2027 WOMEN'S FROZEN FOUR®

DULUTH, MN

PRECHAMPIONSHIP 2026-27 MANUAL



National Collegiate Women's Ice Hockey

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Section 1 • Introduction

During the 2026-27 academic year, the Association will sponsor 94 national championships — 43 for men, 49 for women and two for both men and women. Of the men's championships, four are National Collegiate Championships, 13 are Division I championships, 12 are Division II championships and 14 are Division III championships. Of the women's championships, 10 are National Collegiate Championships, 12 are Division I championships, 13 are Division II championships and 14 are Division III championships. The combined men's and women's championships are National Collegiate Championships.

The Prechampionship Manual will serve as a resource for institutions to prepare for the championship. This manual is divided into three sections: General Administrative Guidelines, Sport-Specific Information and Appendixes.

Sections one through nine apply to policies applicable to all 94 championships, while the remaining sections are sport specific.

Section 1•1 Definitions

Prechampionship Manual. Resource for institutions to prepare for the championship.

Administrative Meeting. Prechampionship meeting for coaches and/or administrators.

Appendixes. Any supplemental documents to be provided and distributed through the various resources.

Championship Manager. The NCAA staff member(s) responsible for the operational oversight of the championship.

Games Committee. The committee assigned to supervise the conduct of each championship session at a specific site. For finals sites, the games committee is typically the NCAA national committee.

NCAA National Committee. The sport committee with direct oversight responsibilities for the championship.

Nonpredetermined Sites. Those sites that are selected to host at the time of the participant/team selections announcement.

Playing Rules. The rules under which the competition will be conducted.

Predetermined Sites. Those sites that are selected to host before the participant/team selections announcement.

Preliminary Rounds. The rounds of the championship before the final or championship round.

Regional Alignment. The geographic location of institutions or regional advisory committees.

Schedule of Events. Official event schedule – includes all required activities (e.g., practices, banquets).

Selection Criteria. Policies and procedures in place to guide the team selection process.

Site Selection Criteria. Policies and procedures in place to guide the site selection process.

Squad Size. In any championship in which a squad limit has been established by the governing sport committee or by the bylaws, the number of eligible student-athletes in competitive uniform eligible to participate at the start of competition.

Tournament Physician. The physician designated by the host institution/conference to serve as the chief medical advisor for the championship event(s) to be hosted at the host venue.

Section 2 • Championship Core Statement

The championships and alliances staff strives to administer competition in a fair, safe, equitable and sportsmanlike manner so that the experience of the student-athlete is paramount.

This is attained by:

Ensuring student-athletes' optimal experience.

Executing championship events reflecting appropriate quality and values to/for stakeholders — student-athletes, coaches, administrators, member institutions, sport committees, fans, broadcast partners and corporate champions/partners.

Coordinating all aspects of the championship in an efficient, effective manner through common operating policies and practices, using internal and external resources.

Integrating championships with broadcast and corporate relationships in a manner that maintains the integrity of the championship.

Assuring effective management of the business aspects of the operation.

Enhancing the assets of the NCAA and their value by collaborating with internal and external expertise to achieve heightened exposure (e.g., community programs, fan events, banquets, anniversaries).

Section 3 • Conduct

Section 3•1 Certification of Eligibility/Availability

[Reference: Certification of Eligibility/Availability in Bylaws 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20.2.4, 31.2.1.7.1, 31.2.1.7.1.2 and 31.2.2 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Bylaws 7.3.1.5 and 18.2.1 in the NCAA Division II Manual and Division II Championships Committee Policy and Bylaws 31.2.1.5, 31.2.1.5.2, and 31.2.2 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

Only student-athletes eligible under Bylaws 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 may compete in NCAA championships. Member institutions are required to certify the eligibility of their student-athletes before the beginning of each academic year and to withhold ineligible student-athletes from all intercollegiate competition.

Member institutions are reminded to notify the NCAA national office before the selection date for each championship of any student-athlete who may have participated in regular-season competition but subsequently is determined to be ineligible or unavailable for NCAA championship competition.

DISCOVERY OF INELIGIBILITY OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE AFTER SELECTION

If an institution fails to report an ineligible student-athlete and the omission is not discovered until after the institution is selected to participate in the championship, necessitating the institution's withdrawal from the championship, that withdrawal shall be considered as one of the years of ineligibility, provided another institution participates in the championship in place of the disqualified institution. If the discovery of the ineligible student-athlete occurs so near the beginning of the championship that the governing sport committee does not have a reasonable period of time to replace the disqualified institution in the bracket, that fact shall be taken into consideration in determining the number of years the disqualified institution shall be ineligible to participate.

Section 3•2 Drug Testing

As part of preparation and planning to participate in championship events, member institutions are reminded and encouraged to review all applicable policy and legislative requirements pertaining to banned substances, drug testing and related eligibility requirements with their student-athletes. Student-athletes who compete in NCAA championships may be subjected to drug tests in accordance with legislation and may be determined to be ineligible as a result thereof. Only student-athletes who have consented in writing to such testing are initially eligible for these championships; and thereafter, student-athletes who are tested shall remain eligible only if they test negative.

