



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD  
AND CROSS COUNTRY COMMITTEE  
JUNE 11-13, 2019, MEETING**

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

- **Additional mini-trophies at cross country championships.**

(1) Recommendation. That mini-trophies be awarded to the top 40 finishers at the Division III Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships.

(2) Effective date. 2020 championships.

(3) Rationale. The committee continues to feel that the process of awarding the NCAA mini-trophies to each of the top 15 men's and women's finishers, moving those student-athletes off the awards stage only to then bring the top 40 men's and women's finishers – inclusive of the top 15 once again – to the podium to receive their coaches association award is cumbersome for all involved and inadvertently detracts attention from both of the awards presentations. Providing an additional 25 mini-trophies per gender to match the 40 All-American coaches association awards would keep the focus on the NCAA awards. Increasing the awards to 40 would also give cross country a similar awards ratio to that of indoor and outdoor track and field.

(4) Estimated budget impact. \$3,087.50

(5) Student-athlete impact. Providing additional mini-trophies to the top 40 student-athletes to recognize their achievements would enhance the student-athlete experience and align with the awards given by the coaches association.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

**1. 2018 annual report.** The Division III Track and Field and Cross Country Committee approved the report from last year's annual meeting as presented.

**2. Committee business.** The committee reviewed the sport-specific assignments from this year and will review again in the fall once the new committee members are established. The committee also reviewed and tentatively approved the timeline for the coming year.

### 3. Cross country.

- a. **2018 championships administration.** The committee felt that the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh and Lake Breeze Golf Club served as excellent hosts for the 2018 Division III Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships. The committee noted that the weather provided for less than ideal course conditions for the championship races, but that operationally the championships were well executed.
- b. **Championships evaluations.** The committee reviewed the championships evaluations and discussed the common themes. For future championships the committee would like to see wider starting boxes and a greater distance to the first turn on the course, if possible. The committee also discussed the parking and shuttle system that received negative feedback from the championships and would look to find an alternate solution if future championships are hosted in this same location. Specific to the process from the 2018 championships, but also generally, the committee plans to implement a new secondary clerking procedure to speed up the process to make it less cumbersome for student-athletes, coaches and meet administration in the final minutes leading up to the start of competition.
- c. **Start time and race order.** The committee discussed race start times and noted that an hour between races is still ideal and that final race times will be determined after discussions with Flo Track and NCAA staff occur.
- d. **Regional realignment.** The committee discussed the USTFCCCA proposal for regional realignment and will discuss the topic again after the concept is presented to the larger coaching body at the USTFCCCA Convention in December. The committee supports a change to the current regional alignment that would provide a better balance of teams attending each regional. Increasing the number of regions, thus decreasing the number of teams attending each regional, would allow for more manageable regional competitions and potentially increase the number of hosts that would be able to bid on regionals.

Sam Seemes, chief executive officer at the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association, joined the meeting to discuss the coaches association's proposal and to answer the committee's questions. The committee reviewed both the nine- and 10-region models, the proposed selections process and the distribution of teams and individuals. The coaches association has done a great job with the initial phase of the realignment proposal and the committee is very appreciative of the effort that has been put into the proposal.

- e. **Awards.** NCAA staff informed the committee that the Division III Championships Committee approved that men's and women's regional champion trophies be awarded at each regional starting with the 2019 regionals. The committee also revisited the discussion of the USTFCCCA All-American awards and the cumbersome process each year when the student-athletes are recognized for their achievements. The committee would like to see

mini-trophies awarded to each of the top 40 student-athletes to mirror the USTFCCCA awards to keep the focus on the NCAA awards (see Action Item 2).

#### **4. Indoor track and field.**

- a. 2019 championships administration.** The committee thanks the University of Massachusetts, Boston for serving as tremendous hosts for the 2019 Division III Men's and Women's Indoor Track and Field Championships while also noting the difficulties experienced with the host facility and its staff.

As for specific issues, the lack of adequate space within the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center for warm-ups and for the throws was identified as a concern. Other areas of concern with the host facility was the lack of locker room space for student-athletes, cleanliness of bathroom facilities, and availability of host staff throughout the duration of the championships.

The championships are slated to return to Boston and the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center in 2022. NCAA staff will be in touch with UMass-Boston's staff about conducting the championships at this facility again.

