



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III FIELD HOCKEY COMMITTEE
JAN. 26-27, 2026, ANNUAL MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

a. Automatic qualification.

1. Recommendation. Approve the following 18 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2026 NCAA Division III Field Hockey Championship: Collegiate Field Hockey Conference, Conference, Centennial Conference; Conference of New England; 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, 2026.
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 2025-26 sponsorship numbers).

Anticipated allocations: Automatic qualifiers – 18; At-large – 10.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

b. NPI dial change.

1. Recommendation. The committee requests an immediate change to the Quality Win Base Value of its current NPI dial of 52.5 to 53.0.
2. Effective date. September 1, 2026.

3. Rationale. The committee reviewed the fall 2025 selection data and noted that the quality win base value of 52.5 is providing considerably large quality win bonus values in Division III field hockey. The current base value of 52.5, combined with 20% win percentage and 80% strength of schedule dials on the NPI itself, is resulting in a win bonus for more than 50% of the institutions that sponsor the sport and culminating in final NPI numbers with an average of 54.58, notably higher than other Division III sports and higher than any previously observed field hockey season. The committee noted that a significant number of teams ended with NPI values over 80 and win values over 100. Additionally, the data showed that due to the considerably high bonus value being applied, some teams were moving up the rankings by almost a full NPI point when no longer playing, rather than an average of .25 points that other sports experience. Due to these data, the committee requests an immediate change outside of the 18-month notification window and three-year data pilot. The committee feels confident that this minor change would not impact how teams schedule their opponents. The committee also requests to maintain its ability to review all dials, including the quality win base value, after the 2026 season, due to the emergency need for a dial change.
 4. Estimated budget impact. None.
 5. Student-athlete impact. The committee believes that changing the quality win base dial with an immediate effect would ensure the NPI rankings will allow for the best teams selected to the field for the 2026 championship. The committee also believes the ability to review all dials again after the 2026 championship is best for the membership to have three years of data before making a considerable change.
- c. Video replay required to host preliminary rounds for the 2027 championship.**
1. Recommendation. Require video replay to be used in order to host any preliminary round starting for the 2027 championship, while highly encouraging it for the 2026 championship.
 2. Effective date. September 1, 2027.
 3. Rationale. During the 2025 championship, preliminary-round hosts used video review for the first time. Of the 16 hosts, eight used video review. The committee noted the desire to have all hosts during NCAA championship play to have video replay available for the umpires. The committee considered requiring this for the 2026 championship but agreed that providing an 18-month notice should be ample time for potential hosts to plan accordingly. The committee also noted similar requirements that have been implemented in basketball and football for Division III. The national coordinator of

- officials fully supports this initiative to allow the umpires every possible opportunity to get the call right.
4. Estimated budget impact. Minimal. Field hockey video replay requires a minimum of one camera angle being available for video review. Each host is already required to stream the game and is provided a financial stipend by the NCAA to offset the expense. The additional infrastructure needed to meet the minimum requirement for video replay would include an additional laptop/monitor with the stream, and a gameday staff member to assist the umpire in queuing up the film for the appropriate spot. While the committee desires for hosts to have more than one angle available, members understand that having one angle available is better than having none at all.
 5. Student-athlete impact. The committee believes that requiring video replay for every game of the NCAA championship will allow the student-athletes the best possible experience during competition to get the call right on the field.

d. Video replay umpire at second and third rounds.

1. Recommendation. To provide a video replay umpire at the second and third round as an officiating position assigned by the NCAA Field Hockey National Coordinator of Officials.
2. Effective date. September 1, 2026.
3. Rationale. With the addition of video replay during the preliminary round introduced during the 2025 championship, the committee noted the desire to provide a video replay umpire during second- and third-round competition. The specificity around the second and third round is due to the additional umpire already being onsite for the doubleheader on Saturday. The committee would request one of the off umpires during each game be assigned to the video replay position, only collecting an additional game fee. For the third round, one additional umpire would be provided with a game fee, as they were already provided per diem for this day.
4. Estimated budget impact. \$1,500. The NCAA will provide a \$125 game fee for each video replay official during the second and third round, a total of 12 games. As described, there is no additional lodging, per diem or mileage fee since this umpire was already assigned to the site.
5. Student-athlete impact. The committee believes that providing a video replay umpire during the second and third round will allow one umpire to focus on the video replay operation, streamlining the replay functionality and allowing for quicker restart and

decision process. The committee also believes this will allow student-athletes to be more comfortable with the video replay official should they advance to the finals site where a video replay umpire already exists.

e. Fourth broadcast camera at the finals site of the championship.

