KEY ITEMS.

• Player substitutions – postseason play. The NCAA Division I Women's Golf Committee is recommending that substitutions be permitted during the postseason (regionals and finals – both stroke and match play) for the 2021 women's championships (see Action Item 2-b).

• Playoffs for advancement (stroke play). The committee is recommending a modification to how playoffs are conducted during the postseason (see Action Item 2-c).

• Countable format option – five players playing together. Due to the possible effects the COVID-19 pandemic may have on hosts planning their regular-season tournaments, the committee has approved for the 2020-21 regular season counting the format option of five players from the same team playing together in the standard five-count-four as acceptable for rankings and selection purposes. If a tournament host decides to use this format variation in their event, it will be extremely important that the head rules official makes sure that breaches of the rules governing "advice allowed in team competition" do not occur during tournament play (see Informational Item 9-b).

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 2021 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.** 2020-21 academic year.

(3) **Rationale.** All eligible conferences are being recommended.

(4) **Estimated budget impact.** None.

(5) **Student-athlete impact.** None.

**b. Substitutions – regionals and finals stroke play.**

(1) **Recommendation.** That substitutions be permitted (between stipulated rounds only) during the postseason (regionals and finals – both stroke and match play) of the women's golf championships.

(2) **Effective date.** 2021 championships.

(3) **Rationale.** For the 2019 championships, substitutions were permitted only for the match-play portion of the tournament. The committee continues to believe substitutions should be extended to include the stroke-play portion for both regionals and finals as it offers coaches the opportunity to make lineup adjustments if needed in order to maintain a full team throughout NCAA postseason competition. The committee has discussed the topic with coaches at length over the past two years. Additionally, this past June the committee partnered with the NCAA research staff, along with the support of the Women's Golf Coaches Association, to survey the coaching membership about extending substitutions to the stroke-play portion of regional and finals site competitions. The committee members were pleased with the high response rate (80 percent), and noted that 67 percent of coaches who participated in either regionals and/or finals (2017-2019) supported allowing as optional the opportunity for substitutions to be permitted, at the coach's discretion, for both stroke play (regionals and finals) as well as the currently approved match play. This approval rating is slightly higher than when coaches were surveyed three years ago about extending the opportunity for substitutions to be used during match play only at the finals site.

The committee noted that with substitutions permitted for match play in 2019, 14 of the 24 teams advancing elected to bring a sixth player to the championships, and six of the eight teams that advanced to the match-play portion had a sixth player on site. Importantly, none of the six teams with a sixth player used that player, which indicates to the committee that in most instances, coaches would use the sixth player only for emergency situations (injury or illness). The committee believes allowing substitutions for stroke play will provide each team the ability to adjust its lineup (between stipulated rounds) in a manner that ensures...
each team participates with five players. In those cases when a sixth player is brought along who does not participate, the committee believes this nonetheless enhances the experience for that student-athlete by providing the player with the opportunity to observe the national championships in order to know what is expected to make the lineup in future years.

Additionally, the committee felt that women's coaches who had their teams selected to postseason play should be allowed to have the same optional lineup opportunities during their championships to maintain their five-person team, given the uncertainty around COVID-19 restrictions that could unexpectedly impact the health and safety of participating players requiring real-time lineup adjustments. The committee also noted that the same expansion of the player substitution concept to stroke play at regionals and finals was previously approved by the NCAA Division I Competition Oversight Committee for implementation at the 2017 men's championships for the first time and no issues or concerns have resulted.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None, as the travel party is currently at eight (five student-athletes and three nonstudent-athletes) and the committee would adjust the travel party to provide for six student-athletes and two nonstudent-athletes. However, participating institutions that choose to bring additional individuals beyond the travel party of eight could incur additional costs. 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, and either way the travel party will remain at eight.

(5) Student-athlete impact. Substitutions would allow for one additional student-athlete to travel with the team to the championships. That student-athlete would be permitted to participate in the practice round, have daily use of the practice facilities and follow the championships as a spectator, which would provide a good experience for the future. These student-athletes would be available in the event of injury, illness or a coach's decision to play.

c. Playoffs for advancement (stroke play).