- b. Championships evaluations.** The committee reviewed the championship evaluations and noted that feedback was fairly split regarding overall satisfaction. Themes revolved around the facility and its constraints (e.g., warm-up space), the timing of the luncheon banquet, and the availability and cleanliness of bathroom and locker room facilities. Concerns also were expressed regarding the high cost of business in Boston in relation to the Division III per diem and the increased stress of traffic and navigating a large city. The championship evaluations were shared with the host for review.
- c. Indoor championships schedule of events.** The committee discussed the schedule for the upcoming 2020 NCAA Division III Men's and Women's Indoor Track and Field Championships to be hosted at JDL Fast Track in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, noting that the biggest difference since the last time the championships were hosted at this venue is whether there's a space large enough to accommodate the now mandatory coaches meeting.

#### **5. Outdoor track and field.**

- a. 2019 championships.** The committee discussed the outdoor championships administration and student-athlete experience. The committee and host staff were able to address most of the concerns coming out of the championships when SPIRE hosted in 2017. Some concerns to be addressed for future outdoor track and field championships hosted at SPIRE are a need for additional flagging, bike rack and/or stanchions to properly mark coaches boxes

and identify walk-ways, additional volunteers to monitor access points and practice sessions, and having headsets available for the committee to use for walkie-talkie communication.

The committee also discussed the need for house implements to be available to student-athletes during practice times. NCAA staff will work with Gill Athletics to possibly provide additional implements for this purpose, or to implement a system in which the competition implements can be checked in and checked out during the designated practice blocks.

- b. Championships evaluations.** Overall, participating student-athletes and coaches were satisfied with their experiences at the championships. However, some of the challenges experienced at SPIRE were proximity, availability and cost of hotel accommodations and the proximity and availability of food choices.
- c. Selections process.** The committee reaffirmed the declarations timeline to be used moving forward. The declaration window will be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Eastern time. The late entry declaration window will be from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Eastern time. The selections announcement will be posted Friday not later than 9 p.m. Eastern time.
- d. Outdoor championships schedule of events.** The committee reviewed the schedule of events from the 2019 outdoor championships specifically to address the concerns of the men's and women's 10,000 meters start time. While simply moving the start time back seems to be a simple fix, there are many moving parts to a track and field schedule that must be considered as well as the possibility of inclement weather that could delay the competitions. The committee spent considerable time discussing every angle of this issue from both a coach's perspective and as meet management; both scenarios pose different struggles, making the decision complex. Ultimately the committee voted to move the start of the men's and women's 10,000 meters to the end of the schedule on the first day of competition. The committee also decided to delay the start of the meet that day to eliminate any gaps in the schedule. A more concrete start time will be published when the schedule is finalized.

## 6. General policies and procedures.

- a. Final qualifier meets.** The committee discussed final qualifier meets and the purpose they serve. There have been instances in recent history in which the integrity of final qualifier meets has been questioned, causing the committee to reconsider the parameters set on these meets and the application process. The committee discussed allowing only one final qualifier meet per region, but ultimately decided that could have a negative impact on student-athletes if access to final opportunities to qualify for the championships is

decreased. The committee will continue to monitor these meets moving forward and discuss as necessary.

- b. Qualifying criteria.** The committee reviewed the qualifying criteria and made no changes.
- c. Field event flight procedures.** The committee discussed the current field event flight procedures policies and how they came into play at the indoor and outdoor championships this year. Specifically, the committee noted that both flights of a field event must be brought out to the competition site together and remain present until the finals have been announced. Once finals have been announced, the student-athletes who did not advance will be released. Exceptions may be made when facility space constraints do not allow for that many student-athletes at one time.
- d. Jury of appeals process.** The committee reviewed the jury of appeals process from the 2019 indoor and outdoor championships and memorialized the step-by-step process to be referenced moving forward to ensure consistency in application.

