



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S GOLF COMMITTEE
JUNE 30, JULY 14 AND 26, AND AUGUST 4, 2021, VIDEOCONFERENCES**

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Automatic qualification.** The NCAA Division I Women's Golf Committee is recommending 27 conferences to receive automatic qualification into the 2022 championships (see Action Item 2-a).
2. **Player substitutions at conference championships.** The committee is recommending that substitutions be permitted during conference championships (both stroke play and match play) (see Action Item 2-b).
3. **Adjustment to inclement weather advancement policy from regionals to national championships.** The committee is recommending that the inclement weather policy be adjusted to require a minimum of 36 holes to be completed at regionals for advancement to the national championships, an increase from a minimum of 18 holes under the current policy (see Action Item 2-c).

ACTION ITEMS.

1. **Legislative items.**

- None.

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

a. **Automatic qualification.**

- (1) **Recommendation.** That the following 27 conferences sponsoring women's golf be awarded automatic qualification into the 2022 championships: American Athletic Conference; ASUN Conference; Atlantic Coast Conference; Big East Conference; Big Sky Conference; Big South Conference; Big Ten Conference; Big 12 Conference; Big West Conference; Colonial Athletic Association; Conference USA; Horizon League; The Ivy League; Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference; Mid-American Conference; Missouri Valley Conference; Mountain West Conference; Northeast Conference; Ohio Valley Conference; Pacific-12 Conference; Patriot League; Southeastern Conference; Southern Conference; Southland Conference; The Summit League; Sun Belt Conference; and Western Athletic Conference.
- (2) **Effective date.** 2021-22 academic year.
- (3) **Rationale.** All eligible conferences are being recommended. The committee noted that the Southland Conference will enter the first year of its grace period during the 2021-22 season with only five conference members competing in women's golf.

(3) Estimated budget impact. None.

(4) Student-athlete impact. None.

b. Substitutions permitted during conference championships.

(1) Recommendation. That substitutions be permitted (between stipulated rounds only) during women's golf conference championships (both stroke and match play).

(2) Effective date. 2022 championships.

(3) Rationale. For the 2019 championships, substitutions were permitted only for the match play portion of the tournament. For the 2021 championships, substitutions were permissible during stroke play at regionals and the national championships to afford coaches the opportunity to make lineup adjustments if needed in order to maintain a full team throughout all NCAA postseason competition.

The committee observed during the 2021 postseason that confusion existed within the membership regarding the ability for substitutions to occur during women's golf conference championships. Substitutions are currently permitted during NCAA regionals and finals for both men and women but are currently permitted only for men's conference championships.

The committee believes that it is in the best interest of college golf to permit substitutions for women's conference championships moving forward to ensure that the same opportunity and experience is provided to coaches and student-athletes for both genders. Further, this will ensure that a consistent set of allowances are afforded throughout the entire postseason for both genders, beginning with conference championships and extending to NCAA regionals and finals.

(4) Estimated budget impact. Participating institutions that choose to bring additional individuals beyond their normal travel roster could incur additional costs at conference championships. It is important to note that the requested adjustment would be deemed permissible but not required. Therefore, schools may elect to bring only five student-athletes without an additional budget impact.

(5) Student-athlete impact. Substitutions would allow for one additional student-athlete to travel with the team to conference championships. These student-athletes would be afforded a conference championship opportunity and would be available to be substituted into the team lineup in the event of injury, illness, or a coach's decision.

c. Adjustment to inclement weather advancement policy from regionals to national championships.

