



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COMMITTEE  
APRIL 17-19, 2023, ANNUAL MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

**1. Legislative items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

**a. Automatic qualification.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the NCAA Division III Championships Committee award the following 42 conferences automatic qualification privileges for the 2024 NCAA Division III Women's Basketball Championship: Alleghany Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Rivers Conference; American Southwest Conference; Atlantic East Conference; Centennial Conference; City University of New York Athletic Conference; Coast-to-Coast Athletic Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8 Conference; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; 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 Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; State University of New York Athletic Conference; United East Conference; University Athletic Association; Upper Midwest Conference; USA South Athletic Conference; and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

Tentative Pool Allocations:

Pool A – 42  
Pool B – 1  
Pool C – 21

- (2) Effective date. 2024 championship.
- (3) Rationale. All eligible conferences are being recommended for automatic qualification similar to past years.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**b. Preliminary-round host feedback and future hosting considerations.**

(1) Recommendation. That when significant negative feedback is received regarding a preliminary-round host, that a Division III Women's Basketball Committee member, in conjunction with NCAA staff, contact the host institution's director of athletics and tournament director to make them aware of the concerns. To be eligible to host the following year, the institution in question would need to submit an action plan that addresses the specified concerns by February 1. Hosting privileges would be reviewed annually and institutions that have continued feedback concerns, or institutions that do not submit an action plan, may no longer be able to host during that championship.

(2) Effective date. 2024 championship.

(3) Rationale. The women's basketball committee greatly values the student-athlete experience for all rounds of the tournament. The committee feels it is important to be proactive in addressing concerns related to host sites and have action plans for avoiding similar situations in the future. The committee fully supports the Division III initiative, Game Day the DIII Way, and thus feels it is important to address concerning feedback received from the student-athletes, coaches and administrators.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. This effort is to raise the quality of the student-athlete experience for all rounds of the championship.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

- 1. 2022 annual meeting report.** The NCAA Division III Women's Basketball Committee reviewed and approved the 2022 annual meeting report as submitted.
- 2. Women's basketball presentation.** Lynn Holzman, NCAA vice president of women's basketball, discussed current issues in women's basketball, including gender equity progress. Ms. Holzman also presented a recap of the joint women's basketball championship in Dallas in 2023.
- 3. National and regional advisory committees (RAC).** The committee reviewed the national committee roster and the RAC roster and noted term expirations and immediate openings.

4. **Officials.** Mary Toberman, Division III women's basketball national coordinator of officials, presented her annual report. The committee asked to avoid having an official work too many games with one team (regular season and postseason) and be sure to track that information.

Ms. Toberman also informed the committee that she is stepping down at the end of her term and thanked the committee for the support and collaboration during her tenure. The committee will conduct a search for her replacement.

5. **College Basketball Academy waiver request.** Corey Berg, associate director of academic and membership affairs, met with the committee to discuss the waiver request. The committee supports the Division III Committee for Legislative Relief issuing a blanket waiver permitting Division III women's basketball coaches to coach College Basketball Academy participants. The committee noted a similar blanket waiver is in place for men's basketball, and this relief is appropriate for women's basketball as those events begin in summer 2023.
6. **Division III governance presentation.** Ali Spungen, NCAA associate director of Division III, joined the committee to provide updates from the NCAA Convention as well as other initiatives underway in Division III.
7. **Review of 2023 championship.** The committee reviewed the various videoconferences, selections, rankings and other items in the championship planning process and execution.

The committee decided to implement or continue the following items:

- Add a prospective host call and coordinate with the men's committee to conduct it jointly as an efficient use of time for the attendees.
- Add a site representative call following the host call after selections to touch base with the assigned site representatives and be a resource for them to ask questions.
- The committee agreed that the bracket working group's work significantly improved the bracketing process and will continue to engage that group in the future.
- The committee will continue to release the top-16 reveal in conjunction with the men's committee.
- The committee asked staff to continue exploring the possibility of a host/site representative collaboration zone to post hosting information in one location.
- The committee asked staff to require prospective hosts to upload/submit the hotel agreement in the bid portal.
- The committee would like to develop a feedback process to identify and address expressed issues at preliminary-round sites. The committee seeks Championships Committee feedback on what authority sport committees have to withhold a site from hosting based on past challenges that have not been rectified by the host.
- The committee wants to continue with assigning the game times for preliminary rounds and stagger the start times.

- 8. Review of 2023 semifinals and final.** The committee reviewed the semifinal site. There was good attendance and the games were very exciting. The committee noted the challenges faced with an older facility that lacked amenities that the committee deems necessary to provide championship-caliber student-athlete experiences. The committee noted some items that should be addressed in the bid specifications for the championship and directed staff to make changes prior to being presented in the upcoming bid cycle.

