

**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III BASEBALL COMMITTEE
JUNE 23-24, 2025, ANNUAL MEETING**

KEY ITEMS.

- 1. Format change.** The committee is seeking approval of a championship format change.

ACTION ITEMS.

- 1. Legislative items.**

- **None.**

- 2. Nonlegislative items.**

- a. Automatic qualification.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the following 41 conferences receive automatic qualification for the 2026 NCAA Division III Baseball Championship:

Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Rivers Conference; American Southwest Conference; Atlantic East Conference; Centennial Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Collegiate Conference of the South; Conference of New England; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; Midwest Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference; New Jersey Athletic Conference; North Atlantic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; State University of New York Athletic Conference; United East; University Athletic Association; USA South Athletic Conference; Upper Midwest Athletic Conference; Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

The anticipated pool allocations are as follows: Automatic Qualifiers – 41; At-large – 23.

- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2025.

- (3) Rationale. All eligible conferences have been recommended.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

3. **Review of the 2024 annual meeting report.** The committee reviewed and approved the annual committee meeting report as submitted.
4. **2025 championship review.** The Baseball Committee reviewed the 2025 championship and addressed the following items:
 - a. **Opening ceremony.** The committee was pleased with the execution of the opening ceremony after the 2024 issues that failed to serve a very large group effectively and efficiently.
 - b. **Future championship sites.** The committee was informed that the 2029 - 2031 bid cycle will take place over the summer of 2026 and will review the bid information at the close of the cycle.
 - c. **Championship series game format.** The committee elected to assign the higher seeded team of in the final three game series as the home team for games #1 and #3. The lower seeded team will be the home team in game #2.
 - d. **Host Review.** Championship hosts from Eastlake, OH joined the committee to discuss championship planning and hosting logistics. Overall, both the committee and host and facility representatives were pleased with the execution of the championship.
5. **NCAA Power Index (NPI).** The committee utilized data from the past year and discussed the compared NPI selection criteria. The committee may look to update selection criteria when the window opens following year two of the NPI season.
6. **2025 regional and super regional review.** The committee discussed preliminary-round information.
 - a. **Super Regional game format.** The committee elected to assign the higher seeded team of super regional site as the home team for games #1 and #3. The lower seeded team will be the home team in game #2.
 - b. **Host Dugouts.** The committee elected to have the host of the regional and super regional rounds always be in their dugouts, including when there are doubleheaders/if necessary games.
 - c. **Bids.** The committee expressed the bid format, specifically high seed institutions that do not submit bids. However, the committee understands that there are multiple events on campus during the spring.

- d. **Site reps.** The committee agreed to implement a site rep training call prior to the regional round to ensure consistent application of policies and operation of all preliminary-round sites.
- e. **Radar Guns.** The committee agreed to allow radar guns, as they are permissible in accordance with the playing rules.
- f. **Instant Replay.** The committee will continue to research the benefits of using replay with all games being streamed on ESPN+. The committee will work with conference offices and institutions to determine if making permissible for the 2026 preliminary rounds.
- g. **Medal spikes.** The committee will again not award hosting opportunities to institutions that do not allow metal spikes on the turf playing surface. They discussed mandating teams to purchase plastic spikes or wear flats is a financial burden on institutions or does not set up a championship experience using non-game equipment.
- h. **Additional day to regional-round.** With 64 teams in the bracket, the committee discussed variables surrounding the request to add a day to the regional format along with adjusting the number of games to be played on day 2. The current game schedule goes as follows: two games day 1, three games day 2, and two (one game “if-necessary”) games day 3. With the proposal, the game schedule would be: two games day 1, two games day 2, two games day 3 and one “if-necessary” game on day 4. The focus of the committee regarding this request is to alleviate the stresses accrued by the participating institutions as well as the stress put onto the hosting institutions. The committee believes adjusting the game schedule will provide the participating institutions with a greater experience by allowing those impacted to feel as though the weekend is a more meaningful event than a regular-season weekend series and giving the student athletes time to enjoy the area in which they are selected to play.
 - With the current format, hosting institutions without lights are required to start game 3 at 8:30 a.m. to have a chance at getting all three scheduled games played in a reasonable time. Often, the game schedule gets delayed for various reasons (primarily weather conditions and natural pace of play).
 - For the institutions playing in game 3, a start time of 8:30 a.m. often calls for a wake-up call around 5:30 – 6 a.m. local to start preparation for the game. Waking up at these times decreases the feeling of a true championship experience.
 - The committee believes that more institutions will be interested in hosting opportunities by adjusting the schedule to the 2, 2, 2, 1 game format. This would give the tournament/ hosting institution more flexibility regarding game times, weather delays, and/or slow-paced games, among other variables.
 - By adjusting the game times, the committee believes this would encourage new hosting institutions to submit bids.

