



REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S LACROSSE COMMITTEE
JUNE 9-10, 2025, ANNUAL MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

a. Video replay at preliminary rounds.

- (1) Recommendation. Require prospective preliminary-round hosts to have video review capabilities.
- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2025.
- (3) Rationale. The committee believes that video review should be used during the entirety of the championship to ensure the correct calls are made as much as possible. This does not mean institutions must use it during the regular season if their conference does not allow it. The committee will work with the NCAA playing rules staff to provide minimum specifications to potential hosts of what is required to have video review available. The committee is aware that the rule states that only one monitor be available for video replay, and that there is already an expectation to provide a minimum of two human-operated cameras for ESPN+ during the first and second rounds for broadcasting. Additionally, the quarterfinal round is on linear television, with ESPN producing the broadcasts, guaranteeing at least two camera angles during the quarterfinal round as well as the first and second rounds. The committee hopes that by requesting this mandate early in the 2025-26 academic year, all potential hosts will have ample time to understand logistics behind providing video replay at their site if they do not use it during the regular season. The committee also noted that all eight preliminary-round hosts in 2025 had the ability and did use video review but wants to ensure its requirement for the future.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None, as any additional expenses to implement video review would be considered a non-reimbursable hosting expense. The committee acknowledged that the expected minimum costs to implement video review at a site that does not have it at during the regular season should be limited to an operator game fee, a monitor, a headset for the official, and corresponding connection plans for the cameras to the monitor. The committee believes that host expense would be approximately \$500 per round.

- (5) Student-athlete impact. Student-athletes will be provided every opportunity to ensure the correct call is made on the field if video-review technology is used. Ultimately, the student-athlete experience is directly tied into the result of the competition and officiating, and the goal of the committee is to ensure the student-athletes are aware that the technology was available if needed.

b. Automatic qualification.

- (1) Recommendation. Approve the following 15 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2025 NCAA Division I Women's Lacrosse Championship: America East Conference; American Athletic Conference; Atlantic Sun Conference; Atlantic 10 Conference; Atlantic Coast Conference; Big 12 Conference, Big East Conference; Big South Conference; Big Ten Conference; Coastal Athletic Association; Ivy League; Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference; Mid-American Conference; Northeast Conference; and Patriot League.
- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2025.
- (3) Rationale. Each conference meets the requirements of NCAA Bylaw 31.3.4.1 and has completed the automatic-qualification declaration form.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. **2025 annual meeting report**. The committee approved the 2024 annual meeting report as submitted.
- 2. **Automatic qualification, pool breakdowns and regional alignment**. The committee reviewed automatic qualification forms, conference grace periods, and conference regional alignments. Staff noted conference membership changes, which will be confirmed once the 2025-26 sponsorship information is available. Staff also noted several institutions that will begin sponsoring or becoming championship eligible during the next several years.
- 3. **Access ratio and sport sponsorship**. The committee desires to note the continued growth of women's lacrosse and the desire to be considered for an additional team for the 2027 championship. After the 2026 season, if all programs compete and no institutions discontinue sponsorship of the sport, women's lacrosse will have 130 eligible institutions for the championship, with an additional one after the 2027 season. The last bracket expansion happened after the 2019 championship, when sponsorship was 116 teams, and the championship went from 26 to 29 teams for the 2021 championship. After the 2026 season,

the hope is that there will be 130 eligible institutions, an increase of 14 institutions and the goal of one additional team to the championship, and the preference of three additional teams to the championship for a bracket without any first round byes and an even 32 teams. While the women's lacrosse committee acknowledges the access ratio for the championship will be at 22% after next season, members also recognize that the men's lacrosse championship access ratio continues to remain closer to 25% at this time.

