



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III FOOTBALL COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 27-28, 2025, MEETING**

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

- **None.**

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

**a. Automatic qualification.**

- (1) Recommendation. Approve the following 27 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2025 championship: American Rivers Conference, American Southwest Conference, Centennial Conference, Collegiate Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin, Commonwealth Coast Football, Empire 8, Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference, Landmark Conference, Liberty League, Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference, Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association, Middle Atlantic Conference, Midwest Conference, Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, New England Women's & Men's Athletic Conference, New Jersey Athletic Conference, North Coast Athletic Conference, Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference, Northwest Conference, Ohio Athletic Conference, Old Dominion Athletic Conference, Presidents' Athletic Conference, Southern Athletic Association, Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, Upper Midwest Athletic Conference, USA South Athletic Conference, Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

The anticipated pool allocations are as follows: Automatic Qualifier – 27; At-Large – 13.

- (2) Effective date. Immediately.

- (3) Rationale. All recommended conferences meet the criteria for automatic qualification eligibility.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.

- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**b. Minimum cameras – preliminary rounds.**

- (1) Recommendation. Require hosts of first, second, third and quarterfinal rounds of the Division III Football Championship to provide a minimum of two cameras for streaming purposes.

- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2025.

- (3) Rationale. As the committee looks to improve on year two of the ESPN+ streaming experience, the committee gathered feedback from institutions that sponsor football

to help finalize a recommendation to the Division III Championships Committee pertaining to livestreaming minimum camera requirements for hosting the 2025 football championship preliminary rounds.

Survey findings indicated more than two-thirds of respondents used two or more cameras during the regular season or preliminary rounds. More than three-fourths recommended requiring at least two cameras for preliminary-round games.

For 2024, minimum technical requirements mandated hosts use at least one camera for all NCAA football preliminary-round games. Since ESPN+ broadcasts the preliminary-round livestreams, the network has requested to increase the minimum cameras required to improve production value. In addition, the committee recommends increasing the broadcast stipend, from \$1,000 (one camera minimum) to \$2,000 (two camera minimum) to help offset production and announcing costs.

(4) Estimated budget impact. \$37,000.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Minutes from 2024 annual meeting.** Minutes from the committee's January 2023-24 annual meeting were approved as submitted.
2. **Governance update.** Governance staff discussed topics related to Division III football, including current financial status, budget and webcasting updates from the 2023 NCAA Convention.
3. **Legislative review.** AMA staff discussed action and informational items from 2023-24, particularly those applicable to Division III football.
4. **2024-25 preliminary-round review.**
  - a. **Rankings.** The committee reviewed the new NCAA Power Index regional ranking process. The committee discussed continuing to post regional rankings despite a national ranking being available.
  - b. **Championship travel.** NCAA travel and insurance staff joined the committee to discuss results from the pilot program involving bracketing and protecting the top eight seeds in the bracket. While there were more flights than the previous year, early round flights were status quo.
  - c. **Host neutrality.** The committee agreed to ask the Championships Committee to consider improving hosting experiences by reducing neutrality elements during

preliminary-round games. Specifically, the committee discussed eliminating the noisemaker policy to create more of a home game environment.