- (1) Recommendation. That the inclement weather policy be adjusted to require a minimum of 36 holes to be completed at regionals for advancement to the national championships, an increase from a minimum of 18 holes under the current policy. If a minimum of 36 holes cannot be completed, the top seeded teams and top seeded individuals not on an advancing team will advance to the championships, as is the case under the current policy.
- (2) Effective date. 2022 championships.
- (3) Rationale. In the weeks following the cancellation of the Baton Rouge Regional, the committee engaged in discussions and solicited feedback from the membership and other stakeholders on the inclement weather policies governing the championship. Committee members observed through their discussions that there is a desire from the membership to adjust the current inclement weather policy to require that a minimum of 36 holes of competition be completed at a regional for the results to be used for advancement to the national championships. Through their discussions, committee members consistently received feedback that, in the event of a significant weather situation in the future, one 18-hole round of golf should not override an entire season's body of work made up of dozens of competition rounds.

The committee surveyed all Division I head coaches in August 2021 and this position was validated by the results of the survey, with 84.9% of respondents supporting an adjustment to the current policy to require a minimum of 36 holes for advancement from regionals to finals. The committee also voted to allow additional scheduling flexibility when conducting future regionals with extreme weather scenarios.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. This recommendation ensures that competing student-athletes will not have an entire season's body of work overridden at a regional by one 18-hole round of golf, should inclement weather offer no other feasible options.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Review meeting schedule and agenda.** The committee reviewed agenda items and supplements.
2. **Review and approval of 2020 meeting report.** The committee approved the report from its June 2020 annual meeting as written.

3. **2021 regional site reviews.** The committee reviewed participant survey responses from regionals and noted that course setup and pace of play should continue to be evaluated moving forward. Committee members noted that, with the current regional field sizes of 96 participants in one wave of tee times, the checkpoint pace of play system is not as effective as it would be with a smaller number of participants in one wave of tee times.

The committee discussed a regional model for the championships inclusive of six regional sites, an increase from the current model with four sites, and recommended that the six regional model be approved for future championships, beginning as early as 2022. This recommendation was forwarded in a separate report to the Competition Oversight Committee for its September meeting. If approved, the smaller field sizes in the six regional model would also positively address the concerns related to the checkpoint pace of play system at regionals and would allow for additional flexibility in inclement weather situations.

The committee discussed tee times and pairings at regionals and clarified language impacting individual participants from the same institution. Individual participants from the same institution will be paired together during the practice round; however, tee times for competition rounds will not be adjusted to accommodate individuals from the same institution in the same pairing. The committee noted that it will maintain the right to adjust pairings in extreme situations, if warranted.

The committee spent a considerable amount of time reviewing the policies and procedures in place for the championships following the disappointing cancellation of the 2021 Baton Rouge regional. Host preparedness, venue maintenance and communication were identified as priority areas of emphasis in future planning. Committee members also expressed disappointment with unprofessional behavior from various individuals during the regional and noted that such conduct has no place in the sport, no matter the situation.

The committee also discussed the minimum yardage requirement of 5,800 yards for regular-season events and confirmed that this same minimum should apply to postseason competition. This minimum yardage will be added to postseason manuals for clarification. Additionally, committee members engaged in introductory conversation on a sliding scale for minimum yardage in relation to par but took no action on that topic at this time.

4. **Inclement weather policy review.** The committee reviewed the inclement weather policies for the championships and recommended an adjustment to the minimum number of rounds to be completed at regionals for advancement to the finals (see Action Item 2-c).

The committee also reviewed the schedule of events during regionals and discussed the need to allow flexibility when necessary to conduct as much competition as possible. As part of that flexibility and should extreme inclement weather necessitate such an action in the future, the committee will allow competition to begin as early as Sunday afternoon at future regional sites. This added flexibility was supported by 96.3% of respondents from the Division I women's golf head coaching membership as part of an August 2021 survey.

The committee noted that, if such an instance were to occur, considerations must be given to a team/individual(s) representing a school that has a written policy against competition on a particular day for religious reasons, per NCAA Bylaw 31.1.4.1. The committee also noted that, if such an instance were to occur, all efforts would be made to allow for participants to have a practice round or walkthrough of the course prior to competition, but not at the expense of a competition round.