Section 3•3 Honesty and Sportsmanship

Individuals employed by (or associated with) a member institution to administer, conduct or coach intercollegiate athletics and all participating student-athletes shall act with honesty and sportsmanship at all times so that intercollegiate athletics as a whole, their institutions and they, as individuals, shall represent the honor and dignity of fair play and the generally recognized high standards associated with wholesome competitive sports.

Section 3•4 Misconduct/Failure to Adhere to Policies

MISCONDUCT

Misconduct in an NCAA championship is any act of dishonesty, unsportsmanlike conduct, unprofessional behavior or breach of law, occurring from the time the championship field is announced through the end of the championship, that discredits the event or intercollegiate athletics. Each games committee shall hold an administrative meeting with the representatives of participating institutions to review and explain the policies related to misconduct.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A governing sport committee may assess a financial penalty against an institution for failure of any of its representatives to adhere to the policies and procedures governing the administration of the competition. This includes, but is not limited to, failure to comply with the procedures and deadlines for submitting scores, score sheets, schedules, rosters and entry/march-in forms for qualification and other materials necessary for the efficient administration of the competition. **Click here** to see the full misconduct/failure to adhere to policies and procedures online.

Section 3•5 Sports Wagering Policy

Sports wagering includes placing, accepting or soliciting a wager (on a staff member's or student-athlete's own behalf or on the behalf of others) of any type with any individual or organization on any intercollegiate, amateur or professional team or contest. Examples of sports wagering include, but are not limited to, the use of a bookmaker or parlay card; internet sports wagering; mobile betting; auctions in which bids are placed on teams, individuals or contests; and pools or fantasy leagues in which an entry fee is required and there is an opportunity to win a prize.

The current NCAA legislation against sports wagering prohibits NCAA student-athletes, member institutions' athletics staff and non-athletics staff with athletics responsibilities, and conference office staff from participating in sports wagering activities or providing information to individuals involved in or associated with any type of sports wagering activities concerning intercollegiate, amateur or professional athletics practice or competition in a sport in which the NCAA conducts championship competition, in bowl subdivision football and in emerging sports for women.

A wager is any agreement in which an individual or entity agrees to give up an item of value (e.g., cash, shirt, dinner) in exchange for the possibility of gaining another item of value.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

A student-athlete found in violation of the prohibition against knowingly participating in any sports wagering activities or providing information to individuals involved in or associated with any type of sports wagering activity that involves intercollegiate, amateur or professional athletics competition shall be ineligible for further intercollegiate competition, subject to appeal to the Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement for restoration of eligibility.

POSTSEASON

In championships in which a bracket format is used, student-athletes, coaches and administrators may not participate in bracket competitions where there is both a required entry fee and an opportunity to win a prize. Student-athletes and administrators may participate under current NCAA rules in bracket contests where there is no entry fee but a possibility of winning a prize. Some NCAA member schools, however, have chosen to ban student-athletes from participating in these types of bracket contests.

HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

It is permissible for NCAA championships to be conducted at locations in states that permit sports wagering.

Section 3•6 Student-Athlete Experience Survey

During the NCAA championships, the student-athlete experience is paramount. NCAA staff and hosts dedicate themselves to planning the best experiences for all involved. As part of our commitment to getting better, following the championship, participants will receive a survey to provide feedback on their experience and input on how

championships can be improved for future NCAA student-athletes. Institutional administrators and coaches will receive an email containing a link to the survey and will be asked to forward the survey to student-athletes. Additionally, this survey will be accessible via QR code found on the back of NCAA-issued championship credentials.

We also understand that sometimes certain circumstances or conditions occurring during the events may require real-time consideration. When this is the case, student-athletes may reach out to their site representative or NCAA national office staff on-site.

Section 4 • Elite Scholar-Athlete™ Award

The Elite Scholar-Athlete award was created to recognize the true essence of student-athletes by honoring individuals who have reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in their sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among their peers. The award is presented in every sport, every division, and goes to the student-athlete who has the highest cumulative grade-point average of all student-athletes competing at the finals site. One student-athlete per championship will receive the award, and the announcement of the winner will be made at the finals site.

Institutions that wish to nominate a student-athlete must do so through an online nomination process. For more information or to access the online form and submit a nomination, **click here**.

Section 5 • Fan Travel

Through support from Marriott International as the Official Hotel Partner of the NCAA, NCAA championships are pleased to provide easy and affordable accommodations for family and fans to follow their favorite student-athlete(s) and team(s) as they participate in NCAA championships competition. Travel arrangements completed through Marriott and NCAA Travel help support NCAA student-athletes. Please direct your fans to **ncaa.com/travel** to search and book online hotel reservations.

Section 6 • Health and Safety

As part of preparation and planning to host and/or participate in championship events, member institutions are reminded and encouraged to review all applicable health and safety policy and legislative requirements and guidance including, among others, those relating to concussion management, catastrophic injury prevention, inclement weather and independent medical care. These requirements and related information can be found in applicable division manuals, sports playing rules and the materials located on the **Health, Safety & Performance website**. In addition, a summary of some of the key health and safety considerations related to traveling to championship events can be found in the **NCAA's Guidance for Medical Care and Coverage for Student-Athletes at Away Events**.

