



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III FIELD HOCKEY COMMITTEE
JANUARY 30-31, 2023, ANNUAL MEETING**

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Automatic qualification.** The committee requests approval for all eligible conference to receive automatic qualification. (See Action Item 2.)
2. **Committee chair.** The committee elected a new chair for 2023-24. (See Informational Item 13.)
3. **Championship format review.** The committee noted the championship format and pool allocations and expressed concern with the decreasing amount of Pool C allocations with automatic qualifiers. (See Informational Item 2.)

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

- **Automatic Qualification.**
 - a. Recommendation. Approve the following 18 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2023 NCAA Division III Field Hockey Championship: Atlantic East Conference, Centennial Conference; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference, Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women's and Men's Athletics Conference; New Jersey Athletic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; and State University of New York Athletic Conference.
 - b. Effective date. September 1, 2023.
 - c. Rationale. Each conference meets the requirements of NCAA Bylaw 31.3.3 and has completed the automatic-qualification declaration form (note that pool allocations may be adjusted based on 2022-23 sponsorship numbers).

Anticipated pool allocations: Pool A – 18, Pool B – 1, Pool C – 7.
 - d. Estimated budget impact. None.
 - e. Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **2022 annual meeting report.** The committee approved the 2022 annual meeting report as submitted.
2. **Automatic qualification, pool breakdowns and regional alignment.** The committee reviewed the regional alignments by conference. Staff noted conference membership changes and will confirm once the 2022-23 sponsorship information is available. The committee discussed how field hockey is severely impacted by the amount of AQs and Pool Cs. With only a 26-team bracket and 17 automatic qualifiers, members feel there are even fewer opportunities for Pool C teams to make the tournament.
3. **Discussion with the national coordinator of officials.** The committee met with Tim Vaughan, the national coordinator of officials, to discuss the postseason assignment process, results from the survey distributed after the championship, the process for reviewing the pool of officials for postseason assignment, the addition of video review educational materials prior to the national semifinals, and the potential addition of a video review umpire at the championship (see item 3-d below).
 - a. **NFHCA convention review.** The committee provided feedback to Mr. Vaughan regarding the discussions at the NFHCA convention about providing more communication between coaches and officials.
 - b. **Umpire selection process.** The committee reviewed the process used for selecting and approving umpires for the 2022 championship and thought it went well. Committee members appreciated Mr. Vaughan's work to ensure that the appropriate officials were assigned to all rounds of the championship. The committee discussed ideas on how regular-season conference assignors can provide feedback to Mr. Vaughan ahead of the 2023 selection date. The committee discussed the assignment of finals site officials, and specifically the championship game.
 - c. **Video review at the championship.** The committee discussed the confusion surrounding video replay at the championship since it is not a regular-season function. Mr. Vaughan is working on educational materials that can be reviewed prior to the championship. The committee agreed to meet with Mr. Vaughan or his designee and the production crew prior to the championship to ensure a smoother process.
 - d. **Video review umpire for the Division III Field Hockey Championship.** The committee reviewed the addition of the video review umpire at the finals site and commended the recommendation from Mr. Vaughan to include that umpire and will plan to keep the position in place moving forward.
 - e. **RQ+ transition.** The committee discussed with Mr. Vaughan the opportunity with the RQ+ transition to provide more educational materials, videos and notes to the membership throughout the season. In addition, committee members discussed moving up the rules test deadline to assist in preparation for the championship.
 - f. **Officials Evaluations.** The committee discussed the desire to restart coaches' evaluations during the championship with officials and the officials' supervisors. Mr. Vaughan supported this idea, and the committee will plan to implement that into future

championships.