The committee also discussed the feasibility of extending the event beyond the current competition deadline of Wednesday evening, should significant weather scenarios occur in the future. While such an extension was not ruled out, the committee did note several logistical challenges that could hinder this as a realistic possibility depending on the specifics of the site, including lodging accommodations, travel arrangements and golf course availability, among others. Alternate sites were also discussed as a potential alternative in a future inclement weather scenario, though the committee noted challenges with this option, as well.

The committee directed staff to update manuals to reflect the expectation for maintenance staff to be on site during all hours needed throughout all rounds of the championships, and especially in situations involving inclement weather. Additionally, staff will update bid specifications for future championships to ensure clarity regarding expectations for course maintenance.

5. **Review 2021 championship finals site.** The committee reviewed the 2021 championship finals, which were held at Grayhawk Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona. Committee members noted that survey responses for the championships were very positive overall, which bodes well for the next two years at the same site.

Committee members noted that survey responses included a few areas where improvements can be made in future years, including a few related to food and beverage at the competition venue. Additional clarity on the meal check-in process, food offerings and pricing were identified as specific areas of focus.

The committee discussed the pre-championships course walkthrough and would like to offer an earlier start time for this optional event in future years. Additionally, the committee discussed the practice-round tee times, noted their satisfaction with the format, and will continue using tee times in the future. Committee members noted a desire to adjust tee times for the practice round to begin earlier in the day.

The committee discussed course setup and noted specific examples of working with officials to tweak the setup for future championships. Committee members expressed a desire for the yardages on the first two days of competition to be as similar as possible in an effort to give all participants a similar playing experience on those days, regardless of whether they are in the morning or afternoon wave of tee times.

6. **2022 championships planning.** The committee began planning discussions for the 2022 championships.

Staff and committee members noted that three of the four predetermined women's regional sites for 2022 hosted a men's regional in 2021. Staff will compile feedback from the men's regionals to share with the sites as women's regional planning calls begin in the coming months.

The committee discussed the championship finals, which will be held at Grayhawk Golf Club for the second of three consecutive years. Committee members noted that water, shade opportunities and hydration should remain priorities throughout the planning process.

The committee made an adjustment to the tee times at the finals site, moving all individual participants into the same wave as the top seeded teams for rounds one through three.

Committee members were pleased with the Elite 90 presentation and broadcast coverage of the Elite 90 award recipient as part of the 2021 championships and would like to continue this approach in 2022.

The committee noted that the COVID-related elimination of a breakfast reception at the 2021 championships did not have a negative impact on the student-athlete experience and recommended a reallocation of the funding usually provided for this event to enhance the championships in another manner.

Lastly, the committee noted an adjustment to the motorized cart policy during NCAA postseason competition (regionals and finals) and will allow only designated coaches to drive and/or ride in an institution's coaches cart beginning in 2022.

7. **Selections.** The committee discussed the 2021 selection process and noted that the one-time adjustment to the number of minimum rounds required for selections will not be in place for the 2021-22 academic year, as the criteria moving forward will revert to what was in place prior to the pandemic. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic during the 2020-21 academic year, the committee was pleased with the 2021 selection process and balance of the fields at each regional site.

The committee noted that the schedule submission deadline of October 1, 2021, will remain in place for the 2021-22 academic year. The schedule submission deadline was originally slated to go into effect during the 2020-21 academic year but was delayed due to the scheduling impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee will continue to monitor the effects of the pandemic and will reevaluate the implementation of this policy if necessary; however, at this time, the committee plans for the policy and applicable penalties to be in place for the 2021-22 academic year.

The committee also discussed the consideration of outside ranking services as part of selection criteria in the future. This topic will continue to be evaluated moving forward.

Additionally, the committee clarified that individual-only tournaments are permissible, provided that they are clearly designated as such prior to the designated schedule submission

deadline. Results from individual-only tournaments must be submitted to Golfstat and will count toward individual rankings and selections. Team penalties are not applicable in the case of a withdrawal from an individual-only event.

