



REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III FIELD HOCKEY COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 29-30, 2024, ANNUAL MEETING

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Automatic qualification.** The committee requests approval for all eligible conference to receive automatic qualification. (See Action Item 2-a.)
2. **Committee chair.** The committee elected a new chair for 2024-25. (See Informational Item 16.)
3. **Selection Criteria Database.** The committee reviewed the selection criteria database that is currently being reviewed by the Division III Championship Committee. (See Informational Item 11.)
4. **Budget priorities.** The committee reviewed and discussed the different budget priorities, including the bracketing models, being reviewed by the Division III Championships Committee and what would be best for their sport in the long term. (See Informational Item 12.)
5. **DVSPORT at finals site.** The committee discussed and recommended procuring a video replay provider at the finals site. (See Action Item 2-b.)

ACTION ITEMS.

1. **Legislative items.**

- None.

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

a. **Automatic qualification.**

- (1) Recommendation. Approve the following 18 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2024 NCAA Division III Field Hockey Championship: Atlantic East Conference, Centennial 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; State University of New York Athletic Conference; and United East Conference.

(2) Effective date. September 1, 2024.

(3) 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 2024-25 sponsorship numbers).

Anticipated pool allocations: Pool A – 18, Pool B – 1, Pool C – 7.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**b. DVSport at finals site.**

(1) Recommendation. To procure DVSport video replay at the finals site of the Division III Field Hockey Championship.

(2) Effective date. September 1, 2024.

(3) Rationale. The committee believes field hockey needs a specific video replay operating system available for the finals site. Currently, field hockey is one of the few Division III sports that still uses the broadcast stream as its replay provider at the finals site. The broadcast stream is not a video replay solution company and does not provide video review technology that an actual provider would provide. Additionally, because of not bringing in a specific provider with additional cameras, the championship only has replay available behind one goal instead of both, creating an unequitable competitive advantage for one team per half. The committee recommends contracting the provider to bring additional cameras and personnel to the championship to run video replay on site at the championship, in conjunction with the video review official.

(4) Estimated budget impact. \$10,000. The general fee for DVSport at other championships with this model is approximately \$10,000, which also included costs for traveling personnel.

(5) Student-athlete impact. With only having video replay available during the finals of the championship, the student-athletes should be provided with the best available options to facilitate that review. Video review is used to ensure the decision is correct, and this would ensure all options are exhausted and that multiple camera angles are available to make the correct call in the most important moments of the season and championship.

### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **2023 annual meeting report.** The committee approved the 2023 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 be confirmed once the 2024-25 sponsorship information is available.
3. **Discussion with the national coordinator of officials.** The committee met with Tim Vaughan, national coordinator of officials, to review his annual report specific to Division III. Mr. Vaughan discussed the challenges with the quick turnaround from selections to first round but commended the additional planning and host questions to understand potential first-round game times during the bid process. Mr. Vaughan noted that there is still a gap in postseason quality umpires being available and eligible and what is required for the tournament. Mr. Vaughan reviewed his plans for umpire recruitment and education for 2024.
  - a. **Umpire Selection Process:** The committee thanked Mr. Vaughan for his work throughout selections, including using the best available umpires for all rounds of the championship.
  - b. **Umpire evaluations and corresponding actions.** The committee asked for additional follow-up and education to be provided to umpires who receive a negative coaching evaluation to understand the umpire perspective and, if needed, what to correct in the future, while additionally encouraging more dialogue with the coach submitting the review, if required.
4. **Discussion with the secretary-rules interpreter.** The committee met with Cheryl Bruttomesso to discuss the 2024 rules proposals. Ms. Bruttomesso provided guidance and clarity to the proposals as needed. The committee thanked Ms. Bruttomesso for her diligent work over the past year.
5. **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.
6. **Review 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.)
7. **Rules proposals.** The committee discussed each rules proposal to provide feedback to the two Division III committee members who 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.

## **8. 2023 championship review.**

- a. Rankings:** The committee reviewed the regional ranking process and noted that the regional chairs work hard to stay consistent across regions. The committee thought the timeline of the rankings from week to week worked well. The committee noted the potential changes to the regional ranking process if the selection criteria are changed. The committee also noted the desire to revisit the regional alignment if the new criteria are not approved.
- b. Regional Advisory Committees.** The committee noted upcoming vacancies, and the use of the regional advisory committee if the selection criteria are changed.
- c. Selection day review.** The committee discussed the selection day timeline and was pleased with the changes in timing this year to better accommodate the ongoing games during selection. The committee noted the consistent process used during the Pool C selections and how that should be the standard moving forward. The committee was pleased with the bracketing technology provided and used during selections.
- d. Committee replacement and recusal policy.** The committee noted its continued frustration with the committee replacement and recusal policy during selections. The committee could not come to a consensus on a solution but noted frustration around not having committee members available during the most crucial part of the committee responsibilities.
- e. Selection show.** The committee was pleased with year two of the selection show. The committee noted a desire to move the start time of the show earlier in the evening if the selection criteria database is adopted.
- f. Site representatives.** The committee was pleased with the recruitment and training of the site representatives used at the first, second, and third rounds. Members were thankful of the work these individuals provided to support the championship.
- g. Championship shared folder.** The committee noted the success of the championship shared folder technology for sharing documents with hosts, site representatives and participants.
- h. Preliminary-round policies.** The committee discussed the policy improvements from 2022 to 2023, including more clear guidance on walkthroughs and practice times, and not permitting full field run-arounds during warm-ups. The committee discussed policy improvements for 2024, including more clarity around the warm-up music and mascot

policies. Additionally, the committee discussed the starting lineup and awards policies, and decided to recognize the student-athletes during the starting lineup process rather than the awards process. Finally, the committee decided to increase the minimum ticket prices to \$5 for preliminary rounds.