The committee commended the Dallas Sports Commission and all involved in the joint championship. The execution of the joint event was exemplary. The committee would like to implement the red-carpet arrivals at future championships. Another item of note is the in-venue presentation and how it has elevated the game experience the last two years. The committee would like to focus on ways to enhance these items at each venue.

- 9. Championship waivers related to the 70% in-region competition requirement.** For several years, the University of California, Santa Cruz, has submitted a waiver to be eligible for the NCAA Division III Women's Basketball Championship. The committee believes that waivers should be considered/granted for extenuating circumstances. In this instance, it appears that the institution has opportunities to meet the requirement yet has requested a waiver each season.

The committee recognizes the distance to Division III in-region teams can be a challenge for some institutions; however, there are institutions within a reasonable distance from Santa Cruz that they currently do not compete against. The committee understands the Coast-to-Coast Athletic Conference is geographically spread and does not play a typical conference schedule. As such, Santa Cruz does not have pre-established Division III in-region games the same way most schools in other conferences do; thus, Santa Cruz must pursue a schedule of non-conference opponents. However, there are other schools that have a similar challenge geographically yet can put together a schedule that meets the requirement (Hendrix College would be a good example as it incurs a significant amount of travel to play its conference opponents as well as other Division III in-region opponents).

In 2022-23, Santa Cruz played 24 total games, only 15 of which were Division III, 11 in region. Less than half of its games were in-region Division III opponents (46%). It is very difficult for the committee to evaluate a team with only 11 in-region games and only 15 Division III games compared to teams with 22 or more Division III games (all or most in region). For the women's basketball committee, the concern is not just about scheduling *in-region* games but also about scheduling *Division III* games. If they were held to the 70% in-region requirement, 17 games would have had to be in region (and thus Division III). It is still difficult to assess at only 17 but that would be a better data sample than 15. The concern for the committee is that they don't want to be unfair in their assessment of a team that has been very competitive because they simply do not have enough or equitable data for that team.

The women's basketball committee asks the Championships Committee to look closely at the intent of the waiver process and consider carefully when waivers are deliberated. Even if the

waiver continues to be approved, the committee would like the Championships Committee to consider recommending schools work toward being as close to 70% as possible.

- 10. Preview of 2024 championship.** The committee briefly discussed the 2024 championship to be held at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio. The committee agreed to add this item to the agenda for its summer meeting that will be conducted after the site visit.

The committee did express the desire to do a formal four-team banquet again for 2024. The committee asked staff to work with the host to emphasize an informal mixer-type function during the coaches meeting preceding the banquet.

The committee discussed the awards presentation at the semifinals/final site. The committee discussed changing to award four sectional champion trophies at the sectional sites. The only team trophy to be presented at the finals site would be the national champion trophy (budget impact). The mini-trophies to be given at the finals site would be national champion, runner up, and two sets of semifinalist. The committee would like to explore the possibility of presenting a runner-up team trophy at the finals site (budget impact) or the ability for a team to purchase a runner-up team trophy. The committee agreed to discuss this further and may forward it as part of a budget request this fall.

- 11. Budget initiatives.** The committee discussed providing DVSPORT at the semifinals/final site. The committee will collaborate with the men's committee for further discussion.
- 12. Review automatic qualification applications.** The committee reviewed the automatic qualification applications and recommended all conferences that met the criteria be recommended for automatic qualification. (See Action Item 2-a.)
- 13. Manuals.** The committee reviewed the various manuals and directed staff to adjust as needed.
- 14. Committee chair.** The committee voted Bethany Dannelly, associate director of athletics for facilities and operations at Washington and Lee University, as chair.
- 15. Dates of future meetings.** The committee will meet for a summer meeting on July 17. The 2024 annual meeting will be conducted April 15-17.

*Committee Chair:* Megan Wilson, University of Dubuque, American Rivers Conference.  
*Staff Liaison:* Kelly S. Whitaker, Championships and Alliances.

<b>Division III Women's Basketball Committee</b> <b>April 17-19, 2023, Annual Meeting</b>
<b>Attendees:</b>
Denise Bierly, Eastern Connecticut State University.

Jacey Brooks, State University of New York at Cortland.
Bethany Dannelly, Washington and Lee University.
Nate Davis, Gettysburg College.
Michelle Ferenz, Whitman College.
John Jones, Hanover College.
KJ Krasco, Middlebury College.
Gabrielle Lisella, Rowan University.
Suzy Venet Pietz, University of Mount Union.
Megan Wilson, University of Dubuque.
<b>Absentees:</b>
None.
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>
Mary Toberman, NCAA National Coordinator of Officials.
<b>NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:</b>
Ethan Walker, Championships and Alliances.
Kelly S. Whitaker, Championships and Alliances.
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>
Corey Berg, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Lynn Holzman, Women's Basketball.
Ali Spungen, Division III Governance.