(1) Recommendation. That an aggregate score playoff (all five player scores counting) be used to advance teams from 24 down to 15 (Sunday to Monday) and then additionally from 15 teams to the eight teams that advance to match play. The playoff would still be conducted in a "shotgun" type format with the competing teams playing on five different holes.

(2) Effective date. 2021 championships.
Rationale. Currently, the committee conducts a team playoff (shotgun type format) counting the low four scores of five relative to par. Using an aggregate scoring for the five players will make it less confusing to fans, coaches and players as all five players will now count toward their team total and there is no longer a need to incorporate "relative to par" in the playoff. Additionally, counting all five scores makes it likely that playoffs will end quicker (usually after one hole). Additionally, this playoff adjustment would reduce the concerns during regionals for determining advancement to the finals by having to revert to the non-sudden-death tiebreakers due to play not being able to be extended past the last day of regional competition; and/or eliminate the concern at the finals for play to have to be pushed to the following day due to darkness, which would create a potential negative domino effect with completing the team championship on time and retaining the live coverage provided by the Golf Channel during the final three days of the women's championships. The committee also noted the same playoff adjustment was previously approved by the Competition Oversight Committee for implementation at the 2018 men's championships, and it has appeared to have achieved the desired outcomes as there have been no reported concerns expressed by their membership with this change.

Counting four of five scores is what has been done for many years and allows for a team to accumulate a team score if a player was injured or sick during the course of the round and was unable to compete in the playoff. However, the committee noted with substitutions recommended for stroke play beginning with the 2021 championships that a team that has a player who cannot finish the round due to illness or injury can substitute for the playoff since a playoff is considered a new round under the Rules of Golf, and therefore all five scores could count toward the team total.

Estimated budget impact. None.

Student-athlete impact. The recommendation would make it easier for everyone to understand the playoff as well as ensuring that all five players' scores are used to determine advancement.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. Review of schedule and agenda. The committee reviewed agenda items and supplements, as well as discussion items for the joint meeting with the men's golf committee.

2. Annual meeting report. The committee approved the report from its 2019 annual meeting as written.
3. **2020 regional tournament sites.** The committee noted that as part of planning for the 2021 regionals to continue emphasizing during monthly host calls with the respective tournament directors the expectations and the importance of having each site set up and ready for play prior to the start of the practice round.

   a. **Schedule of events.** The committee reviewed the current schedule of events and did not recommend changes for 2021.

   b. **Tee times and pairings – individuals/teams.** The committee reviewed the current tee times and pairing and did not recommend changes for 2021.

4. **2020 championships finals.** The committee obviously was disappointed that the 2020 championships were not able to be conducted due to the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in the NCAA cancelling the 2020 winter and spring championships but looks forward to continue planning for the 2021 championships at Grayhawk Golf Club.

   a. **Schedule of events.** The committee reviewed the 2020 schedule of events and will make no substantive changes for the 2021 championships. Staff will continue discussions with the Golf Channel in order to carve out time during the linear broadcast coverage at the finals for an opportunity to recognize the NCAA Elite 90 award winner, given the discontinuation of the welcome breakfast reception where this recognition had previously taken place.

   b. **Tee times and pairings.** The committee reviewed the stroke play and match play pairings and did not recommend adjustments for 2021. Given the available daylight hours in Scottsdale during late May, the committee noted that tee times will likely start at 6:30 a.m. local time on the first three days of stroke play and quarterfinal match play days in order to allow enough time to complete competition rounds and conduct playoffs as needed to determine advancing teams/individuals. The committee also reaffirmed its intent to maintain the current 11-minute intervals for the first three rounds of stroke play and that the practice round will remain as a shotgun start.