## 7. USTFCCCA proposals.

- a. Indoor weight throw implement.** The committee voted to allow student-athletes to use their own indoor weight throw implements for championships competition. Committee members discussed concerns about the new policy inadvertently including the potential for unsafe implements to be entered into competition. The committee will rely on the current implement inspection process to catch these issues and that ensure unsafe implements are not certified for competition. The committee also discussed that if a student-athlete chooses to use their own implement, that implement becomes open and available for the field to use once it is certified for competition.
- b. 10,000 meters start time.** The committee voted to move the start of the men's and women's 10,000 meters to the end of the schedule on the first day of competition (refer to Informational Item 5-d for details).
- c. Championships travel party size increase.** The committee discussed the proposal to increase the championships travel party size for track and field and took no action. The committee fully supports the proposal because track and field is unique with its various disciplines. Currently, if an institution qualifies up to five student-athletes to the championships, it is allowed one additional non-student-athlete in its travel party. However, the more student-athletes means the more likely it is that more disciplines will be represented, which in turn increases the likelihood of a specialized event coach being involved. This issue is compounded the more student-athletes an institution qualifies to the championships.

In the current limitations, schools may be forced to decide which coach(es) to bring to the championships based on cost and the event specific coach(es) may not travel. This could impact the student-athlete experience as well as student-athlete safety. Compounding this issue is the fact that head coaches may be the only institutional personnel traveling with the team and are not only expected to coach but also handle all other operations such as meals and transportation, which could also become a safety issue if the individual is spread too thin. The committee will make the Division III Championships Committee aware that its concerns related to the current travel party limitations should be included in a broader discussion of travel party limitations and potentially include like sports (e.g., swimming and diving) in the discussion.

8. **Future dates and sites.** The committee reviewed the future dates and sites for all three championships through 2022. The bid portal will open in early August to accept bids for the 2020 and 2021 cross country regional meets. NCAA staff also provided an update regarding the upcoming championships bid cycle for the 2022-23 through 2025-26 championships.
9. **Timing request for proposals.** The committee selected a timing company after reviewing the submitted timing proposals for the 2019 Division III Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships. NCAA staff will work on the next steps in securing the contract.
10. **Strategic plans: cross country, indoor and outdoor track and field.** The committee reviewed the initial phase of the strategic plan process for each of the sports and brainstormed general ideas and concepts to be included. Strategic plans will be revisited this fall after more direction from NCAA staff.
11. **Governance update.** The committee reviewed a handout giving an overview of the most current divisional initiatives and updates.
12. **Other business.**
  - **3,000 meters rule change.** The committee will forward a recommendation to the NCAA Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Committee to amend the language in Rule 5, Article 7j to the following:

*If preliminaries are contested in the 3000 meters, 12 competitors shall qualify to the final. The top four from each heat should advance; however, at least two must advance on the basis of time. If more than 46 20 competitors report for the 3000 Meters, the event shall be contested as a timed-section final or as preliminaries with advancement to a final.*

The committee is recommending this change so that it would have the option to run the 3000 meters as a straight final if it would choose.

- **First contest or date of competition.** The committee discussed NCAA Bylaw 17.1.1.3.1.1-(a)-(2) which designates September 1 or the preceding Friday if September 1 falls on a Saturday, Sunday or Monday as the first date of competition. The committee feels that coaches should have more authority over their schedule and should be allowed to schedule contests when they feel is appropriate for their team(s) as long as they still meet the minimum contests and participants as required in Bylaw 20.11.3.8. Some institutions may deal with adverse weather (i.e., heat) early in the season or simply feel that their student-athletes are not ready to race. Allowing latitude on the first date of competition would allow coaches to make the best decisions for their team. The committee will continue to discuss this concept and pursue avenues for legislative change.

*Committee Chair:* Dara Ford, Otterbein University

*Staff Liaison:* Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances

<b>Division III Men's and Women's Track and Field and Cross Country Committee June 11-13, 2019, Meeting</b>
<b>Attendees:</b>
Jessica Devine, University of Minnesota, Morris.
Dara Ford, Otterbein University.
Don Nichter, Dickinson College.
Derek Stanley, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
Marlee Berg Haryasz, Westfield State University.
Natalie Bach-Prather, East Texas Baptist University.
Kevin Reid, University of La Verne.
<b>Absentees:</b>
Mike Howard, Plattsburgh State University.
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>
Sam Seemes, USTFCCCA.
<b>NCAA Staff Liaison (or Staff Support if subcommittee) in Attendance:</b>
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Nancy O'Hara, Paige Newman.
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>
None.