Section 7 • Logo Policy

[Reference: Bylaw 22.4.1 in the NCAA Division I Manual, 17.1.10 Bylaw in the NCAA Division II Manual and 12.5.3 Bylaw in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

A student-athlete may use athletics equipment or wear athletics apparel that bears the trademark or logo of an athletics equipment or apparel manufacturer or distributor in athletics competition and pregame and postgame activities (e.g., celebrations on the court, pregame or postgame press conferences), provided the following criteria are met.

(a) Athletics equipment (e.g., shoes, helmets, baseball bats and gloves, batting or golf gloves, hockey and lacrosse sticks, goggles and skis) shall bear only the manufacturer's normal label or trademark, as it is used on all such items for sale to the general public; and

(b) The student-athlete's institution's official uniform (including numbered racing bibs and warm-ups) and all other items of apparel (e.g., socks, head bands, T-shirts, wrist bands, visors or hats, swim caps and towels) shall bear only a single manufacturer's or distributor's normal label or trademark (regardless of the visibility of the label or trademark), not to exceed four square inches in area (rectangle, square, parallelogram) including any additional material (e.g., patch) surrounding the normal trademark or logo. The student-athlete's institution's official uniform and all other items of apparel shall not bear a design element similar to the manufacturer's trademark/logo that is in addition to another trademark/logo that is contrary to the size restriction.

Section 8 • Research

In order to avoid inappropriate and unnecessary participant distraction and disruption of championship events, it is expected any data collection or other research efforts conducted at or during championship events will be coordinated through the national office, with notice and a description of any research proposal to be submitted to the NCAA research staff at least six weeks before the championships event begins.

Section 9 • Travel Party

Please refer to the NCAA travel policies for all information regarding transportation and per diem expenses. NCAA Travel policies are updated annually and can be found online **here**. Please reference Appendix A of the travel policies for reimbursable travel party numbers. The travel policies supersede all other documents.

Section 10 • Religious Conflicts

[Reference: Bylaws 31.1.4.1 and 31.1.4.2 in the NCAA Division I Manual.]

Institutional Policy. If a participating institution has a written policy against competition on a particular day for religious reasons, it shall inform the NCAA national office on or before Sept. 1 of each academic year in order for it or one of its student-athletes to be excused from competing on that day. The championship schedule shall be adjusted to accommodate that institution. *(Adopted: 4/22/98, Revised: 8/11/98, 10/28/99, 5/2/13)*

Individual Championships. In individual championships, an athlete must compete according to the institution's policy regarding Sunday competition (if the institution has no policy against Sunday competition, the student-athlete shall compete on Sunday if required by the schedule).

Section 11 • Team Replacement Policy

Division I developed a team replacement policy considering the possibility of unforeseen circumstances impacting championship fields. The policy will be implemented in accordance with the terms set forth in the policy document available **here** when, despite best efforts, a team within the championship field is impeded or hindered from participating in the championship for reasons beyond its control.

Section 1 • General Administration

Section 1•1 NCAA Tournament Operations Staff Contact Information

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Section 1•2 National Committee

[Reference: Administration and Management in the Division I General Section, and Bylaws 31.1.1 and 31.1.2 in the NCAA Division I Manual.]

Current members of the committee are:

Brittany Kane, chair
Senior Associate Director of Athletics
Boston University

Melanie Ruzzi
Head Women's Ice Hockey Coach
Brown University

Charles Dowd
Deputy Athletic Director, External Operations
Scared Heart University

Celeste Brown
Head Women's Ice Hockey Coach
Rochester Institute of Technology

Michelle McAteer
Commissioner
Western Collegiate Hockey Association

For additional information about the National Collegiate Women's Ice Hockey Championship, contact:

Krissy Langley
National Coordinator of Officials
612-710-2242 / KL1620E@aol.com

Steve Piotrowski
NCAA Ice Hockey Secretary-Rules Editor
248-880-6877 / ncaapiotrowski@gmail.com

Paden Alie
NCAA Playing Rules
317-374-9637 / palie@ncaa.org

Section 1•3 Important Dates

Monday, Jan. 11, 2027	National office begins accepting proposed budgets and bid materials for regional competition.
Wednesday, Feb. 24	Regional host and site representative call, 11 a.m. Eastern time / 10 a.m. Central time.
Monday, March 1	Proposed bid materials for regional round sites due to the national office.
Sunday, March 7	Selection show, 11:30 a.m. Eastern time on ESPNU. *Time and Network subject to change.
Monday, March 15	Call with Women's Frozen Four participants, 11 a.m. Eastern time / 10 a.m. Central time.
Monday-Tuesday, June 21-22	Women's Ice Hockey Committee annual meeting.

CHAMPIONSHIP DATES

Sunday, March 7	Championship selections and pairings announced.
Thurs.-Fri., March 11-12	Regional Semifinals, on campus.
Sat.-Sun., March 13-14	Regional Finals, on campus.
Sunday, March 21	Semifinal games – AMSOIL Arena, Duluth, Minnesota.
Tuesday, March 23	Championship game – AMSOIL Arena, Duluth, Minnesota.