5. **Championships discussions.**

   a. **Player substitutions – postseason play.** The committee noted its recommendation to the Competition Oversight Committee that substitutions be allowed not only for the match-play finals (as was implemented for the 2019 championships), but also during the stroke-play portion of the championships effective for the 2021 regionals and finals (see Action Item 2-b). The committee cited recent survey responses that indicate increased support for expanding the availability of the substitution policy as an option to postseason stroke-play competition, as well as evidence that coaches would likely use the sixth player only in cases of injury or illness. The committee also noted that student-athlete well-being continues to drive its decision to expand the concept, along with ensuring that competing institutions are not disadvantaged if a player should become injured or ill.
b. **Tiebreaking playoff procedures.** The committee reviewed the current sudden-death playoff procedures and noted if substitutions are approved by the Competition Oversight Committee for the 2021 championships, then the sudden-death playoff procedures and non-sudden-death tiebreaking procedures should also be adjusted. The committee recommended that playoffs from 24 teams down to 15 teams as well as from 15 teams to the eight match play teams at the finals will continue to be in a shotgun format but with aggregate scoring rather than the best four of five scores relative to par (see Action Item 2-c). The committee noted that the aggregate scoring should end most playoffs in one hole and therefore time should not be an issue in most years. However, the committee did note that should a playoff for either tiebreak not be able to be conducted, the committee will revert to the non-sudden-death tiebreaking procedures to determine the advancing teams.

The committee confirmed that it would use the following for any ties requiring the non-sudden-death tiebreakers:

- First tiebreaker – cumulative total of the non-counting scores.
- Second tiebreaker – cumulative total of the lowest player score from each round.
- Third tiebreaker – cumulative total of the second lowest player score from each round.
- Fourth tiebreaker – cumulative total of the third lowest player score from each round.
- Fifth tiebreaker – cumulative total of the fourth lowest player score from each round.
- Sixth tiebreaker – revert to original seeding of teams.

c. **2021 and 2022 course access policy to finals site golf course.** The women's and men's golf committees reconfirmed both as individual committees and then as a joint committee their support for the 2021 and 2022 course access policy that was established for managing play at the finals site golf course. Additionally, as part of the women's committee's recent discussions on this topic and correspondence from a conference office on behalf of their head coaches regarding the policy, members determined that although no adjustments would occur to the policy at this time given the bid requirements that were in place during the previous hosting bid cycle; they agreed to revisit the topic as part of the current bid process for the selection of future final host sites.

6. **Golf Channel discussion.** The committee continued to express its appreciation for the high quality and extensive broadcast coverage that the NCAA's partnership with the Golf Channel provides for women's collegiate golf, and how the overall profile of the sport and the student-athletes'/coaches' championships experiences continue to be enhanced.
a. **Selection show announcement.** The committee confirmed that the selection announcement for the 2021 championships will be Wednesday, April 28 with the specific time to be determined.

b. **Tee times and pairing.** The committee discussed with the Golf Channel representatives potential air times and tee times for the 2021 men's and women's championships and determined that no further adjustments will need to be made to what had already been established for the live broadcast days of the 2020 championships given that the host site will not change in 2021.

7. **Officials.**

a. **Review of 2021 assignments for regionals/finals.** The committee expressed its appreciation for the leadership Allison Brown, head rules official, continues to provide throughout the year to the membership specific to Rules of Golf clarifications and during regional and final site competitions. The committee reaffirmed the importance of maintaining the highest quality of officiating at each round of competition and maintaining the focus on course setup for all rounds of the championships. The committee also reviewed and approved the four individuals recommended to serve as the 2021 head regional rules officials.

b. **Hole location sheets.** As a follow-up to a request earlier in the year from the committee, Ms. Brown confirmed that hole location sheets at both regionals and at the finals would be developed using greens book quality illustrations rather than the traditional circles. Ms. Brown commented that hole location sheet information provided in this manner should be more accurate and helpful to coaches as they prepare their players prior to the start of their round.

**Pace of play – checkpoint system.** The committee reaffirmed support for using the USGA checkpoint system at the four regionals and finals site to monitor pace of play. Additionally, the committee asked Ms. Brown to review and adjust the current policy accordingly per any changes made by the USGA for use during the 2021 championships. Committee members noted that although it is the players' responsibility to notify their coaches once they have been made aware of their breach of the checkpoint policy, they have encouraged Ms. Brown to continue emphasizing this point at each of the coaches administrative meetings that occur prior to the start of either regional and/or finals site competitions.