1. Recommendation. Provide a fourth broadcast camera at the finals site of the Division III Field Hockey Championship.
2. Effective date. September 1, 2026.
3. Rationale. The committee believes a fourth broadcast camera will enhance the quality of the NCAA.com broadcast, align the camera quantity with the Division II Field Hockey Championship, and provide a better replay angle for video replay operations, allowing for a fully operational camera behind each goal during the championship. The committee noted this as consistent feedback from participating teams at the finals site of the championship over the past several years.
4. Estimated budget impact. \$3,000. The NCAA broadcast department provided the estimate to provide a fourth camera, operator, and lift for the championship. The expense provided was lowered due to an already occurring expense being used for a camera only used for video replay that would no longer be needed, meaning the total request would be for \$3,000 annually.
5. Student-athlete impact. The committee believes that providing a fourth camera for broadcast and for video replay would significantly enhance the student-athlete experience on the field as well as the viewer experience.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **2025 annual meeting report**. The committee approved the 2025 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 2026 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 did note that the number of registered and eligible officials increased from the year prior, which significantly increased the pool of umpires. Mr. Vaughan noted that 180 officials were eligible, and 51 officials were used across all three divisions. Mr. Vaughan also noted

monthly conference calls occurred between the NCAA officiating staff and the regular-season conference coordinators. The committee thanked Mr. Vaughan for his selections and affirmed its desire to have the best available umpires at each round of the championship, based off the evaluation methods outlined by Mr. Vaughan.

4. **Recap of the National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) convention.** The committee reviewed the voting outcomes regarding proposed rules modifications at the convention, which also were reviewed during the joint meeting. The NFHCA provided a majority support of two operational initiatives outlined in Informational Item Nos. 5 and 6 below.
5. **Active roster eligibility for the championship.** The NFHCA proposal outlined the coaches' desire to eliminate the squad size for championship play, noting student-athlete experience. Currently, teams must declare their 24 student-athletes eligible to play in each game prior to warm-ups. Coaches would prefer that all student-athletes be eligible to compete, since they are already allowed to be on the bench, in uniform, practice, and warm up. The coaches acknowledged that the participant medallion number could remain at 24, but the flexibility to play the entire roster during the championship, if approved, would be a tremendous experience for all student-athletes on the team. While the committee supports this idea, members noted this decision is beyond their purview, and they could only support the idea through the meeting report and review with the Division III Championships Committee during an upcoming meeting.
6. **Student-athlete patches.** The NFHCA proposal outlined a desire for all student-athletes on the active roster to receive an NCAA Disk patch during championship play. Currently, only the squad size receives a student-athlete patch. Coaches noted the negative reaction from each student-athlete who does not receive a patch, and the counterintuitive approach of allowing non-eligible student-athletes to do everything an eligible student athlete can do outside of playing in the game and receiving a patch. Coaches also noted that they do not have to tell student-athletes if they are eligible or not, but by not receiving a patch, it becomes obvious for the non-eligible competing student-athletes. As with the proposal in Item No. 5 above, while the committee supports this idea, members noted this decision is beyond their purview, and they could only support the idea through the meeting report and review with the Division III Championships Committee during an upcoming meeting. Committee members noted that if an increase in patch size was permissible, they would request 30 total patches per team for the 2026 championship to help alleviate this concern. This increase would have a minimal budget impact if considered.
7. **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.)

- 8. Rules proposals.** The committee discussed each rules proposal to provide feedback to the four Division III committee members who serve on the rules subcommittee. The goal was to ensure the rules subcommittee could accurately represent the interests of the Division III sport committee as well as the feedback received from the general Division III membership at the NFHCA convention.
- 9. Committee timeline.** The committee reviewed the timeline for meetings and had no desired changes for 2026. The committee also noted the entire roster would return for 2026.
- 10. Rankings.** The committee reviewed the new NCAA Power Index regional ranking process. The committee reviewed the pros and cons of still posting regional rankings despite a national ranking being available. Ultimately, the committee supported the idea of continuing regional rankings for additional publicity opportunities for the sport. The committee also supports the additional NPI rankings that occurred two weeks from selections and urged NCAA staff to consider two pushes during the week once October begins.
- 11. Regional Advisory Committees (RACs).** The committee noted upcoming vacancies. The committee also discussed the new role of the RACs. Committee members noted they still find value in the idea of a RAC, but communication was not active from RAC members in 2025. The committee noted a desire to change the job description of the RAC and take it upon themselves to seek a better response rate moving forward.
- 12. Notification of hosts.** The committee discussed the idea of notifying guaranteed first-round hosts of their hosting selection prior to the selection show, with the main reasoning to help mitigate potential shipment delays for the first round.
- 13. Selection call, conference championship timing, and selection show review.** The committee discussed the selection day timeline and was pleased with the changes in timing this year to better accommodate the selection show. The committee will consider moving it up even further assuming the conference championship schedules remain the same. The committee desires all conferences to play championship games on Saturday, noting the turnaround time of a selection show that occurred on Sunday afternoon instead of Sunday night would be beneficial to all first-round hosts and participating teams. The committee was pleased with the enhanced production of the 2025 selection show, including an addition of analysis of the pairings from ESPN commentator, Leah Secondo.
- 14. Bracketing philosophy.** The committee affirmed its belief that after following traditional bracketing philosophies of protecting the top four seeds and reducing flights as outlined by the Division III Championships Committee, the preference is to remain true to seed as best as possible within the allowable mileage limit. The committee asked NCAA staff to add language around this philosophy into the pre-championship manual for 2026.