DATE FORMULA

Regional Semifinals	Week before Women's Frozen Four (Thursday or Friday).
Regional Finals	Weekend before Women's Frozen Four (Saturday or Sunday).
Finals	Sunday and Tuesday before men's ice hockey regionals.

FUTURE DATES

2028	March 17 **and** 19 **or** 19 **and** 21; Sacred Heart University, Martire Family Arena, Connecticut.

Section 1•4 Equipment

PUCKS

The NCAA shall provide practice and game pucks for all rounds of the championship.

Section 1•5 Eligibility for National Collegiate Championships

[Reference: Bylaw 20.8 in the NCAA Manual.]

An active member institution in good standing, regardless of division, is eligible for the National Collegiate Championships if a division championship in the respective sport is not offered in its division. Such an institution normally is required to meet only the institutional and individual eligibility requirements of its division that govern the sport in question.

Section 1•6 Rules

Per NCAA Bylaw 17.30, member institutions shall conduct all of their intercollegiate competition in accordance with the playing rules of the Association in all sports for which the NCAA develops playing rules. For those sports in which the Association follows rules that are developed by other governing bodies and modified by the governing sports committee, the adopted playing rules shall be used. The governing sports committee will not consider any results for selection purposes that are not played in accordance with NCAA rules, or those rules adopted by an outside organization.

Section 1•7 Uniforms

Each participating institution should bring both home and away uniforms to the site of the competition. Student-athletes shall wear institutional apparel at all news conferences.

LOGOS

Refer to General Administrative Guidelines, Section 7.

Division I Additional Requirements

The logo restriction on student-athletes' apparel set forth in 12.5.4 shall apply during the NCAA championships to all personnel (e.g., coaches, athletic trainers, managers) who are on the team bench for practices and games or who participate in news conferences. Also, the logo restriction on student-athletes' apparel as set forth in 12.5.4 shall apply to commercial logos on uniforms worn by band members, cheerleaders, dance team members and the institution's mascot during NCAA championship events.

These restrictions apply to all apparel worn by student-athletes during the conduct of competition, which includes any pregame or postgame activities.

This bylaw will be strictly enforced at all NCAA championships and the names of individuals and institutions that are not in compliance with this bylaw shall be forwarded to the NCAA enforcement staff.

Section 2 • Determination of Championship Participation

Section 2•1 Championship Format

NCAA Divisions I and II institutions that sponsor intercollegiate women's ice hockey are eligible for the National Collegiate Women's Ice Hockey Championship. The championship will include 11 teams. The championship playoff format consists of three regional semifinal games that will be played on the campuses of the top three seeds. Those winners will compete against the top three seeds and the No. 4 and No. 5 seeds will compete in the four regional final games that are played on the campuses of the participating institutions. The four regional champions will advance to the Women's Frozen Four. The entire championship will use a single-elimination format.

Squad Size. Participating teams are limited to 19 skaters plus not more than three nor fewer than two goalies on the bench for competition. Replacements are permitted consistent with NCAA game protocol; however, after the game begins, no replacements shall be permitted for any reason. Only eight nonplaying personnel shall be allowed on the bench. The official squad size for the National Collegiate Women's Ice Hockey Championship is 27.

The number of student-athletes in competitive uniform shall not exceed the prescribed number at the start of the contest. An institution that is advised it is in violation of this regulation and does not conform promptly to it automatically shall forfeit the competition. There shall be no inordinate delay of the competition to allow the institution to conform to the rule.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (TENTATIVE)

(All times local)

Friday, March 19

All day	Teams arrive.

Saturday, March 20

60 Minutes	Team A - interviews with ESPN and Videoboard (Semifinal No. 1 higher seed chooses A or B).
60 Minutes	Team B - interviews with ESPN and Videoboard.
75 Minutes	Team A - practice.
60 Minutes	Team C - interviews with ESPN and Videoboard. (Semifinal No. 2 higher seed chooses C or D).
20 Minutes	Team A - news conference.
75 Minutes	Team B - practice.
60 Minutes	Team D - interviews with ESPN and Videoboard.
20 Minutes	Team B - news conference.
75 Minutes	Team C - practice.
20 Minutes	Team C - news conference.
75 Minutes	Team D - practice.
20 Minutes	Team D - news conference.

Sunday, March 21

45 Minutes	Semifinal No. 1 practice. (Semifinal No. 1 higher seed chooses first or second practice.)
45 Minutes	Semifinal No. 1 practice. (Semifinal No. 1 higher seed chooses first or second practice.)
45 Minutes	Semifinal No. 2 practice. (Semifinal No. 2 higher seed chooses first or second practice.)

35 Minutes	Semifinal No. 2 practice. (Semifinal No. 2 higher seed chooses first or second practice.)
Noon	Semifinal Game 1.
3:30 p.m.	Semifinal Game 2.

Monday, March 22

75 Minutes	Team 1 practice. (Highest remaining seed selects)
20 Minutes	Team 1 news conference.
75 Minutes	Team 2 practice. (Highest remaining seed selects)
20 Minutes	Team 2 news conference.

Tuesday, March 23

45 Minutes	Team 1 practice. (Highest remaining seed selects)
45 Minutes	Team 2 practice. (Highest remaining seed selects)
6 p.m.	Championship game.