**Course setup – regionals/finals.** The committee talked at length about the importance of having course setups at the regionals and finals sites that provide a challenging but fair test of golf and that can appropriately separate the field, resulting in the best teams/individuals advancing while showcasing the high quality of play by today's top
women's collegiate players. Committee members agreed course setup will remain a high priority for future championships and noted some of the adjustments that have occurred over the past three years under the leadership of Ms. Brown, along with the four regional head rules officials when setting up courses for hosting regional/finals sites, such as implementing white line yardages that provide more teeing options; options for drivable par 4s and reachable-in-two par 5s; minimizing long forced carries off the tee when possible; and using preferred lies when course conditions dictate.

c. **2020 fall hard card.** The committee asked Ms. Brown to review and adjust the hard card specific to any rules changes that have occurred since the end of the spring season so staff can move forward with posting and distributing the information for the membership prior to the start of the fall season.

8. **Selections.**

a. **Selection day timeline.** The committee reviewed the timeline for completing the selection process on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, in preparation for the selection announcement that evening on the Golf Channel.

b. **Selection criteria.** The committee reviewed the selection criteria and made no changes for the 2020-21 season.

(1) **Tournament schedule submission requirements.** The committee reconfirmed its decision earlier this spring to delay implementation of the tournament schedule submission requirement as part of the yearly required registration process for selection consideration until at least October 1, 2021. The committee noted that it will revisit the timing for implementation of the policy for the 2021-22 regular season at a later date when it believes it will be able to better determine whether the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertainty around travel have subsided.

While the committee continues to believe the delay is prudent given the unusual circumstances surrounding the pandemic, members remain firmly committed to the belief that once a schedule is set, teams should complete that schedule unless the tournament is cancelled or a team has to withdraw for reasons beyond the team's control in order to maintain a high level of integrity and fairness within the regular-season rankings process. Additionally, the committee believes that when institutions withdraw and/or cancel from tournaments at the last minute, this can create a financial hardship on hosts of regular-season tournaments given expenses they incur that are offset by the required tournament fees from participating institutions.
(2) **Institutions with four players competing as a team.** The committee discussed the positive results that occurred from the clarification issued last year that required schools to compete as a team if they entered four or more players in a tournament using one of the designated formats in order to use the event results for consideration for rankings and selection purposes as an at-large team. Committee members felt that the clarification appropriately placed the emphasis during the regular season back on schools competing as a team.

9. **Golfstat rankings.**

   a. **Weather-shortened events and 18-hole tournaments.** The committee briefly discussed and will continue to monitor the number and types of yearly tournaments that result in stroke-play competition being less than the standard 54-hole tournaments moving forward and the reasons for this difference (e.g., weather-shortened event that was originally scheduled for 54 or 36 holes of stroke play; regularly scheduled dual matches or 18-hole stroke-play rounds as a qualifier for match-play bracket pairings). The committee did note that given the possible impact of COVID-19 on the overall number of tournaments offered during the 2020-21 season, it is hesitant at this time to limit any opportunities that could count toward meeting minimum round requirements for at-large selections of teams and individuals to the 2021 women's championship.

   b. **Countable Format option - five players playing together.** The committee discussed the potential effects that the COVID-19 pandemic may have on hosts planning their regular-season tournaments this year as they determine the best way to run their events while maintaining a focus on the health and safety of the participants, coaches and possible spectators attending. To that end, effective for the 2020-21 season, the committee has approved allowing the format option of five players from the same team playing together in the standard five-count-four to be considered for rankings and selection purposes. The committee did note that it will be extremely important that if a tournament host decides to use this format variation in their event that the head rules official makes sure that breaches of the rules governing "advice allowed in team competition" do not occur during tournament play.

