



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY COMMITTEE
MARCH 28 AND JUNE 23, 2026, ANNUAL MEETINGS**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. 2025 annual meeting report. The committee approved the 2025 annual meeting report as submitted.

2. 2026 championship review.

a. Bid specifications. The committee reviewed the host bid specifications updated for 2025-26 and noted the updates captured the necessary information for site selections.

b. Post-championship surveys. The committee reviewed post-championship survey results, which were mostly positive. There were multiple mentions about the travel issues caused by inclement weather during preliminary rounds, but that is an extenuating circumstance beyond the control of the committee.

c. Site rep recruitment and training. The committee noted the championship manager hosting a videoconference for site representatives separate from the traditional preliminary host and site representatives' call was helpful to avoid the site rep information being overshadowed by the host information.

d. Preliminary-round hosts. The committee was pleased with the quality of events the preliminary round hosts conducted with one exception that will receive a detailed letter from the sport committee. The hosts were organized and professional and provided high-quality experience for all teams. The committee recommended the championship manager provide extra time and guidance for first-time hosts.

e. Preliminary-round operations.

(1) Streaming. The committee noted that streaming all preliminary round games was a great enhancement and should continue going forward.

(2) Officials. The committee agreed that the officials did an outstanding job, and the

- committee members that were on site at the first round and quarterfinal games received positive reviews from coaches.
- f. Finals site host/venue.** The committee emphasized what a great job the University of Wisconsin-River Falls did as host. The staff was organized and well led by tournament director Charles Sowa. They were flexible and proactive in resolving potential issues. They communicated well throughout the planning process. The committee noted that the venue was one of the best Division III ice hockey venues in the country and would recommend considering UW-River Falls for future championships.
- (1) Banquet.** The committee noted the banquet was phenomenal. The host did an outstanding job, including the speaker, the food, and the awards portion.
- (2) Community service.** The committee discussed positive feedback from participating coaches and players. This year all the teams visited a local food bank to help prepare meals and stock shelves. The committee recommends continuing this in the future.
- (3) Hotels.** The committee praised the team hotels for their attention to the needs of participating teams. The welcome decorations, team meeting rooms, staff availability and friendliness, breakfast areas and close proximity to the facility were all beneficial to the teams.
- (4) Video replay.** Prior to the championship, the committee recommended to the Secretary Rules Editor that all goals be cleared by the video replay official at the final site along with a clear, one-page document to provide coaches clarity on the replay and challenge process. The committee's goals were to ensure confirmed game outcomes, remove stress from coaches who do not use video replay throughout the regular season and to ensure coaches, officials, and the committee were on the same page with the rules and expectations. The committee applauded the results as the changes did not impact the game timing or experience of the student-athletes. Coaches and officials onsite mentioned the additional clarity was appreciated and should be considered going forward.
- 3. Selection and ranking procedures.** The committee appreciated Division III providing the "back door" interface to review NPI data. Knowing all possible scenarios dependent on future game outcomes helps greatly with site planning and coverage, especially with non-predetermined preliminary round games. The committee also applauded Division III for allowing them to seed true to the rankings and make the tournament feel like a true national tournament.
- 4. NPI discussion.** The committee met twice in June with Tim Danehy to discuss and finalize potential changes to the Division III women's hockey NPI dial settings. The committee thoroughly vetted each dial, adjusting them up and down, to see the impact on the data to help select the numbers that supported the sport best. The committee has put forth recommendations for the NPI dials beginning in 2027-28 to the Division III Championships Committee which are subject to review.
- 5. Video replay.** The committee discussed the future of video replay for the championship. Currently, replay is available only at the final site and managed by DVSPORT and an experienced

replay official. While there is interest in expanding replay to preliminary rounds—similar to the Division III men's championship—the committee is hesitant due to challenges in ensuring consistency across sites. Many hosts do not own their rinks, making it difficult to install the necessary camera angles. As a result, some sites could offer multiple views while others may only have a broadcast feed, which the committee does not consider equitable. Although replay capabilities may improve as more conferences adopt video review during the regular season, the committee believes widespread readiness is still one to two years away. The committee will continue evaluating options and seek feedback from the Division III Men's Ice Hockey Committee on its 2025–26 experience.

6. **Review sport sponsorship list and pool document.** The committee received the updated sponsorship and pool document for 2026-27. Sport sponsorship continues to increase. There will be two new automatic qualifying conferences in 2026-27, the Little East Conference and the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference, bringing the AQ total to nine out of 13 teams.
7. **2027 championship – Plattsburgh, NY.** The committee reviewed the 2027 championship, discussing Plattsburgh's expected strengths and any potential concerns. They noted the benefit of having a veteran committee, including a Plattsburgh administrator involved in planning and executing the 2026 championship. Overall, the committee is confident Plattsburgh will deliver an outstanding event
8. **Discuss 2029-2031 bid process.** The committee received an update and tentative timeline for the upcoming bid cycle for the 2029-2031 championships. The championship manager provided a one-page executive summary to help solicit bids for the upcoming cycle.
9. **Division III Championships Committee update.** Laura Peterson-Mlynski will provide the committee with a summary update on items the Championships Committee is currently discussing, including the divisional budget decisions, per diem increase and bench size updates.
10. **Division III Governance and Member Services update.** Corey Berg and Bill Regan from the GMS team spoke with the committee about the age-based eligibility model currently being discussed by the Division I Cabinet and its potential impact on Division III. Other topics included current work of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, graduation rates, uniform logos and the transition to required NCAA ID numbers.
11. **Ice Hockey Rules Committee Update.** The committee received an update on the upcoming changes to the NCAA ice hockey rulebooks following the rules comment period. The new NCAA hockey rulebooks will be published by August 1, 2026.
12. **Review of manuals.** The committee will review manuals for outdated information and suggest updates.

Committee Chair: Kelly Rider, Curry College, Conference of New England
Staff Liaison(s): Ryan Richardson, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Women's Ice Hockey Committee March 28 and June 23, 2026, Meetings
Attendees:

Tracy Johnson, St. Olaf College.
Keith Maurice, Trinity College (Connecticut).
Kelly Rider, Curry College.
Brian Savard, Plattsburgh State University of New York.
Charles Sowa, University of Wisconsin-River Falls.
Absentees:
None.
Guests:
Tim Danehy, NCAA Power Index.
Jeff Fulton, NCAA Secretary Rules Editor – Ice Hockey.
Krissy Langley, National Coordinator of Officials – NCAA Women's Ice Hockey.
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
Dante Jones, Championships and Alliances.
Ryan Richardson, Championships and Alliances.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Paden Alie, Championships and Alliances.
Corey Berg, Governance and Member Services.
Bill Regan, Governance and Member Services.