START TIMES AND GAME ORDER

Start times for the regional semifinal games will be recommended by the host institution and the committee will reserve the right to approve these times. Regional semifinal games shall be played on either March 11 or 12, while each regional final must be played, with a day off, on either March 13 or 14. The Women's Ice Hockey committee will ask hosts to stagger start times for regionals and reserves the right to ask host for rationale on proposed game times. The Women's Ice Hockey committee reserves the right to move proposed game times by up to one hour, while prioritizing the higher seed's game time request, if needed.

The game order for the Women's Frozen Four semifinals (i.e., who plays in the first semifinal and who **plays** in the second semifinal) will be determined by ESPN in consultation with the Women's Ice Hockey Committee.

During the Women's Frozen Four, the second semifinal will not begin before the scheduled start time but may begin after this time depending on the completion of the first game. After the completion of semifinal No. 1 and the resurfacing of the ice, a minimum of 43:00 (time to begin when ice resurfacing machine leaves the ice) will be put on the scoreboard. The only exception to this is when a goal is scored five minutes or less into any overtime session. In this case, the ice will not be resurfaced and a minimum of 48:00 (time to begin after players and officials have left the ice) will be put on the clock. In all cases, warmups for the second game will begin at 38:00, according to the NCAA ice hockey protocol.

TRAVEL PARTY

Transportation expenses and per diem will be provided for an official travel party of 37. Please refer to the NCAA Travel Policies for all information regarding transportation and per diem expenses. Travel policies can be found on the NCAA website at **ncaa.org**. The NCAA is not responsible for the expenses of persons beyond these limits. Once the championship is completed, participating institutions must submit reimbursement requests online through the NCAA Travel Expense System within 30 days of the conclusion of competition.

Section 2•2 Results

During the championship and at the conclusion of the competition, the host sports information director, media coordinator or designee is responsible for reporting official results to the NCAA official website. Please email a copy of results to **ncaa-content@turner.com** and Liz Wacienga (**lwacienga@ncaa.org**). Please be sure to submit all information in the following manner:

Section 2•3 Selection Information

BYLAW 31.3.3.1 - COUNTABLE COMPETITION

For NCAA team-championship selection purposes, competition is countable only when the teams played are varsity intercollegiate teams of four-year, degree-granting institutions that conduct a majority of their competition in that team sport against varsity intercollegiate teams (see Constitution 3.2.4.5) of United States four-year, degree-granting institutions. Competition against service teams, professional teams, semiprofessional teams, amateur teams, two-year colleges and club teams shall be excluded.

ALLOCATION OF BERTHS

Five conferences will receive automatic qualification for the 2027 championship. The remaining six teams will be selected on an at-large basis via the NPI selection criteria (highest six ranked teams via NPI {no matter their record) not receiving automatic qualification).

AUTOMATIC QUALIFICATION

The following conferences have been granted automatic-qualification privileges for the 202**7** championship:

Atlantic Hockey America, ECAC Hockey, Hockey East Association, New England Women's Hockey Alliance and the Western Collegiate Hockey Association.

Divisions I and II institutions that wish to be considered for selection to the National Collegiate Championship must schedule a minimum of 20 games against Divisions I and II opponents.

CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

Championship information, including the complete bracket, will be available on **ncaa.com** subsequent to the official announcement. Updates can be found on this site throughout the championship.

Section 2•4 Selection Criteria

The following criteria shall be employed by a governing sports committee in selecting participants for NCAA championships competition [Bylaw 31.3.3; Criteria for Selection of Participants]:

- Won-lost record;
- Strength of schedule; and
- Eligibility and availability of student-athletes for NCAA championships.

In addition to Bylaw 31.3.3, the Women's Ice Hockey Committee will utilize the following criteria in the selection of at-large teams for the women's ice hockey championship:

- NCAA Percentage Index (NPI) [won-lost record (25%), strength of schedule (75%)] including quality win bonus.**
- Additional NPI Dials Include:
  - Quality win base value of 51.50.
  - Quality win multiplier of .5.
  - Regular season overtime win/loss percentage factor of 2/3 (66.666667%), (W)/1/3 (33.333333%)(L).
  - Home/Away weighting of 1.0/1.0
  - Tie and shootout value of 50/50.
  - Minimum wins: 12.

**If points awarded for any win lower a team's average NPI, those points will not count toward the NPI unless the team has less than 12 wins retained on their schedule. If points earned for losing a game increase a team's average NPI, those points will not count toward the NPI.*

After the automatic qualifiers are assigned, the next six teams in rank order via the NPI (no matter their record) after all regular season and conference championship games are complete will fill the remaining at-large spots.

The Women's Ice Hockey Committee does not consider outside polls as a source for selections.

SEEDINGS AND PAIRINGS

The following steps are taken during the selection meeting: In setting up the tournament, the committee begins with a list of priorities to ensure a successful tournament on all fronts, including competitive equity, financial success and the likelihood of a playoff-type atmosphere at each regional site.

For this model, the following protocol will be followed:

1. Once the five automatic qualifiers and six at-large teams are selected, the top four overall teams via the NPI are the "1" seeds and will be placed in the bracket so that if all four teams advance to the Women's Frozen Four, the overall No. 1 seed will play the overall No. 4 seed and the overall No. 2 seed will play the overall No. 3 seed in the semifinals.