- i. **Games committee.** The committee discussed and instructed staff to change the games committee for preliminary rounds to include an administrator or coach from a participating team, rather than only an administrator.
- j. **Second-round game times.** The committee discussed the preferred game times for the second round of 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. The committee understands the need to keep the 10 a.m. start time available but prefers to use this only if absolutely necessary, with case-by-case approval annually. The committee also will work with potential hosts who need to have a later start time but will approve that in the same manner it approves any deviation request.
- k. **Joint NCAA postseason round hosts.** The committee discussed second/third round hosts that are also hosting another NCAA postseason round in another sport, specifically soccer. The committee instructed staff to work closely with other championship managers to reflect different game times when possible, and especially when the competition fields are in proximity of one another. The committees believes this will improve the student-athlete experience for both sports.

#### 9. 2023 finals site championship review.

- a. **Team hotel.** The committee was pleased with the additions of complimentary team meeting rooms for each team, with audio visual services. Additionally, the committee was pleased with the signage provided at the team hotel. The committee expects this as the standard moving forward at future hosts.
- b. **Banquet.** The committee was pleased with the work of the hosts at the 2023 banquet. The committee affirmed the plan to continue with a traditional banquet format at the 2024 championship.
- c. **Schedule of events.** The committee discussed the schedule of events at the finals site and confirmed the practice times and order on Thursday were correct. While the committee discussed moving semifinal times, members decided the prescribed times of noon and 3 p.m. were best for the student-athlete experience. The committee decided to move the practice times on Saturday later by one hour to accommodate the morning practice needs to prepare student-athletes. The committee decided to move up the national championship game time to noon to assist with team travel and the staggering of championship game times at all three divisions.

- d. **General operations.** The committee was pleased with the general operational improvements implemented at the 2023 championship. The committee thanked host Christopher Newport University for providing outstanding service to the student-athletes.
  - e. **Community service.** The committee noted that community service opportunities at the championship will be reviewed annually.
  - f. **Video review.** The committee discussed the continued education of video review needed at the finals site for the participating teams. The committee noted the desire for a more effective video replay system (see Action Item 2-b above). The committee also reviewed a Division III-specific rules proposal that allows student-athletes two reviews rather than one. The committee recommended to forward the proposal to the rules subcommittee.
  - g. **Reseed.** The committee discussed possibly reseeding the final four teams at the finals. The committee weighed the pros and cons and decided to not reseed the bracket at any time after it is selected.
10. **2024 championship ball.** The committee confirmed to use the smooth ball throughout the championship. The White Penn Monto Elite will be the official ball for the 2024 championship. The orange ball will be provided but used only if decided by the games committee. The championship will also provide practice balls for second- and third-round hosts as well as at the finals site.
11. **Inclement weather policy.** The committee noted the need to have a more concise inclement weather policy and procedures for the championship operations. The committee instructed staff to work on guidelines and provide to the committee for approval. The committee noted the desire to play a game to completion, even if needing an additional day, but never playing more than one game in a day.
12. **Selection criteria database.** The committee discussed the proposed selection criteria database. The committee discussed the desire to revisit the current criteria, specifically the home and away multipliers in strength of schedule if the Division III Championships Committee does not move forward the new selection criteria. The committee reviewed the selection criteria database and the data provided on past championships. The committee started to discuss the details of the new criteria but will not finalize until the database is approved and more direction is provided.
13. **Division III Championships Committee update.** NCAA Director of Championships Laura Peterson-Mlynski joined the committee to discuss the upcoming Division III Championships Committee initiatives and meetings. Discussion included the budget priorities and the selection criteria database. The committee discussed the different bracketing models in the budget priorities survey and provided feedback on the best solution for field hockey. The committee noted the lack of available at-large bids and why the model selected works best for field hockey. The committee understands the Championships Committee will make a decision for all sports.

The committee discussed the potential new selection criteria and asked for clarity on timing of the decision. The committee noted that, while supportive of the new criteria, the turnaround time for fall sports and their schedules is a slight concern.

- 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 the Division III philosophy statement, updates on athletic training, and a reminder of the process for federated playing rules. Additionally, Becca Trovato from the academic and membership affairs staff joined to provide legislative updates from the NCAA Convention.
- 15. Committee roster.** The committee noted the expiring term of two members, plus the immediate vacancy in Region VI. The committee is pleased with the current rotation of term expirations to help maintain an experienced base from year to year.
- 16. Field hockey manuals review.** The committee reviewed the various manuals and instructed staff to make the appropriate updates.
- 17. Committee chair.** The committee confirmed that Victor Brady, head field hockey coach at Bryn Mawr University, will serve as the chair for 2024-25.

*Committee Chair:* Jodi Cipolla, Endicott College, Commonwealth Coast Conference  
*Staff Liaison:* Caleb Kolby, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Field Hockey Committee January 29-30, 2024, Annual Meeting	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Wendy Andreatta, University of Rochester.	
Victor Brady, Bryn Mawr University.	
Jodi Cipolla, Endicott College.	
Penny Kempf, Rowan University.	
Krystyanna Ramsdell, Worcester State University.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
None.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
Tim Vaughan, National Coordinator of Officials.	
Cheryl Bruttomesso, Secretary Rules Interpreter.	
<b>NCAA Staff Liaison (or Staff Support if subcommittee) in Attendance:</b>	
Caleb Kolby.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Bill Regan, Markell Staton and Becca Trovato.	