   c. **Medical exceptions.** The committee briefly revisited the topic of medical exceptions (justified withdrawals) but took no action at this time. The committee will continue to discuss this topic during future meetings and monitor the potential impact that COVID-19 restrictions could have on schools competing in regular-season tournaments as well as the potential impact to the health and safety of student-athletes and team personnel that would preclude them from completing the tournament and thereby affecting their Golfstat rankings.

a. Championships dates – May 21-26, 2021 (Friday-Wednesday). Arizona State University and The Thunderbirds will co-host the 2021 championships finals on the Raptor Course at Grayhawk Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona. The four regional sites are: (1) University Club in Baton Rouge, Louisiana (Louisiana State University, host); (2) OSU Golf Club – Scarlet Course in Columbus, Ohio (The Ohio State University, host); (3) University of Louisville Golf Club in Louisville, Kentucky (University of Louisville, host); and (4) Stanford Golf Course in Stanford, California (Stanford University, host). Regional play will be conducted May 10-12, 2021.

b. Site visit. The committee noted that given that Grayhawk Golf Club is a repeat host and two site visits were conducted last year in preparation for the 2020 championships there will not at this time be a need to conduct an additional site visit this year in preparation for the 2021 championships.

11. Women's and Men's Golf Committees joint meeting. The women's and men's committees met jointly to discuss the following issues:

a. USGA updates. The committees met with United States Golf Association (USGA) representatives Liz Fradkin, director of players relations, and Craig Winters, senior director of rules of golf and amateur status. Ms. Fradkin provided an update on the four remaining USGA events that will be conducted this year; along with the impact of COVID-19 that resulted in the USGA's cancellation of its other amateur championships that are held annually. Mr. Winters discussed the Rules of Golf and COVID-19 related matters, while noting the resources that are available to help tournament directors with planning their events. Mr. Winters noted that the various "back2play" resources that have been developed are located on the USGA homepage within the COVID-19 Resource Center. Mr. Winters also provided a brief update on the current status of discussions and points of emphasis around current USGA and NCAA conversations specific to the Rules of Amateur Status and the work of the NCAA, Division I NIL Legislative Solutions Group that will result in the development of a modernized USGA player code. The committees continue to express appreciation to the USGA for its partnership with the NCAA and having a staff member on site each year as part of the rules team at each championship. Mr. Winters also noted the value and importance of continuing to build on the strong relationship that continues to exist between the USGA and the NCAA through the work of the Intercollegiate Relations Committee that is composed of key stakeholders within collegiate golf, along with representatives from the USGA, both men's and women's coaches associations, and the NCAA national office.
b. **Golfstat rankings.** The committees met with Golfstat representatives Marcus El and Brian Laesch and discussed a variety of topics including weather-shortened and 18-hole events on team and individual Golfstat rankings; availability of accessing on the Golfstat public site archived rankings and historical statistics from past men's and women's NCAA tournaments across all three divisions and both genders, and consideration by the women's committee for adding the format option of five players from a team playing together as countable for ranking purposes and selections.

c. **Golf Channel coverage.** Golf Channel representatives Andrea Starkey, vice president of strategic programming and partnerships, and Thomas McKee, director of collegiate golf strategy, presented the various enhancements, assets and programming that Golf Channel will be providing throughout this year; culminating with the live broadcasts of both the 2021 women's and men's golf championships that will be held at Grayhawk Golf Club. In looking ahead, Golf Channel continues to have a strong desire to build on player and institutional stories along with expanded coverage of play at each of the regional sites, as well as continuing to consider options for possibly covering some additional regular-season women's and men's events as part of their commitment to collegiate golf and growing the game.

12. **Sport sponsorship.** The committee reviewed the 2019-20 sport sponsorship list and discussed schools that are considering adding or discontinue sponsoring the sport for 2020-21.