8. **Review of course access policy.** The committee extended the current course access policy for the finals site to include both the 2022 and 2023 championships at Grayhawk Golf Club. The policy previously did not include the 2023 championships, as they had not yet been awarded to Grayhawk when the original policy was adopted.
9. **Review of tie-breaking playoff procedures.** The committee discussed tiebreaking procedures and voted to adjust the sudden-death playoff procedures that allows coaches to determine the starting hole assignments for their student-athletes, rather than having them preassigned based on an individual's starting position at the beginning of the tournament. Hole assignments will need to be completed within 10 minutes following the conclusion of play.
10. **Substitutions.** The committee discussed substitutions and noted that the ability for teams to substitute during regionals and at the national championships was well received by the membership. The committee also recommended that substitutions be approved for use at conference championships beginning in 2021-22 (see Action item 2-b).
11. **Greens books.** The committee briefly discussed the use of greens reading materials and the recent conversations on the PGA Tour regarding a potential ban on greens books during future competitions. While the men's golf committee plans to survey the head coaches from the Division I membership to determine appropriate next steps for men's golf, the committee does not feel that any action is necessary for women's golf at this time.
12. **Golfstat.** The committee met with Golfstat representatives as part of the joint meeting with the men's golf committee. Additionally, committee members expressed a desire for staff to work with Golfstat to update reports to exclude information that may no longer be relevant.
13. **Golf Channel.** The committee met with Golf Channel representatives as part of the joint meeting with the men's golf committee.
14. **Rules discussion.** The committee met with Allison Brown, head rules official for the championships, and expressed its continued appreciation for Ms. Brown's leadership.

The committee and Ms. Brown discussed course setup for the regionals and final and all share a desire for course setups to showcase the talents of the student-athletes and provide scoring opportunities during future championships. Committee members and Ms. Brown will continue these discussions in the coming months.

The committee provided feedback to Ms. Brown on the finals site setup at Grayhawk Golf Club, including specific holes that could be adjusted during future years. The committee and Ms.

Brown also discussed the distribution of daily hole locations and noted the importance of consistency in timing when sending these to coaches.

Lastly, committee members and Ms. Brown discussed the checkpoint pace of play system and the concern with the system under the current regional structure with 96 players in one wave of tee times. If approved, the recommended six regional model will help to alleviate these concerns, as smaller field sizes will allow for the system to be implemented in the same manner during regionals and at the finals site.

15. **Automatic qualification.** The committee reviewed automatic qualification applications and recommended that 27 eligible conferences receive automatic qualification into the 2022 championships (see Action item 2-a).
16. **Sport sponsorship.** The committee discussed sport sponsorship, including the impact of conference realignment for the 2021-22 academic year.
17. **2021-22 committee roster and timeline.** Staff and committee members thanked two departing members for their service and dedication to women's golf, Sarah Adams and Jeff Hull. Ms. Adams has taken a new position within the membership and will be replaced on the committee by Jon Kasper, senior associate commissioner of championships at the Big Sky Conference. Mr. Hull's term on the committee expires on August 21, 2021, at which time he will be replaced by Patty Post, director of golf at the University of Delaware.

Staff will circulate a committee timeline for the 2021-22 academic year.

18. **Review of championship manuals.** The committee noted several needed updates to the championship manuals. Staff will revise manual language accordingly with updated policies and other edits.
19. **Joint committee meeting with men's golf committee.** The men's and women's committees met jointly to discuss issues relevant to college golf. Representatives from Golfstat, Golf Channel and Grayhawk Golf Club participated in the joint meeting.

Marcus El, Alan Liverance and Ali Szafranski from Golfstat joined the committees to discuss 2020-21 and prepare for the 2021-22 season. Committee members noted a desire for historical data to be more readily available on Golfstat's website and for more transparency with the ranking system. Committee members also engaged in discussion with Mr. El, Mr. Liverance, and Ms. Szafranski regarding the upcoming season and possibility of COVID-19-related scheduling impacts, which will continue to be monitored and discussed as the fall season begins.