2. The next four teams via the NPI are targeted as the "2" seeds. The number 5 overall seed will be designated as the highest ranked overall 2 seed since they receive a first-round bye and would automatically play the No. 4 overall seed. The committee has determined that the overall No. 4 will play the overall No. 5 seed regardless of if they are from the same conference.

3. The next three teams (overall ranked teams 6, 7 and 8) are the other "2" seeds, and the last three teams (overall ranked 9, 10 and 11) will be designated as the "3" seeds.

4. The committee must then place the home teams. Assuming it meets the committee's hosting criteria, the highest seeded team will be given the opportunity to host the four regional sites. If a top four overall seed cannot host, they will still be the designated home team for their matchup.

5. The committee will then complete the bracket so that regional semifinal conference matchups are avoided. Due to the size of an 11-team bracket, if four or more teams from one conference are selected to the championship in the final six spots (teams ranked 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11) via the NPI, then the integrity of the bracket will be protected (i.e., maintaining the pairing process according to the overall rank will take priority over avoidance of regional semifinal-round conference matchups as there would be no way to separate conference opponents in all three regional semifinals in this specific situation).

6. To complete each site, the committee assigns one team from each of the remaining seeded groups so there is a No. 1 seed (overall team 1, 2 and 3), No. 2 seed (overall teams 6, 7 and 8), and a No. 3 seed (overall teams 9, 10 and 11) at three of the sites using its selection criteria principle of separating conference opponents in the regional semifinal, while matching up the No. 4 and No. 5 overall seeds in a regional final matchup.

The Women's Ice Hockey Committee with approval from the NCAA Division I Cabinet shall have the authority to modify its working principles related to the championship site assignment on a case-by-case basis.

Section 2•5 Site Selection

Any institution interested in hosting preliminary-round competition of the 2027 championship must submit a proposed budget, respond to sport-specific questions and ensure that the institution's key contacts and facility information are complete and current in the Championships Bid Portal. Please note that in order to submit a bid, you must first locate the desired championship in the "Championships Available for Bidding" section and select "Start Bid."

All hotels must be full service, have a meeting room that can accommodate at least 50 people and be within 30-45 minutes of the rink. Room rates, as with hotel quality and location, should be comparable for all visiting teams. Hosts are expected to secure room rates that are in line with the per diem rate (i.e., $215 or $315 for a designated high-cost city). Hotels with internal doors and beds (i.e., no pullouts) are the only permissible lodging options. If an institution submits a limited-service property, the Women's Ice Hockey Committee can deem it acceptable if it meets quality and amenity requirements as specified by the Women's Ice Hockey committee.

At the competition venue, a minimum of three (3) comparable locker rooms with shower facilities should be provided for the teams in the rink or an adjacent facility, and two (2) lockers rooms with shower facilities should be provided for the game officials. All locker room plans should be outlined in the bid documents.

Please note that all member institutions have regular and easy access to their profiles by visiting **championships.ncaa.org** and NCAA My Apps. For profile issues or user access please email **championshipbid@ncaa.org** or contact the respective championship manager.

The Championships Bid Portal can be accessed at **championships.ncaa.org**. The deadline to submit all bid materials for this championship is Monday, March 1.

In addition to projected ticket sales and game expenses, prospective hosts should include the following when completing a proposed budget:

- Committee/site representative lodging.
- Game officials lodging.
- State and city taxes/fees.
- Ticket and facility fees.

Committees/site representative's per diem and mileage will be paid by the NCAA, not the host institution. Game officials will be reimbursed via the RefQuest system for their game fees, per diem, mileage and baggage fees.

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

[Reference: Bylaw 31.4 in the NCAA Manual.]

A final financial report from each championship site must be submitted via the Championships Bid Portal under the "budget" tab not later than 60 days after the conclusion of competition.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact Markell Staton at 317-917-6502 or **mstaton@ncaa.org**, or email **championshipbid@ncaa.org**, if you have any questions regarding the bid process.

SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN

Each facility profile should include the safety and security plan for that facility. This information can be uploaded and attached to the profile by visiting **championships.ncaa.org**.

FACILITY EVALUATION

Any institution interested in hosting regional-round competition of the National Collegiate Women's Ice Hockey Championship must submit a facility profile. If an institution is proposing to play a regional game at a facility where it has not played a minimum of 10 games during the regular season, that facility must be approved in advance by the committee.

