

**NCAA DIVISION I COMPETITION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
REPORT FROM THE NCAA DIVISION I MEN'S ICE HOCKEY COMMITTEE
MAY 17-18, 2023, ANNUAL MEETING**

Key Item: The committee is recommending conferences to receive automatic qualification for the 2024 NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship. (See Action Item 2.)

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative item.

- **Automatic qualification.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the following six conferences receive automatic qualification privileges for the 2024 championship: Atlantic Hockey Conference, Big Ten Conference, Central Collegiate Hockey Association, ECAC Hockey Conference, Hockey East Conference and National Collegiate Hockey Conference.
- (2) Effective date. 2024 NCAA Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship.
- (3) Rationale. All eligible conferences are being recommended for automatic qualification.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. 2023 championship review.** The committee reviewed the survey feedback regarding the 2023 Division I championship from student-athletes, coaches, athletics administrators, NCAA site representatives, host tournament directors and members of the Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship Committee. The committee noted that the responses overall were very positive but highlighted several repeat comments regarding areas for improvement.
- 2. ESPN.** The committee met with ESPN to discuss the successful ratings from the 2023 Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship, game time concerns for the 2024 championship, the selection announcement show and the broadcast talent working the championship.
- 3. Championship selection process.**
 - a. Selection meeting. The committee confirmed that the meeting time and format from the 2023 championship worked well.

- b. Regional game days and times. The committee discussed concerns from the membership about playing regional games on Thursday and Friday at 2 p.m. Eastern time. This is not a time most Division I men's ice hockey teams use during the regular season. The weekday afternoon start times are difficult for fans to attend, which in turn affects host institutions' ability to meet their \$100,000 guarantee.

The committee did note its appreciation for ESPN's collaboration during the 2023 Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship to not have games begin at noon Eastern time. Given the concern noted above, the committee strongly prefers to not play a weekday 2 p.m. Eastern time game during the championship.

- c. Selection criteria. The committee recommended minor editorial adjustments clarifying its policy regarding avoiding conference matchups if a conference has five or more teams selected to the championship. The updated language is as follows:

*"If five or more teams from one conference are selected to the championship, the committee **may** protect the integrity of the bracket (i.e., maintaining the pairing process according to seed **may** take priority over avoidance of first-round conference matchups).*

To complete each regional, the committee assigns one team from each of the remaining seeded groups so there is a No. 1, No. 2, No. 3 and No. 4 seed at each regional site."

- d. Pairwise.

- 1) RPI vs. NPI. The committee is interested in continuing to explore using the NPI in place of the RPI in the Pairwise calculations. No action was taken at this time, but the committee will continue to review this for future consideration.

The committee has asked for additional discussion with Tim Danehy on the matter.

- 2) 3-on-3 overtime and shootout results calculation. The committee did not take any action but did note interest in learning more about the impact on the Pairwise weighing overtime results in both the "Head-to-Head" and "Common Opponents" components over the next year.
- 3) Home/Away/Neutral. The committee reviewed the existing guidelines for determination of home/away/neutral determinations for Pairwise purposes. The committee confirmed that no changes were needed from the 2022-23 version of the document.

- e. Rules committee items. The committee expressed concern with student-athletes potentially receiving wrist or neck cuts from skate blades during a game and will encourage the rules committee to require student-athletes to wear undershirts with Kevlar protection in the wrist and neck areas.

4. Future regional and Men's Frozen Four sites.

- a. Campus sites hosting regionals. The discussion continued regarding the potential for a regional to be hosted at a campus site. The feedback from men's head hockey coaches and conference commissioners is that most of the membership prefers that campuses not be regional hosts. The committee did not take any action at this time but noted a desire to discuss the matter further with conference commissioners.
 - b. Intermission length. The committee reviewed the recent change to a 15-minute intermission (previously 18 minutes) and noted the adjustment was well received. Accordingly, the committee is comfortable with a 15-minute intermission for the 2024 championship.
 - c. Future regional and Men's Frozen Four dates and sites. The committee was provided with the upcoming championship dates.
 - d. St. Paul, Minnesota – 2024 Men's Frozen Four site visit. The committee chair will join NCAA staff on a site visit to St. Paul in late October/early November of 2023.
- 5. Rules and officiating.** The committee met with Frank Cole, national coordinator of officials; Jeff Fulton, NCAA secretary-rules editor; and Ty Halpin, NCAA director of championships, to recap the 2023 championship officiating and plan ahead for 2024.
- The committee noted it would like to receive an initial list of potential postseason officials from the conference supervisors earlier in the season. This will allow committee members adequate time to review and provide input on potential officials for the championship.
- 6. Conference commissioners.** The committee met with the conference commissioners and discussed items including RPI vs. NPI in the Pairwise metric, head-to-head and common opponents weighting in overtime results, and ESPN game times.
- 7. NCAA travel staff.** The committee met with Melissa Piening, NCAA director of travel, to discuss some of the travel concerns experienced during the 2023 championship.
- 8. Committee chair.** The committee voted Jeffrey Schulman, director of athletics at the University of Vermont, to remain as the chair of the committee for the 2023-24 academic year. Mr. Schulman served the committee and championship very well as the chair for the 2022-23 academic year.

Committee Chair: Jeff Schulman, University of Vermont.
Staff Liaisons: Chad Tolliver, Championships and Alliances

Division I Men's Ice Hockey Committee May 17-18, 2023, Annual Meeting	
Attendees:	
Bob Daniels, Ferris State University.	

Rick Gotkin, Mercyhurst University.
Josh Richelew, University of Michigan.
Scott Sandelin, University of Minnesota Duluth.
Jeff Schulman, University of Vermont.
Tim Troville, Harvard University.
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
Ty Halpin, Championships and Alliances.
Tiffany Howard, Travel and Finance.
Melissa Piening, Travel and Finance.
Phil Pierce, Championships and Alliances.
Jay Jay Rackley, Championships and Alliances.
Chad Tolliver, Championships and Alliances
Guests in Attendance:
Frank Cole, NCAA National Coordinator of Officials.
Tim Denehy, College Hockey Stats.
Michael Feinberg, ESPN.
Jeff Fulton, NCAA Secretary Rules Editor.
Andy Green, ESPN.
Steve Hagwell, ECAC Hockey.
Don Lucia, Central Collegiate Hockey Association.
Dan Margulies, ESPN.
Steve Metcalf, Hockey East Association.
Michelle Morgan, Atlantic Hockey Association.
Diana Sabau, Big Ten Conference.
Heather Weems, National Collegiate Hockey Conference.