005. "You can have a couple weeks where you don't have to worry about recruiting, you don't have to worry about someone on campus, you're not falling behind.

"That would be healthy."

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