Appendixes

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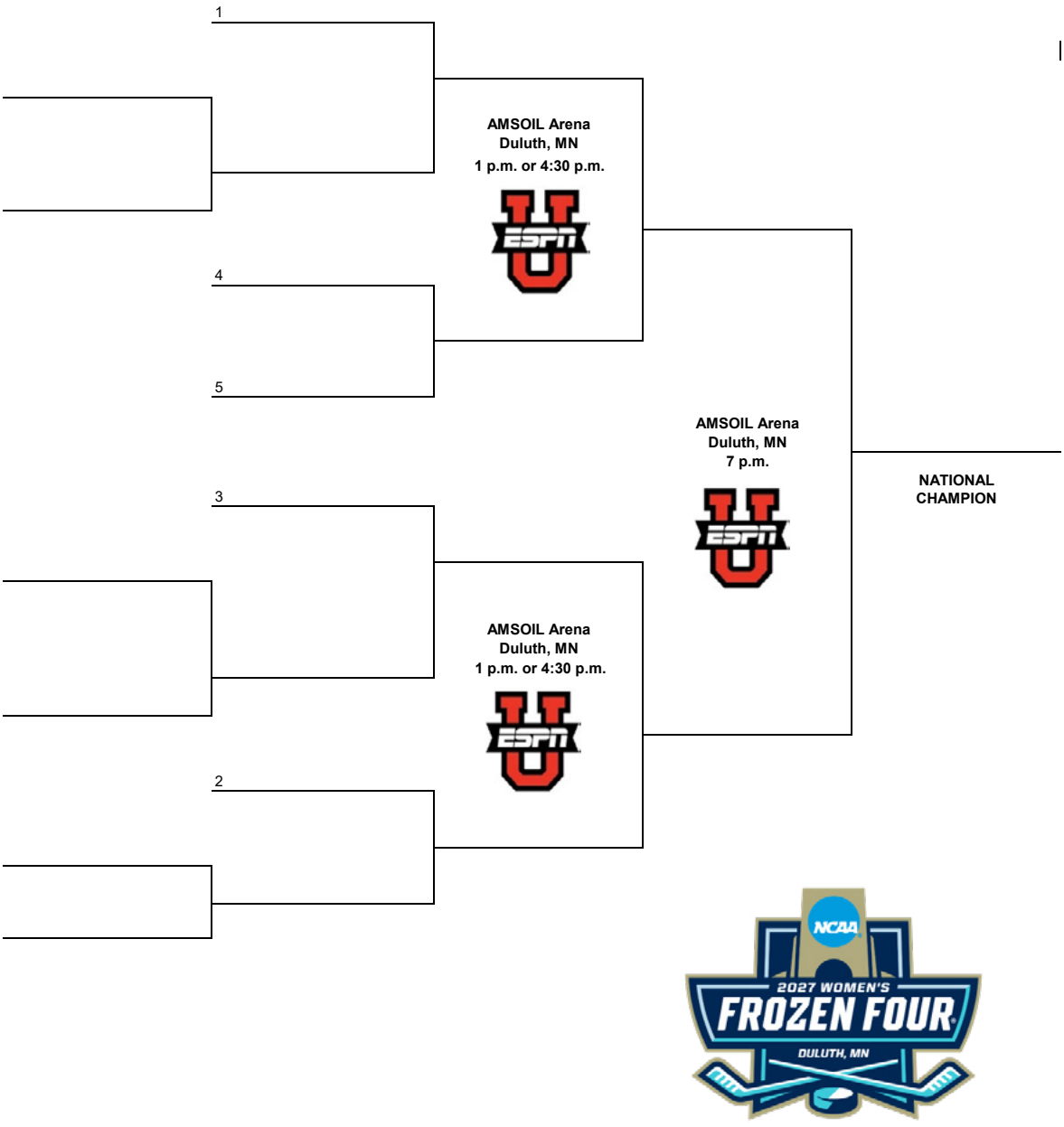
Appendix A • Bracket

2027 NC Women's Ice Hockey Championship



All times are Eastern time.
The regional semifinal games at regional sites will be Thursday/Friday with regional final games Saturday/Sunday.
The national semifinal game order will be decided after all four teams advance.
Information subject to change.
***Host site.**

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Appendix B • Sport Sponsorship

Atlantic Hockey America (7)

University of Delaware
Lindenwood University
Mercyhurst University
Pennsylvania State University
Robert Morris University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Syracuse University

ECAC Hockey (12)

Brown University
Clarkson University
Colgate University
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Harvard University
Princeton University
Quinnipiac University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
St. Lawrence University
Union College (New York)
Yale University

Hockey East Association (10)

Boston College
Boston University
University of Connecticut
College of Holy Cross
University of Maine
Merrimack College
University of New Hampshire
Northeastern University
Providence College
University of Vermont

New England Women's Hockey Alliance (8)

Assumption University
Franklin Pierce University
Long Island University
Post University
Sacred Heart University
Saint Anselm College
Saint Michael's College
Stonehill College

Western Collegiate Hockey Association (8)

Bemidji State University
Minnesota State University, Mankato
University of Minnesota Duluth
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
The Ohio State University
St. Cloud State University
University of St. Thomas (Minnesota)
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Appendix C • Officiating Policies and Procedures

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Officials. Officials for all championship competitions are selected by the Women's Ice Hockey Committee based on recommendations submitted by the NCAA national ice hockey coordinator of officials via the eligibility requirements outlined.

1. Must be eligible on RefQuest by completing all RefQuest postseason eligibility requirements which include but are not limited to, registering, consent and passing a background check, watching the pre-season video, passing the rules test, and completing the annual sport radar video. (Note additional requirements may be added yearly.)
2. Highly encouraged to participate in a conference clinic and NCAA preseason meeting.
3. Must be formally recommended by a conference supervisor via RefQuest and/or email directly to the National Coordinator in accordance to the timeline below.
4. Officials must complete the conflict-of-interest form when registering for RQ and confirm conflicts when asked by the national coordinator of officials prior to postseason assignment. If an official has a conflict of interest with an institution, they will not be assigned to officiate that institution during the postseason.
5. It is highly recommended that officials work a minimum of 10 games at the level and in the position for which they are recommended (referee or linesperson).