Glenn Grimshaw and Andrea Starkey from Golf Channel joined the committees to recap the 2021 championships and begin preparations for the 2021-22 season. Ms. Starkey and Mr. Grimshaw shared viewership numbers from the 2021 championships and noted that Golf

Channel was pleased with the metrics, noting that they were aided by the championships being conducted on the West Coast, resulting in greater viewing opportunities throughout the country. Additionally, Ms. Starkey and Mr. Grimshaw shared a PowerPoint presentation with the committees detailing their planned regular-season and championship coverage for the upcoming year, as college golf coverage continues to grow on the network's platforms. Ms. Starkey noted that Golf Channel is continuing to explore covering a women's regular-season event, with discussions currently ongoing with possible events for 2021-22. Ms. Starkey and Mr. Grimshaw also discussed with the committees the early success of PGA Tour University and the network's opportunities to integrate college golf coverage into their broadcasts through this partnership; Ms. Starkey noted that Golf Channel would love to see a similar opportunity implemented on the women's side in the future.

Travis McCutchan, head golf professional at Grayhawk Golf Club, joined the committees to recap the 2021 championships and discuss improvements for 2022. Mr. McCutchan and the committees discussed hydration, the spectator experience, food and beverage enhancements and enhanced hospitality options, among other items.

The committees also discussed course access for advancing teams of the opposite gender during regional play. The men's and women's committees agreed that courses hosting men's or women's regionals should be off limits to outside play during the four dates of the regional, including the day of the practice round and the three competition days. The committees agreed this limit should include the opposite gender of the host institution. Team-specific practice facilities can be used by the opposite gender of the host institution if they are not being used for the regional being hosted. While the championship course is off limits during the regional, other courses on property can be used at the discretion of the host facility.

20. **2022 committee meeting dates.** The committee will determine its 2022 annual meeting dates at a later time.
21. **Other business.** The committee was joined by Angie Ravaoli-Larkin, head women's golf coach at Texas Christian University and president of the Women's Golf Coaches Association. Ms. Ravaoli-Larkin discussed several topics with the committee and shared feedback from recent coaches' meetings during the summer months. Committee members shared with Ms. Ravaoli-Larkin that there are currently no adjustments to the planned schedule submission deadline of October 1, 2021. The committee noted that it will continue to monitor the impact of the pandemic on scheduling and can adjust this deadline if necessary. Ms. Ravaoli-Larkin and the committee also discussed individual-only tournaments, inclement weather policies, coaches golf carts, and substitutions.

Committee Chair: Julie Manning, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

Staff Liaison(s): John Baldwin, Championships and Alliances.

Division I Women's Golf Committee June 30, July 14 and 26, and August 4, 2021, Videoconferences	
Attendees:	
Sarah Adams, Eastern Washington University.	
Jeff Hull, Furman University.	
Brad Hurlbut, Farleigh Dickinson University, Metropolitan Campus.	
Breanna Jenco, Xavier University.	
Julie Manning, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.	
MaryLou Mulfur, University of Washington.	
Absentees:	
None.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Marcus El, Golfstat.	
Glenn Grimshaw, Golf Channel.	
Alan Liverance, Golfstat.	
Travis McCutchan, Grayhawk Golf Club.	
Patty Post, University of Delaware.	
Angie Ravaioli-Larkin, Texas Christian University.	
Andrea Starkey, Golf Channel.	
Ali Szafranski, Golfstat.	
NCAA Staff Liaison (or Staff Support if subcommittee) in Attendance:	
John Baldwin, Championships and Alliances.	
Zach Christopher, Championships and Alliances.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Julie Kimmons, Championships and Alliances, Broadcast.	
Nancy O'Hara, Championships and Alliances.	