- 15. First-round game times.** The committee discussed potentially changing the timeframes in which first-round games can be played. The committee ultimately did not recommend a change to ensure flexibility is allowed for all teams participating in the tournament, while being fair to potential travel impacts on visiting teams.
- 16. Second-round practice policy.** The committee voted to change the second-round practice policy to align with practice policies at the other rounds of championship, allowing selection to occur via NPI ranking. This change will be outlined in the 2026 manuals and selection information.
- 17. Championship uniform policy.** The committee was pleased with the additional communication from teams, site reps, and the NCAA on uniform pairings for the 2025 championship. The committee voted to change the uniform policy to note that the lower seeded team (2 is lower than 1) must change uniforms if there is a uniform conflict deemed by the National Coordinator of Officials. This does not include goalie jerseys, which will be determined after the field uniforms are selected.
- 18. Game ball policy.** The committee reviewed the first year of the new game ball policy, noting success in allowing the dimple ball on specific surfaces for the first time during the championship. The committee discussed if any tweaks needed to be made to the policy and ultimately decided the policy should remain as set for 2026.
- 19. Film policy.** The committee discussed the current film policy during the championship and elected not to make any changes at this time, including continuing to not allow the filming of all games during the second round or semifinals for the non-participating teams. In other words, a team may film only the game in which it is competing. The committee asked NCAA staff to add more specific language to the manuals to outline this scenario during future championships.
- 20. Inclement weather policy.** The committee conducted its annual review of the inclement weather policy and requested no changes.
- 21. Championship survey results.** The committee reviewed the survey results compiled by participants of the championship throughout the meeting and instructed NCAA staff to seek more information about certain preliminary-round sites and report back at the next meeting.
- 22. 2025 finals site championship review.**

 - a. Team hotels.** The committee was pleased with the change of two team hotels during the 2025 championship. The committee noted the continued need for complimentary team meeting rooms for each team. The committee noted feedback from teams on potential improvements for future years.

b. Banquet. The committee was pleased with the work of the hosts at the 2025 banquet. The committee affirmed the plan to continue with a traditional banquet format at the 2026 championship but will continue to make this decision annually based off the feedback from the championship participants.

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, the committee tabled the discussion until summer meetings. The committee was pleased with the noon start time to the championship game and plans to use that time slot again so long as the other divisional game times remain the same. The committee also confirmed the continuation of the administrative and coaches meeting on-site at the championship. The committee noted the need to shorten the warm-up time available for the second semifinal to 45 minutes in-order to ensure an appropriate game start time.

23. 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.

24. Division III update. NCAA Managing Director of Division III Bill Regan provided an update from the NCAA Convention and other ongoing Division III initiatives. Additionally, Sarah Turner from the governance and member services staff joined to provide legislative updates from the NCAA Convention.

25. Division II and III field hockey rules subcommittee roster. The committee confirmed that Wendy Andreatta, Carrie Austin, Krystyanna Ramsdell, and LA Lane will continue to serve as the Division III representatives on the new Division II and Division III field hockey rules subcommittee.

26. Committee chair. The committee confirmed that Wendy Andreatta, head field hockey coach at the University of Rochester, will continue to serve as the chair for 2026-27.

Committee Chair: Wendy Andreatta, University of Rochester, Liberty League

Staff Liaison: Caleb Kolby, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Field Hockey Committee Jan. 26-27, 2026, Annual Meeting	
Attendees:	
Wendy Andreatta, University of Rochester.	
Carrie Austin, University of the South.	
Megan Corrigan, Alvernia University.	
Therese Doyle, Kean University.	

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LA Lane, Clark University.
Krystyanna Ramsdell, Worcester State University.
Absentees:
None.
Guests in Attendance:
Tim Danehy, NCAA Power Index (NPI.)
Tim Vaughan, National Coordinator of Officials.
NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:
Caleb Kolby.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Sarah Turner, Bill Regan and Markell Staton.