- g. Officials' radios.** The committee discussed the need for officials to be on radio with all umpires at the site and instructed NCAA staff to work with Mr. Vaughan in asking that question in the availability survey.
- 4. Recap of the National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) convention.** The committee discussed the bulletin provided to the coaches at the breakout meeting of the convention. The committee reviewed the voting outcomes regarding proposed rules modifications at the convention, which also were reviewed during the joint meeting with the Divisions I and II Field Hockey Committees. The committee discussed adding video review at second- and third-round sites and noted the potential budget impact. The committee instructed NCAA staff to explore the budget impact for the upcoming budget cycle.
- 5. Review of materials for the joint meeting.** The committee reviewed the agenda and materials for the joint meeting with the Divisions I and II Field Hockey Committees and prepared its position statements on current topics. (See the joint meeting report for more information.)
- 6. Rules proposals.** The committee discussed each rules proposal to provide feedback to the two Division III committee members that sit on the rules subcommittee. The goal was to ensure the rules subcommittee could accurately represent the goals of the Division III sport committee as well as the feedback received from the general Division III membership at the NFHCA convention.
- 7. 2022 championship review.**
 - a. Site representative recruitment and training.** The committee discussed the recruitment of site representatives for the 2022 championship and agreed that despite having a great pool of candidates it is challenging to lock in site reps on Sunday night for games the following Wednesday. While it was challenging, the committee noted improvements based on recommendations suggested at the prior year's annual meeting. The committee discussed continuing and enhancing communication with potential site reps further in advance of the Sunday selections. The committee also discussed training for the site representatives and agreed that it is difficult to expect anyone to fully comprehend the vast amount of information such a short time. The committee was pleased with the implementation of a new organizing strategy used to share information with site reps and will plan to continue to improve the education materials and process for 2023.
 - b. Championship format.** The committee was pleased with the format of the 26-team bracket in its second year of implementation. Members hope that sponsorship will continue to grow so that the bracket can be expanded further in the future. The committee discussed the potential need to change the date formula if the bracket continues to expand. The committee will continue to review whether this change is needed and the appropriate time to do so.
 - c. Rankings.** The committee supported continuing the first regional rank as alphabetical.
 - d. Selection call.** The committee discussed the selection timeline for 2022. The committee was pleased with moving up the selection call and therefore having RAC calls completed earlier as well. This led to the successful implementation of a selection show. The committee noted the struggle with conference championship games being played during the selection call but

discussed strategies to make use of the valuable time and discussing the teams. The committee was pleased with the technology and number of potential hosts. The committee also discussed the recusal/replacement process during the selection call when a committee member's institution is under consideration. The committee's desire is to no longer have a recusal policy so that committee members can stay on the call but be silent during the that portion of the selection process. The committee also discussed different strategies on how to improve the process of Pool C selections.

- e. **Selection show.** The committee was pleased with the implementation of a selection show in 2022 and plans to continue this practice in 2023.
- f. **Preliminary rounds.** The committee reviewed preliminary-round feedback. The committee noted the importance of refining some policies, including bringing clarity to practice time assignments, walkthrough options, and game time options. The committee noted some issues on practice time assignments at four-team sites and will work to make a more definitive policy for 2023. Additionally, the committee supported adding optional walkthroughs for all teams on the day of the first-round game due to travel logistics. Finally, the committee supported having hosts submit game times with their bids and using that information when creating the bracket prior to the selection show. The committee also discussed capable facilities and hosts and what those expectations should be moving forward.
- g. **Full field runaround pregame.** The committee noted it will implement a championship policy that student-athletes stay on their own half of the field once the warm-up clock is started.
- h. **Day of rest.** The committee was pleased to add a day of rest to the finals site and anticipates that continuing to add value to the experience at future championships.
- i. **Student-athletes in uniform.** The committee was pleased with allowing all traveling student-athletes within the bench number (40) to be in uniform during the championship. This enhanced the student-athletes experience. Additionally, the committee was pleased to provide all student-athletes participating in the championship with an NCAA blue disk patch.
- j. **Signage.** The committee was pleased with the signage provided at the championship and thought it added to the championship experience. The committee was pleased with the ticket punch signed, enlarged bracket, and lighting piece throughout the championship.
- k. **Hotels.** The committee was pleased with the team hotel for the finals and reiterated the need for the teams to continue to have meeting rooms at the hotel. The committee noted the importance of a hot breakfast and meeting room at the finals site hotel when at all possible. The committee discussed ensuring all rounds of the championship have a great hotel experience and will continue to reiterate that to future hosts. The committee was pleased with the survey results around hotels.
- l. **Broadcasting/streaming.** The committee was pleased with the broadcasting of the national championship and was pleased that all preliminary-round hosts streamed the games.
- m. **Banquet.** The committee reviewed the banquet and supported continuing the event moving

forward.

