



MEDIA COORDINATOR'S MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to highlight the responsibilities of the media coordinator at each preliminary host site of the 2026 NCAA Division I Football Championship.

This publication should be used in conjunction with the Preliminary Round Operations Manual and the Division I Pre-Championship Manual.

Media coordinators should work closely with the sports information directors of each participating team to provide smooth press operation at each site, both for the media and teams.

Although this and the other publications attempt to cover all phases of championship competition, some questions may arise before or during the event. Media coordinators and SIDs should feel free to contact the undersigned concerning any aspects of media operation.

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BLOGGING POLICY

A credentialed media member may blog during any NCAA championship event, provided that such blog does not produce in any form a “real-time” description of the event (i.e., any emulation or display of any kind that replicates or constitutes play-by-play of a material portion of an event, other than periodic updates of scores, statistics or other brief descriptions of the event) as determined by the NCAA in its sole discretion. If the NCAA deems that the credentialed media member is producing a real-time description of the contest, the NCAA reserves all actions against the credentialed media member, including but not limited to the revocation of the credential.

CHAMPIONSHIP WEBSITE GUIDELINES

NCAA.com will host all championship websites for final round sites. Hosts can build a micro site that highlights local information (hotels, places to eat, things to do, etc.).

COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS

No complimentary tickets are available at NCAA championship events. Members of the media desiring "media purchase" tickets should contact the host media coordinator, or someone designated by the SID.

CREDENTIALS

All media credentials for preliminary round competition are authorized and issued by the NCAA at the site of the competition.

NCAA policy **PROHIBITS THE ISSUANCE** of media credentials to the representatives of any organization that regularly publishes, or otherwise promotes the advertising of, "tout sheets" or "tip sheets," or other advertising designed to encourage gambling on college sports events. The policy also prohibits the issuance of credentials to professional scouts.

Working credentials should not be mailed. The media coordinator should issue credentials individually at a designated headquarters hotel or other appropriate site. A photo ID or some other type of positive identification should be required to pick up credentials.

Printing of Credentials

Depending upon media demand, credentials may be like the host institutions' regular-season games or may include more specific designations.

The following is a sample of the types of credentials that should be produced, if applicable:

- All-Access/VIP – The host institution for all preliminary rounds should provide the visiting team with 13 All-Access credentials for its “University Personnel” [e.g., president/chancellor, athletics director, Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), associate athletics directors and sports information contacts]. The visiting institution’s applicable conference office staff should receive a maximum of three

additional All-Access credentials. All-Access credentials are good for stadium entrance. The visiting institution should also be provided 10 VIP passes, which will allow key constituents (e.g., alumni, spouses, etc.) to have access to the field, press box, news conference and locker room areas. This pass is not good for stadium entrance.

- Media/Sideline Media (ESPN) – These should be issued to members of the media and should allow access to the sidelines, locker rooms (post game only) and the interview room.
- Sideline Photo – These should be issued to still photographers and should allow access to the designated sideline areas, press box, locker rooms (post game only) and the interview room.
- Bench – These should be issued to all non-uniformed personnel on each bench (e.g., head coach, assistant coaches, trainers and managers). Individuals wearing a uniform should not be issued a credential. Access should include the sidelines, locker rooms, press box and interview room.
- Event Management – These should be issued to all auxiliary stadium personnel and grants access to designated areas.
- Temporary Field Pass – These should be issued to individuals who require access to the field either during pregame or halftime ceremonies. The credential is not good for access to the sidelines while the game is in progress.
- Official Pass – These should be issued to individuals who require access to the field for official capacity, including game officials and ball kids.

It is acceptable for concession workers and ushers to be admitted to the stadium through the policy used during the regular season. Band members who are in uniform and performing at the championship should be admitted free of charge.

In addition, NCAA national office staff and committee members (site reps) will have credentials that should allow them all access to the facility.

Guidelines for Credentialing

General Policies: Credentials must be worn as specified below to gain entry to the arena and for access to designated areas. For more information, please review the [Credential Terms & Conditions](#) as well as Appendix E of the [Media Coordination Manual](#).