Policies. Officials shall adhere to the conference's policies relating to gambling activities and drug and alcohol use. Furthermore, officials must conduct themselves in a manner befitting intercollegiate athletics. Failure to do so may result in termination of the officiating assignment. This includes self-reporting any injuries that could affect their ability to officiate in the NCAA championship competition.

Background checks. All officials must consent and pass the NCAA background check to be considered for assignment. Background screening is verified once the final recommendations are submitted.

TIMELINE

August 5	RefQuest+ hub opens.
Sep/Oct	Conference/NCAA clinics.
Oct 27	Deadline for Officials to complete NCAA postseason eligibility on RefQuest.
Nov./Dec.	Initial recommendations due from conferences to NCAA national coordinator and staff liaison.
January.	Final recommendations due from conferences to NCAA national coordinator and staff liaison. *Changes past this deadline must be submitted with explanation directly to the NCAA national coordinator with copy to the Conference Commissioner and NCAA staff liaison.*
March 7	Teams selected for championship; national coordinator submits final recommendations to committee.
March 7	Bracket publicly announced; national coordinator notifies coordinators and officials of selections.
March 8	National coordinator confirms travel arrangements have been made, and all officials have received documents with instructions for the championship.

Evaluation, Selection and Assignment of officials. Selection and assignment of officials for all tournament games will be made by the NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Committee in accordance with the following policies and procedures:

1) Evaluations. Women's Ice Hockey conference supervisors will conduct evaluations of their conference officials in their own manner. The women's ice hockey National Coordinator of Officials may also evaluate the same officials in-person, online/TV, or through trained regional observers. All three evaluations are considered when making postseason recommendations and assignments.

2) All conference supervisors recommendations will be considered by the national coordinator and the committee without bias. The women's ice hockey national coordinator of officials will utilize the evaluation process outlined to make a final recommendation to the committee for each round. The women's ice hockey committee will be the final decision-making authority as to the selection and assignment of officials for all NCAA tournament games.

3) The national coordinator will make assignment recommendations to the Women's Ice Hockey Committee utilizing these principles:

    a. Neutral conference officials (referee, linesperson, video replay) will be assigned to each game, when possible.

    b. While neutral officiating crews are preferred, if sufficient neutral crews do not exist due to officiating evaluations, conferences represented in the bracket (i.e. many teams from one or two conferences) and/or potential advancement within the bracket, a split crew may be recommended. This involves using two referees from one team's conference and two linespersons from the other team's conference. In a game with a split crew, a referee pair will be assigned from the conference of the higher seed's conference, and a lines pair from the lower seed's conference.

    c. In the event an official worked multiple games in multiple conferences, and is recommended by more than one conference coordinator, an examination of the official's game schedule will be utilized with the two specific opponents in their assigned game to confirm neutrality still exists. In this situation, the national coordinator may reach out to each respective conference coordinator to confirm neutrality prior to the assignment, as needed.

4) At Regionals, two separate crews will be utilized when there is more than one game at the site, if possible.

5) At Women's Frozen Four, a separate crew will be utilized for each game (three total crews,) if possible.

Video Replay Official. At each regional site and the Women's Frozen Four, a video replay official will be assigned. The video replay official will be a neutral conference official, if possible. The video replay official will assist the on-ice crew in making the decision but has no authority on the final decision. The video replay official will have specific training regarding video replay rules and technology. This person must be involved with college hockey with thorough knowledge of women's ice hockey rules. This person watches and analyzes video footage to assist the on-ice officials (who make the final decision). This official is usually working in a central replay booth working in conjunction with the technical equipment operator. This person must possess in depth knowledge of the NCAA Men and Women's Ice Hockey Rule Book to determine if a play meets criteria for successful review.

Video Ice Coordinator. At each regional site the video ice coordinator will be provided by the host institution and has no influence on the game. At the Women's Frozen Four, the NCAA will assign the video ice coordinator to work with the video replay coordinator. This person communicates with the replay official, video replay compound and the officials on the ice.

Officials Liaison At each regional site, an on-site official's liaison will be assigned by the NCAA. This is the officiating representative that will handle any/all inquiries and communication between the championship committee representative/NCAA staff and the entire officiating crew. This individual will also complete a game evaluation for each game. They will remind the officiating crew to complete one self-evaluation survey. Conference coordinators are provided with the first opportunity to be on-site and have no influence on the assignments made for future rounds of the championship. The NCAA Women's Ice Hockey National Coordinator of Officials will fill this spot at the Women's Frozen Four.

Notification to Coaches. The NCAA Administrator, with copy to the National Coordinator of Officials, Supervisor of Officials, Site Representative and Tournament Director, will notify each head coach, traveling administrator, and director of operations of their officials approximately 24 hours prior to puck drop. Participating teams must keep official information confidential and may not lobby for any changes.