13. **Committee.**

a. **New appointments for 2020-21.** The committee recognized outgoing members Julie Brooks, head women's golf coach at University of California, Irvine, and Ryan Colton, associate athletics director at the University of Richmond, for their service and tremendous leadership during their tenure on the national committee. Appointments to replace the outgoing committee members have been determined, and they will assume their roles September 1.

b. **Committee chair selection.** The committee also selected Julie Manning, executive associate athletics director/senior woman administrator at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, to serve as chair, effective September 1. Ms. Manning will be in her fourth year on the committee and brings to this role extensive department-wide administrative experience at different institutions; along with 20 years as the head women's golf coach at Iowa State University. Ms. Manning replaces Mr. Colton, who has completed his four-year term on the committee while serving the last three as chair.

c. **Committee timeline.** The committee reviewed the proposed timeline for 2020-21 and made no changes. Staff will schedule all conference calls with the appropriate parties throughout the year.
14. Review of NCAA Division I Championships Finance Review Working Group recommendations. The committee provided its responses/feedback on the recommendations from the working group and confirmed that Mr. Colton will submit to the working group prior to the July 10 deadline.

15. Championship strategic plan. The committee reviewed the Division I Women's Golf Championships strategic plan and made no changes at this time for the 2020-21 season. However, the committee noted that it will continue to review the strategic plan annually at a minimum and more often if needed so it continues to address the most current issues facing the sport.

16. Championships manuals. The committee asked staff to make the necessary changes and general updates to the various manuals in preparation for posting for the 2020-21 season.

17. Future sites. The committee reviewed the list of regionals and finals sites that have been selected for 2021-22 during the previous bid cycle.

18. Bid document review – regionals/finals. The committee continued reviewing bids from institutions and other entities interested in serving as regionals and/or finals host sites during the 2023-2026 bid cycle. The committee will continue its review over the next few months and forward recommendations to the Competition Oversight Committee for final consideration and approval during the Competition Oversight Committee's October 5 meeting. Final host sites will be announced October 23. The committee reaffirmed the importance of continuing to identify, recruit and select the highest quality golf courses to serve as host venues for not only the back-to-back championship finals sites with the men but also for all women's regional competition sites moving forward.


20. Other business. The committee was joined via videoconference during a portion of the meeting with Angie Ravaioli-Larkin, head women's golf coach at Texas Christian University, and Ginger Brown-Lemm, head women's golf coach at Mississippi State University, who serve respectively as the president and vice-president of the WGCA. The following items were discussed: (1) NCAA Division I Championships Finance Working Group report and responses being considered by the WGCA with specific focus on the bracket/field size reductions for women's golf; (2) WGCA's development of a best practices manual for managing issues specific to COVID-19 concerns for hosts of regular-season tournaments; (3) justifiable withdraws; (4) possibility of schools unable to compete this year in a full schedule of tournaments due to the impact of COVID-19 on travel; (5) minimum rounds of competition required for consideration for at-large selections for teams/individuals; and (6) concerns regarding the ability for international players to return to the United States for the 2020-21 school year and season. Both groups continue to reaffirm the value of conducting this dialogue as a part of the national committee's regular annual meeting agenda and asked NCAA staff to plan accordingly for future meetings.
Committee Chair: Ryan Colton, University of Richmond  
Staff Liaison: Carol A. Reep, Championships and Alliances

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<tr>
<td>Sarah Adams, Eastern Washington University.</td>
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<td>Julie Brooks, University of California, Irvine.</td>
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<td>Ryan Colton, University of Richmond.</td>
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<td>Jeff Hull, Furman University.</td>
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<td>Breana Jenco, Xavier University.</td>
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<td>Julie Manning, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marcus El, Golfstat.</td>
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<td>Liz Fradkin, USGA.</td>
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<td>Brad Hurlbut, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Metropolitan Campus.</td>
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<td>Brian Laesch, Golfstat.</td>
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<td>Thomas McKee, Golf Channel.</td>
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<td>Mary Lou Mulflur, University of Washington.</td>
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<td>Andrea Starkey, Golf Channel.</td>
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<td>Ali Szafranski, Golfstat.</td>
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<td>Craig Winters, USGA.</td>
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<td>Carol A. Reep.</td>
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<th>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Hale, Bonnie Johnson, Julie Kimmons, Rick Nixon and Natalie Steger.</td>
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