DIGITAL RIGHTS OVERVIEW (STREAMING/MOBILE)

Please visit [here](#) for updated information.

DIGITAL HIGHLIGHTS USAGE POLICY – MEMBER SCHOOLS

Please visit [here](#) for updated information.

DIGITAL HIGHLIGHTS USAGE POLICY – MEDIA, THIRD-PARTY WEBSITES

Please visit [here](#) for updated information.

INTERNET POLICY

The NCAA website, [ncaa.com](#), serves as the official online resource for NCAA championships. The NCAA and its partners own the internet rights to all 94 championship events. Rights include live statistics, video and audio streaming, electronic commerce, and post-event footage use. The NCAA and its partners own all game action, practice footage, press conferences, one-on-one interviews or any other content on the NCAA website.

INTERNET LIVE STATS

[NCAA.com](#) is the official destination for live scores and statistics from NCAA Championships. NCAA Digital will acquire a live Stat Crew or NCAA LiveStats data feed from all rounds of Division I Football Championship. Schools participating in these contests may not display live statistics on their official website, other than by linking to NCAA.com, a member of the NCAA Digital operations team will be in contact with the host institution's media relations director to arrange the live stats feed and testing schedule.

Live statistics are considered a protected right as part of a bundled rights agreement, referenced above. For clarification purposes, a live statistical representation includes play-by-play, score updates, updated box scores, photos with captions, etc.

LIVE VIDEO STREAMING RIGHTS POLICY

For the 2026 championship, live video streaming will not be allowed during the championship as the ESPN family of networks will televise preliminary games.

MEDIA HOSPITALITY AND ENTERTAINMENT

If a media dinner is planned, it should be scheduled for the evening prior to the competition. Pregame meals before each session are encouraged, but not required. Press souvenirs no longer are permitted at any NCAA championship.

Although media hospitality and entertainment are desirable, but not required, disbursements for these items should be guided by the budget which originally was submitted by the tournament manager and approved by the Division I Football Championship Committee. Budgets cannot be changed without the prior approval of the committee.

NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP PHOTO TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please visit [here](#) for NCAA Championships Photo Terms & Conditions.

FOOTAGE USAGE AND LICENSING

<https://www.ncaa.org/championships/media-center/>

All preliminary round games will be televised by the family of ESPN networks (ABC, ESPN, ESPN2, ESPNU and ESPN+). No ENG camera crews may film any preliminary round games. All ENG crews must plug into the ESPN audio/video mult-distribution box and take the feed from the production truck for highlights. The NCAA recommends that the host SID work with the ESPN producer or operations manager to establish the best location to place the ESPN-provided mult-box. The NCAA recommends that host schools find a covered area within 100 feet of the production truck. Please supply two eight-foot tables and adequate power sources for your local TV stations or school DVD/VCRs.

A television station may broadcast any press conference live regardless of whether they hold the broadcast rights to that specific contest. The rights to these press conferences remain with the NCAA and are under the same guidelines as the news footage usage.

PERSONNEL

Each media coordinator is responsible for organizing workers to assist in the press operation of the championship.

The number of workers will depend upon the media demand for the games at the site. Communication with the participating SIDs and the media coordinator's knowledge of the area media will help with advance planning.

Such duties as press runners, quote takers, stat crews, copy machine personnel, etc., should all be coordinated with the tournament manager.

PHOTOGRAPHY AREA POLICIES

No photographers are permitted in the "team areas," which are back of the limit lines between the 25-yard lines. Photographers may be restricted to designated photo areas depending on the host institution's health and safety policies.

**NO MEDIA PERSONNEL OR THEIR EQUIPMENT SHALL BE IN THE TEAM AREA,
AND NO MEDIA PERSONNEL MAY COMMUNICATE IN ANY WAY WITH PEOPLE IN
THE TEAM AREAS.**

Photographers may not place tripods on or beside the playing field or attach strobes to goal posts.

POSTGAME INTERVIEWS

All coaches and student-athletes shall be available for interviews. However, if a member of the coaching staff or a student-athlete is ejected during the game, the individual(s) will not participate in the press conference.

