



REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III MEN'S ICE HOCKEY COMMITTEE  
JULY 2 & 8, 2025, ANNUAL MEETING

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

**a. Automatic qualification.**

1. Recommendation. That the following 10 conferences be afforded automatic-qualifying status to the 2026 NCAA Division III Men's Ice Hockey Championship: Conference of New England; Little East Conference; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference; Middle Atlantic Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; Northern Collegiate Hockey Association; State University of New York Athletic Conference; United Collegiate Hockey Conference and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

The anticipated pool allocations for the 2026 championship are as follows: Pool A – 10 and 4 at-large.

2. Effective date. September 1, 2025.
3. Rationale. Each conference meets the requirements of NCAA Bylaw 31.3.3 and has completed the automatic-qualification declaration form. (Note: Pool allocations may adjust based on 2025-26 sponsorship numbers.)
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Agenda and meeting schedule.** The committee reviewed the meeting agenda and schedule.
2. **2024 annual meeting report.** The committee approved the 2024 annual meeting report as presented.
3. **Key actions of the NCAA Division III Championships Committee.** The committee reviewed recent actions the Division III Championships Committee made during the 2024-25 academic year.

#### 4. Review of 2025 championship.

- a. **Preliminary-round hosts.** The committee noted no significant negative feedback regarding the preliminary-round hosts.
  - b. **Finals site.** The committee noted that the Utica University Nexus Center was a great venue for the championship. The committee also noted that the practice and game time schedule worked very well. The Utica staff did a great job on the banquet with the quick turnaround of a non-predetermined site.
  - c. **Venue.** The committee noted the Utica University Nexus Center was a great facility. There was ample locker room space, and the ice maintenance was tremendous. The ice art was late as this was a non-predetermined site, but the arena staff worked extremely hard to make sure we were game ready for the first practice. The committee greatly appreciate the great work of the staff to get this accomplished.
  - d. **Practice schedule.** The committee noted the championship schedule worked well this year.
  - e. **Hotels.** The committee did not receive any issues or concerns from the participating teams regarding their hotels.
  - f. **Awards presentation.** The committee noted the awards presentation was one of the better presentations in some time. The Utica staff were great getting everything turned over in a timely fashion.
  - g. **Hydration.** The committee noted a positive experience with the hydration product and snacks.
  - h. **Facility/Staff.** The committee noted the Utica and arena staff did a tremendous job, especially on the quick turnaround. The committee and staff look forward to working with Utica again for the 2026 championship.
  - i. **Committee responsibilities and assignments.** The committee felt responsibilities and assignments worked well this year.
5. **Predetermined sites.** With the new bid cycle for 2028-2031 approaching, the committee discussed whether to continue the current pilot program alternating predetermined and non-predetermined finals sites for the men's ice hockey championship. The committee discussed the pros and cons. The committee highlighted the cost of flights and quality hotels; more control during the bid selection process and the student-athlete experience as key points. The committee suggested using "West-preferred" or "East-preferred" language in the bid process to

ensure equitable hosting opportunities for each region. The committee believe providing hosts an entire year (or more) to plan for the championship will allow them more time to ensure they are providing a positive student-athlete experience. It is common for hosts and the NCAA staff to feel rushed by the quick turnaround when the site is not predetermined. The expanded planning timeline also allows more opportunities for the committee to collaborate with the hosts and provide feedback. Quality hotels can be contracted much earlier, which could lead to better rates for the participants. The committee would also have more control during the bid process to select the most suitable hosts possible instead of leaving that to chance with a non-predetermined site. The two Division III ice hockey championships are the only of the NCAA's 91 championships that have nonpredetermined finals sites. The committee will discuss with the women's ice hockey committee to propose a formal recommendation.

6. **Video review.** The committee will allow replay for the preliminary rounds. Since division III has required streaming as a host requirement for championships, the committee feels the use of replay should be allowable. The video review for the preliminary rounds may not be as high quality as the final site (more cameras are at our final site) but at least all arenas will have at least one camera. Some views may be inconclusive due to the camera angle but having the ability is in the best interest for the championship.
7. **American Hockey Coaches Association.** The committee discussed hot topics shared from the 2025 ACHA convention.
8. **2025-26 committee calendar.** The committee reviewed the 2025-26 calendar.
9. **Championship manual review.** The committee provided edits to be incorporated into the 2025-26 manuals
10. **Committee roster.** The committee noted we are still waiting on a replacement for Graham Johnson who resigned from the committee.
11. **2026 annual meeting.** The committee agreed to meet virtually on June 23-24, 2026.

*Committee Chair:* Tyler Hynes, Wilkes University, Middle Atlantic Conference  
*Staff Liaison(s):* Will Hopkins, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Men's Ice Hockey Committee July 2 & 8, 2025, Annual Meeting	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Tristan Durgin, University of New England	
Danielle Harris, Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Association.	
Tyler Hynes, Wilkes University.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
None.	

<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>
None.
<b>NCAA Staff Liaison (or Staff Support if subcommittee) in Attendance:</b>
Will Hopkins, Championships and Alliances.
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>
Mariah Martin, Championships and Alliances.