

DIVISION II **FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP**

The Division II Football Committee implemented new bracketing initiatives beginning with the 2019 championship with the intention of reducing flights in the first two rounds of the championship. The committee has the ability to adjust a qualified team's placement in the championship bracket. This revised bracketing model has been approved through all levels of the NCAA governance structure and will continue for the 2022 NCAA Division II Football Championship.

Please note that the team selection process has not changed from past years. The committee will still select the top seven teams in each super region (taking into account any teams that qualified via earned access) and once the bracket is complete and released there will be no changes until the four teams are seeded going into the semifinal round.

The committee will bracket the football championship according to the following principles:

1. The teams awarded the number one seed in each of four super regions shall receive a bye in the first round and are placed in the appropriate positions in the bracket in their selected super region [in each super region bracket, seed number 1 (bye) and 4 in the upper half with one unseeded team; and Nos. 2 and 3 in the lower half with two unseeded teams];
2. Teams that are selected in the #5, #6, and #7 spots in each super region will be considered 'unseeded' and can be paired with any #2, #3, or #4 seeded team in the first round. Unseeded teams may be placed in any super region bracket if doing so reduces the number of flights in the first/second round.
3. Teams that reach the field via earned access will be paired with a #2 seed in the opening round in their home super region (*unless preliminary round flights can be reduced by being paired with a #2 in an alternate super region*). In the event that multiple teams earn berths in the field via earned access, those teams shall compete against seeds two and three in the first round in an appropriate seed order as determined by the committee.
4. 24 teams (all teams that are not #1 seeds) will play first-round games. Seeds #2, #3 and #4 in each super region will be paired with any unseeded team using pairings principles listed below.

Teams will be placed on the bracket using the following priorities with the consideration that the NCAA Division II mileage threshold for mandatory team travel via ground is 600 miles.

Example of Bracketing Principles

Previous Model

	miles between	
	<u>schools</u>	<u>travel</u>
No. 2 seed hosts team A.....	880.....	flight
No. 3 seed hosts team B.....	331.....	drive
No. 4 seed hosts team C.....	617.....	flight

Enacting Current Bracket Principles

No. 2 seed hosts team B.....	450.....	drive
No. 3 seed hosts team C.....	460.....	drive
No. 4 seed hosts team A.....	550.....	drive

Priorities for Bracket Placement of Unseeded Teams:

- a. Priority 1: Unseeded teams will be placed into the bracket in order to maximize reduction of first-round flights.
- b. Priority 2: Unseeded teams will be placed into the bracket in a fashion that will reduce the likelihood of second round flights.
- c. Priority 3: Repeating regular season match-ups in the first round of the championship should be avoided, provided that doing so does not increase the number of flights (per priorities 1 & 2).
- d. Priority 4: Teams shall be paired accordingly based on what its seed would have been prior to being listed as 'unseeded'.