Each host media coordinator should designate an interview room or area at the facility and an individual to coordinate the activities in it. Interviews may be in-person, virtual or a hybrid depending on the hosts health and safety policies. If in-person, steps should be taken to keep media at a safe distance and to follow the health and safety protocols of the host institution. Participants should have their own entry or exit point to the interview room. The interview area should have a public-address system, an elevated head table or dais. Host institutions are required to have a designated press conference moderator.

Media coordinators should utilize an audio mixer (mix down unit) for the designated interview area to permit individuals utilizing microphones to attach their equipment to it, eliminating the presence of audio equipment and/or operators in front of, or adjacent to, the speakers at the dais.

The following is a quick checklist of minimum requirements for the interview setup:

- Permanent structure near the playing field (preferred but not required) or
- Temporary covered structure near playing field
- Seating for a minimum of 25 media
- Risers or an area with an unobstructed view for television cameras
- Table for a minimum of 4-6 for the interviewees
- Moderator
- *Pool reporter
- Quote taker(s)
- Sufficient amplification
- Sufficient electrical outlets
- Mult-Box (Provided by ESPN)
- News conference backdrop that is blank or has institutional logos. No corporate logos should be placed on the backdrop.

The sports information director representing each participating institution, working with the media coordinator, should designate an individual to escort the coach and student-athletes to the interview area after a 10-minute cooling-off period.

All locker rooms should be open to the media after a 10-minute cooling off period. The 10-minute clock starts when the coach enters the locker room.

The postgame press conference format shall specify the visiting team should be scheduled first in the interview room followed by the host team. Each interview should consist of the head coach and two student-athletes.

The interview with the visiting team generally should not exceed 10 minutes.

Regardless of any personal regular-season radio or television contract(s), the coach and selected players are obligated to the entire press staffing the tournament and must report to the interview room immediately after the 10-minute cooling-off period expires. The coach cannot delay a postgame interview with the covering media to conduct a program for a single newspaper, radio or television reporter. After fulfilling all commitments to the press staffing the tournament, the coach and players may participate in special interviews.

Coaches and student-athletes should not be made available to selected media representatives prior to the conclusion of the 10-minute cooling-off period. The visiting coach and student-athletes may, however, immediately report to the interview room and be available to all media representatives staffing the championship. Should a coach permit one media representative to enter the dressing room before the 10-minute cooling-off period has expired, the dressing room will be open to all other media representatives desiring access to the area.

The only exception to this policy is for ESPN and they are permitted a FOUR-MINUTE period immediately after the game to conduct post-game interviews. This does not mean four minutes per person, but four total minutes for all individuals interviewed. The media coordinator or designee has the responsibility to terminate the four-minute interview period, NOT the network/station that has purchased rights.

When a game includes a potential fighting situation that results in a technical foul and/or ejection of a participant, a rules interpretation is requested or there is a clock or timing issue, the pool reporter shall accompany the NCAA staff representatives to the officials' locker room to receive an interpretation in order to enhance the media's understanding of the activities that occurred. Interpretations are not given if the situation in question is a judgment call. Prior to entering the officials' locker room, the pool reporter shall go to the interview room or media workroom to speak to other media members and compile a list of questions to ask the involved official.

The host media coordinator, who will prepare the statement, will distribute the information to the media after it is reviewed and approved by an NCAA staff representative. Any statement involving an official's interpretation can be read by the news conference moderator in the interview room while the statement is being distributed.

If the involved official does not elect to speak to the pool reporter, the referee will decide whether the referee or the standby official will provide the interpretation on behalf of the officiating crew. The interpretation shall apply exclusively to the specific situation and will only be used to provide an interpretation of a rule.

Quotes shall be distributed to the media immediately following each press conference.

PRESS PARKING

Press parking is desired at each site, but this decision must be made by the host. If press parking is limited, "carpools" should be encouraged to permit the greatest use of the parking area. Press shuttle systems also may be used provided any costs are included in the budget submission and are approved by the NCAA Division I Football Championship Committee.

PROGRAMS

Championships will feature a digital game program, which the NCAA and LEARFIELD Publishing has the exclusive right to post/distribute at the competition venue during the championship. No competing publications are permitted at NCAA events.