- n. **Community service.** The committee appreciated the community service project that the hosts put together and supported a similar idea moving forward.
- o. **All-tournament team.** The committee was pleased with the composition of the all-tournament team at the finals site and will continue with this approach in 2023.
- p. **Game times.** The committee will remain flexible on finals site game times with the hopes of staggering from the different divisions but will keep the Division III student-athlete experience at a premium.
- q. **Game ball.** The committee affirmed the white, smooth Penn Monto Elite ball as the official ball of the 2023 championship. The committee appreciated the increased number of practice balls sent to the finals site. The committee also noted that the 2023 championship will require hosts to provide a minimum of 75 practice/warm-up balls rather than asking teams to provide their own balls.
- r. **Survey review.** The committee reviewed the survey results and discussed them throughout the various sections of the agenda.

8. 2023 championship.

- a. **2023 committee timeline.** The committee affirmed the timeline for 2022 worked well and will hope to use a similar timeline in 2023. The committee discussed adding selection preparation meetings around the selection technology and processes. Members also discussed adding an in-person administrative meeting between the two practices on Saturday.
- b. **Banquet.** The committee supports continuing to examine the best way to honor student-athletes, whether it's through a banquet or some other initiative. The committee is open to considering alternatives with host institutions.
- c. **Locker rooms.** The committee noted the need to emphasize with hosts during prep calls and site visits that each team's locker room spaces must be as equitable as possible. The committee will review the 2023 host's locker room plan and ensure it meets the expectations of the championship to the best of their ability.
- d. **Community service.** The committee supports continuing a partnership with a local community service organization but is open to new ideas on how to best integrate the partnership into the flow of a busy championship weekend. The committee supported working with the host to provide a boxed lunch for teams to assist with the logistics.
- e. **Practice.** The committee confirmed the process for selecting practice times worked well for 2022 and will plan to use this method for 2023. The committee noted moving practice later in the day on the day of rest.
- f. **Official ball.** The committee confirmed to use the smooth ball throughout the championship. The Penn Monto Elite will be the official ball for the 2023 championship.

9. Bid cycle.

The committee noted the 2026-30 bid cycle and reviewed the specs to host the

Division III Field Hockey Championship finals. The committee will schedule future meetings in 2023 to review the bid specs, and eventually the submitted bids in 2024.

10. **Budget cycle.** The committee noted the upcoming Division III budget cycle with requests due in early 2024.
11. **Regional Advisory Committees (RAC).** The committee reviewed the RAC rosters and made note of vacancies. The committee asked staff to re-emphasize on the RAC training webinar that RAC members are expected to serve as site representatives.
12. **Committee roster.** The committee noted the expiring term of two members. The committee is pleased with the current make-up of term expirations to help maintain an experienced base from year to year.
13. **Committee chair.** The committee confirmed that Jodi Cipolla, head field hockey coach at Endicott College, will serve as the chair for 2023-24.
14. **Division III update.** NCAA Managing Director of Division III Bill Regan provided an update from the NCAA Convention and other ongoing Division III initiatives. Discussion included upcoming Division III Championships Committee initiatives on the championship experience, the Division III philosophy statement, and a process for federated playing rules. Additionally, Jeff Meyers and Brittany Higgins from the academic and membership affairs staff joined to provide legislative updates from the NCAA Convention and potential proposals for 2024.
15. **Field hockey manuals review.** The committee reviewed the various manuals and instructed staff to make the appropriate updates.

Committee Chair: Chrissy Chappell, Connecticut College, New England Small College Athletic Conference
Staff Liaison(s): Caleb Kolby, Championships and Alliances; Markell Staton, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Field Hockey Committee January 30-31, 2023, Annual Meeting	
Attendees:	
Jodi Cipolla, Endicott College.	
Chrissy Chappell, Connecticut College.	
Megan Cross, SUNYAC.	
Penny Kempf, Rowan University.	
Victor Brady, Bryn Mawr College.	
Enza Steele, Lynchburg University.	
Absentees:	
None.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Tim Vaughan, National Coordinator of Officials.	
NCAA Staff Liaison (or Staff Support if subcommittee) in Attendance:	
Caleb Kolby, Markell Staton.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Bill Regan, Jeff Meyers and Brittany Higgins.	