

Q. Why is now the right time for Winthrop to make this decision?

A. Winthrop has a long and proud athletics history. With recent elevated costs of Division 1 athletics, combined with financial limitations resulting from COVID-19, it became clear that Winthrop had a structural issue with athletics budgeting. That is to say, our current athletics budgeting model was no longer sustainable. Additionally, the Winthrop Memorial Tennis Courts are in dire need of substantial repairs, causing both programs to train and compete at off-campus locations. All of this has directly impacted the student-athlete experience for Winthrop Tennis. Due to these issues, now was the time to make this incredibly difficult decision.

Q. Will Winthrop honor existing scholarships of the impacted student-athletes?

A. Yes. All athletics scholarships will be honored through the student's fourth academic year in an undergraduate program at Winthrop. Should a student need more time to graduate, scholarship support will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Q. Will Winthrop honor scholarships for new incoming student-athletes in the impacted sports (first time in college, NLI signees and transfers)?

A. Yes. Signed national letters of intent and financial aid agreements for the 2020-21 academic year will be honored next year in an undergraduate program at Winthrop. Academic services will also be available to these students during the entirety of their enrollment at Winthrop.

Q. What will Winthrop do now to handle the process with the impacted teams?

A. Our immediate priority will be supporting our tennis student-athletes. Just because this program will not continue, does not mean we are not committed to each of our students and their success. We will do everything possible to facilitate successful transitions to other tennis programs, or help them finish out their education at Winthrop. The VP for Intercollegiate Athletics, Senior Associate AD/SWA, and Deputy Athletics Director will ensure they remain accessible to each student and their families during this time.

Q. Would Winthrop like for the impacted student-athletes to stay?

A. Yes, graduation is and always has been the number one goal of each of our student-athletes. We will continue to support these students with academic support, tutoring, and other support services throughout their undergraduate careers at Winthrop should they choose to stay enrolled.

Q. Will Winthrop assist student-athletes who desire to transfer?

A. Yes. All affected student-athletes will receive full releases to transfer, if requested. Additionally, Winthrop will appeal to the Big South Conference to waive the intraconference transfer rule should those students want to attend other Big South Conference member

institutions. These student-athletes will be immediately eligible, provided they are academically eligible to compete.

Q. Will student-athletes from the impacted sports have access to key support services such as academic counseling and sports medicine for continued rehabilitation purposes until graduation from Winthrop?

A. Yes. Sports medicine services and academic counseling will continue to be provided by Winthrop to these student-athletes.

Q. What is the employment status of the coaches in the impacted sports?

A. The Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics and the Office of Human Resources are working with the individual coaches to support them during this time. Due to privacy laws, we will not expand further.

Q. Were other sports considered for elimination?

A. Multiple cost savings options were thoroughly evaluated by the university, we are hopeful this move will help ensure fiscal health for Winthrop Athletics in the future. No other sports are being considered for elimination at this time.

Q. Will discontinuing these sports impact Winthrop's Big South Conference affiliation?

A. No. Winthrop is still above the minimum for both Big South and NCAA Sport Sponsorship minimums. Winthrop remains committed to our membership in the Big South Conference.

Q. How many student-athletes and coaches will be directly affected by this decision?

A. Approximately 12 current student-athletes along with 7 incoming freshmen and transfers. Additionally there are two full time staff impacted and 2 graduate assistants. Winthrop Athletics will work with the graduate school to best support the graduate assistants, we hope they will remain and finish their studies in Winthrop's superior graduate school.

Q. What will happen to the facilities used by the impacted sports?

A. The tennis courts will remain available for use by our Winthrop University staff and students and there will be additional discussions regarding potential access for Rock Hill residents and the City of Rock Hill.

Q. Will club sports at Winthrop be an option for the impacted student-athletes?

A. Winthrop does not currently have club tennis. However, if any of the student-athletes wish to pursue this, Winthrop Athletics is committed to working with Student Affairs to see if this is a possibility as we support our students through this difficult transition.

Q. *Will the impacted sports be reinstated sometime in the future?*

A. There is no plan to reinstate these sports.