LEARFIELD will be responsible for all program production, including editorial content, layout and design, and advertising. Championship media contact should provide LEARFIELD with text and photos for editorial pages about host institution/venue/city, if requested by LEARFIELD. Any pages promoting the host institution/venue/city will not be display advertisements; those interested in purchasing advertising space for sponsors, etc., should contact Clerrinda Queen (clerrinda.queen@learfield.com).

LEARFIELD encourages the host institution/venue to distribute supplemental handouts (i.e., updated statistics and notes), provided any such materials:

- are only distributed with the purchase of a program;
- do not include information available in the program;
- do not include advertisements.

The host should not include expenses for such supplements in the championship budget and/or financial report. All supplemental content is subject to NCAA and LEARFIELD approval.

RADIO

Please visit [Radio Policy](#) for updated information.

SEAT ASSIGNMENTS

Media coordinators should review seating charts prior to gameday to ensure that media agencies regularly staffing games played by the participating and host institutions receive preferred seat locations.

SECURITY

Security personnel should be instructed to protect the working press areas and interview area especially before and after each game, and to limit access in all restricted areas to individuals wearing credentials. It is incumbent upon the media coordinator to emphasize the NECESSITY TO PROTECT THE WORKING PRESS AREAS from the fans, and to encourage the security supervisor to designate additional personnel to staff this area before and after each game.

SPORTS INFORMATION DIRECTORS

The sports information director representing each participating institution shall provide the host media coordinator with a list of media representatives from the institution's geographic area who will staff the event.

Game notes provided by the participating SIDs and the media coordinator are encouraged but not required.

STATISTICAL SERVICES

Play-by-play and complete box scores should be provided to the media, along with coach and player quotes from both teams' post-game press conferences.

Each participant's sports information director should update team and individual statistics after each game, and the statistics should be reproduced and distributed preceding the team's next competition in the championship.

Flip cards should be provided to all media members for easy reference to participating team information, where applicable. The flip cards should include all players on the roster and a minimum of their uniform numbers along with the head coach and any assistants. The flip card should include team results as well as standard information regarding the game, such as date, location and opponent.

TEAM CONTENT PERSONNEL

Please visit [here](#) for updated information.

Each participating institution may designate up to two individuals as team content personnel. Those individuals will be provided with a credential and an armband/vest, and they will be permitted to film and/or photograph their student-athletes ONLY during competition.

Team content personnel may only shoot from designated areas that have been determined by the media coordinator. During competition, team content personnel must follow all rules that apply to any other credentialed media member.

Team content personnel will be given access to:

- Any area that credentialed media is able to access.
- The court/field during closed practices.
- The team locker room during pregame, halftime, postgame, and any other times when the locker room is open to the media.
- The postgame celebration and awards ceremony, if applicable.

Team content personnel are the only individuals outside the NCAA broadcast partner(s) who may shoot live, game-action video.

VIDEOGRAPHER FOOTAGE USAGE

Veritone is the exclusive licensing agent of the NCAA and our library provides member institutions access to the NCAA video and photo archive. Schools wishing to post footage from NCAA championship events are required to maintain an annual Member Institution License purchased from Veritone.

A single project request for footage may consist of up to five minutes of NCAA copyright footage for usage in one project. The project can NOT result in revenue generation. All agreements must be signed in accordance with member institution policies and include the signature of director of athletics or the assistant/associate director of athletics. Digital delivery is free of charge.

Please visit [here](#) for more information.

NCAA MEMBER INSTITUTION FOOTAGE PURCHASE PROGRAM

Please visit [here](#) for updated information.

TELEVISION POLICIES

Please visit <https://www.ncaa.com/media-center/broadcast-services> for updated information related to the NCAA's television and video policies. Once on that webpage, scroll to the "Broadcast Services" section to review information on technical specifications, transmission requirements, right information and broadcast policies.

WIRELESS

Wireless internet access must be available at all championship rounds for media use. The host institution may NOT assess an additional fee to any media agency for this service. Any wireless charges should be charged to the host or reflected in the proposed budget.