- d. **Preliminary-round broadcasts.** NCAA staff discussed ESPN+ and the early issues hosts encountered and overcame. The committee agreed to propose increasing minimum camera requirements to host. (See Action Item 2-b.)
- e. **Video exchange.** The committee defined the preliminary-round video exchange policy involving first-round teams advancing to play second-round bye opponents. The committee agreed that when games played between first-round and second-round bye teams were exchanged, the first-round teams would receive weeks nine, 10, and 11, while the second-round bye teams would receive video from weeks 10, 11 and the first-round game. Also, the committee discussed whether video technology software should be shared between competing teams. The committee tabled the discussion to complete research and will resume discussions at a later date for 2025-26 postseason.
- f. **Instant replay.** The committee discussed using instant replay at all rounds of the playoffs if the cost could accommodate. A limited number of Division III teams use sideline instant replay. The committee will continue to research this issue.
- g. **Hosting team hotels.** The committee discussed secured hotel accommodations by the hosting team and adding minimums as a best practice. Along with the NCAA Division III hotel minimums, the committee asked hosts to also secure a full or half service hotel to give teams a place to have team meals and team meetings while keeping the room costs reasonable.
- h. **Bench size.** The committee voted to increase bench size by adding two medical doctors to the current 78 individuals. Previously, medical personnel were included in the 78-person limit. However, feedback indicated that some host teams were reluctantly servicing the visiting team when visiting team doctors were not traveling with the team. The addition will allow the host team to exclude medical doctors from the original 78 bench size. The committee emphasized that only medical doctors could be the two additional individuals. In addition, the committee discussed increasing bench size further and increasing the squad size as well. Following the Division III Championships Committee's recommendation to allow additional student-athletes beyond those included in the squad size to dress, the committee received feedback that even with the increase, institutions were still leaving team members at home. Costs would be covered by institutions if they elected to bring additional team members.
- i. **Game start times.** The committee discussed revising game times. Currently, all game times start at noon local. The committee discussed maintaining first-, second-, and third-round game times at noon local, and have the quarterfinal round games start at

noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m. or 3 p.m. local based on mileage. The committee will review distances and submit a recommendation.

**7. 2024-25 championship review.**

- a. Championship site.** The Houston Sports Authority staff reviewed topics related to the 2024 championship game, noting that the team banquets are well received and will continue in 2025. Specifically, the participants toured the NFL's Houston Texans locker room and weight room and conducted the banquet separately in stadium suites.
  - b. Future hosts.** The committee discussed the 2025 championship site visit timelines for Canton, OH and plans to visit in July.
  - c. Championship broadcast.** NCAA staff discussed television ratings, noting that overall, the championship game's rating was up from the previous year. The committee discussed suitable kickoff dates and times and again settled on Saturday or Sunday the desired time for the championship game due to Canton requiring a daytime game. Staff will work with the television partner and relay the preferred time for the championship and will provide more information to the committee if needed.
- 8. 2025 American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) convention.** Staff discussed NPI issues addressed with the coaches at the AFCA convention.
- 9. Rules.** The committee discussed playing rules and other items to pass along to the NCAA Football Rules Committee for its upcoming session. The committee was informed that the rules committee plans to schedule a videoconference to discuss the federated rules process.
- 10. Officiating.** The committee discussed officials' game fees and the position of National Coordinator of Officials responsibilities as the use of technology continues be used at a higher rate.
- 11. Committee chair appointment.** The committee reelected John Snell, associate athletics director at Baldwin Wallace University, as committee chair. Mr. Snell's knowledge and experience as an administrator and football coach will provide strong direction and properly represent the membership as committee chair.
- 12. Annual meeting dates.** The committee tentatively agreed to conduct its annual meeting January 26-27, 2026, in Indianapolis.

*Committee Chair:* John Snell, Baldwin Wallace University.  
*Staff Liaison(s):* J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.

<b>Division III Football Committee January 27-28, 2025, Meeting</b>	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Keith Buckley, Pacific University.	
Isaac Collins, Albright College (Theil University).	
Blaise Faggiano, Utica College.	
Jason Imperati, Lawrence University.	
Hunter Sims, Howard Payne University.	
John Snell, Baldwin Wallace University.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
None.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
John Coppins, Harris County Houston Sports Authority (via videoconference).	
Morgan Haase, Shell Energy Stadium, Houston (via videoconference).	
Randy Mann, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor (via videoconference).	
Bernard Mendoza, Harris County Houston Sports Authority (via videoconference).	
<b>NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:</b>	
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.	
Jonathan Youngblood, Championships and Alliances.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Tiffany Howard, Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Melissa Piening, Bill Regan (via videoconference).	