- The committee identified Thursday as the ideal starting date for competition.
- 7. Championship selections and bracketing.** The committee discussed selection criteria, bracketing principles, hosting guidelines, conference tournament game times, and committee and staff preparation work leading up to selections.
 - 8. Division III governance update.** NCAA staff Bill Regan provided divisional governance updates to the committee.
 - 9. Championships Committee update.** NCAA staff discussed topics related to the division, including information regarding budget changes and the positive outcomes and the impacts they will have on the membership and increased per diem.
 - 10. Bench size.** The committee discussed the intention to increase bench size from 33 (35 with two medical) to 42 (40 with two medical) to allow additional student-athletes in the dugout (bench) area. The championships committee will also look to discuss bench size for all team sports over the summer.
 - 11. Championship umpires review.** Don Umland, the Division III coordinator of umpires, provided his annual report to the committee via teleconference. The committee agreed that Mr. Umland was proficient at organizing the preliminary-round and championship finals umpiring assignments.
 - 12. Playing Rules and Officiating.** The committee videoconference with the DIII baseball rules committee members and NCAA staff liaison to discuss items including safety first base and other potential rule changes. The committee discussed when pitch clocks should be mandatory on campuses during preliminary rounds, they would not be required to host regional and super regional rounds of the baseball championship.
 - 13. Manual reviews.** The committee directed NCAA staff to make recommended edits for the pre-championship, host operations, committee operations and site representative manuals, particularly to format clean up and bench size.
 - 14. 2025-26 timeline.** The committee reviewed the regional advisory committee and sport committee timeline and staff will make the recommended updates for final committee approval.
 - 15. 2026 annual meeting.** The annual meeting is scheduled to take place June 22-23, 2026, in Indianapolis.
 - 16. Umpire fees.** The committee is discussing the potential need to increase umpire fees and adding fees for new positions. The committee will be drafting a proposal for the Division III Championships Committee to review before the February meeting.
 - 17. Committee chair.** The committee elected to appoint Ben Coopridier, associate athletics director, Grinnell University, as the chair beginning September 1, 2025. This will be Mr. Coopridier's first year as committee chair.

Committee Chair: Bill Gorman, Wentworth College.
Staff Liaison(s): J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.

Division III Baseball Committee June 23-24, 2025, Meeting	
Attendees:	
Dave Beccaria, Haverford College.	
Rick Carver, Franciscan University of Steubenville.	
Ben Coopridner, Grinnell College.	
Scott Dietz, Babson College.	
Jimmy Habecker, Keuka College.	
Bill Gorman, Wentworth Institute of Technology.	
Kyle Palmer, Texas Lutheran University.	
Jim Peeples, Piedmont University.	
Joshua Schroeder, Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference.	
Absentees:	
None	
Guests in Attendance:	
Keri Alexander Luchowski, North Coast Athletic Conference.	
Dani Johnson, North Coast Athletic Conference.	
Mark Lembke, Greater Cleveland Sports Commission.	
Don Umland, National Coordinator of Umpires.	
Jessie Woods, Colby College.	
NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:	
CJ Sowards, Championships and Alliances.	
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.	
Jonathan Youngblood, Championships and Alliances.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Stanley Broaden, Playing Rules and Officiating.	
Bill Regan, Division III Governance.	
Rachale Seewald, Playing Rules and Officiating.	