4. **Seeding 50% of the championship field.** The committee believes that women's lacrosse is an excellent candidate for the next championship to be provided with the ability to seed 50% of the championship field. The championship currently seeds eight teams, meaning only eight additional teams would be seeded. The committee noted the regional makeup of the sport would likely assist in potential expenses since the additional seeded teams would have multiple non-seeded institutions within driving distance. The committee believes it has a strong case to be considered for seeding 50% of the field and hopes that the Sports Oversight Committee will agree when deciding the next championships to seed 50% of the field.
5. **Discussion with the national coordinator of officials and secretary-rules editor.** The committee met with Mara Banfield, the national coordinator of officials, and Stefanie Smith, secretary-rules editor, to discuss the postseason assignment process, video replay in preliminary rounds, and to provide a general recap of the championship officials and the 2025 rules changes.
 - a. **Officials selection process.** The committee reviewed the process used for selecting and approving officials for the 2025 championship and thought Ms. Banfield did an outstanding job.
 - b. **Officials evaluations.** The committee agreed to continue the officials evaluations from coaches during the championship and hope there will be a higher response rate in 2026.
 - c. **Rule changes.** The committee asked for Ms. Smith's review the upcoming rules change timeline and process. Ms. Smith provided an overview of the upcoming rules committee agenda.
 - d. **NCAA partnership with the Collegiate Women's Lacrosse Officials Association.** The committee commended Ms. Banfield and Ms. Smith's work with the CWLOA over the course of the past year. The committee highly encouraged the continued collaboration and is excited to see the growth in year two with a full year of planning allotted.
6. **Championship date formula.** The committee discussed the championship date formula with a continued review of the change in the quarterfinal round to Thursday. The committee discussed the pros and cons of the date and game times. The committee also discussed game-time philosophy for the first and second rounds. The committee was pleased with additional planning around game times for the first and second rounds and urged staff to continue that work for the fan viewing experience.

7. 2025 championship review.

- a. **Rankings and regional advisory committee.** The committee reviewed the selection criteria and heard a presentation on different selection criteria options. The committee hopes to offer continued education to the membership on the criteria, ranking, and selection process to provide more clarity and transparency when the championship field is announced. The committee also reviewed the regional advisory committee roster and noted future openings with expiration dates and conference realignment.
- b. **Selection call.** The committee discussed the selection timeline for 2025. The committee was pleased with moving up the selection call to talk through the multiple bracket scenarios. The committee was pleased with the technology and number of potential hosts, as well as staff preparation on potential brackets using the bracketing principles.
- c. **Selection show.** The committee asked NCAA staff to continue engaging with ESPN on selection show ideas and formats. The committee was pleased with the overall product of the show and the numerous watch parties from the teams, highlighting one of the reasons they enjoy this volunteer service.
- d. **Preliminary rounds.** The committee reviewed preliminary-round feedback and discussed hosting expectations. The committee asked staff to work thorough language surrounding back-up shot clocks. The committee wants to continue to ensure hosts understand what is expected to host a preliminary round. The committee also was pleased with the implementation of new requirements at preliminary rounds this year including locker room requirements, tent requirements, hotel requirements and video review requirements.
- e. **Dual-site hosts (men's and women's).** The committee noted the uniqueness of sites hosting both men's and women's postseason games on the same weekend. The committee believes hosts have proven both can be held at the same site and weekend and encouraged staff to continue working to understand any hosting restrictions prior to selections.
- f. **Practice times.** The committee will continue offering teams 90 minutes of practice the day before competition and 60 minutes the day of competition at all rounds of the championship. The committee asked staff to ensure that if the game field was not available that a practice field of the same surface could be provided for teams and it would be confirmed in the bid portal and communicated to the teams on the participant call.
- g. **Preliminary-round game times.** The committee acknowledged the need to simplify the first- and second-round game time process and allow more flexibility for staggering. The committee requested NCAA staff to update game time guidelines to allow for any site to choose been noon-7 p.m. in the first round, and 11 a.m.-3 p.m. in the second round.
- h. **Postseason game requirement.** The committee will amend the language in the

prechampionships manual regarding hosting a regular-season game in a facility that a school plans to use during postseason to highly encouraging and ensuring the field, equipment and postseason facilities are up to championship minimum requirements already outlined in the prechampionships and host operations manuals.

- i. **Signage.** The committee was pleased with the enhanced signage at the championship and thought it added to the experience for the student-athletes and the fans in attendance.
 - j. **Hotels.** The committee was pleased with the team hotels for the finals. The committee noted the importance of working with preliminary-round hosts to ensure appropriate rates and accommodations are reserved for all teams at preliminary rounds. The committee was pleased with the new guidelines the Sports Oversight Committee released on hotels, allowing hosts to adhere to public standards.
 - k. **Broadcasting/streaming.** The committee was pleased with the broadcasting of the national championship weekend and appreciated that all preliminary-round games were available on ESPN networks. The committee thanked ESPN for the continued exposure of women's lacrosse and looks forward to growing the game together in the future. The committee continues to work with ESPN to understand the best windows and game times for quarterfinals, semifinals and final.
 - l. **Survey review.** The committee reviewed the survey results and discussed them throughout the various sections of the agenda.
 - m. **Game ball color.** The committee acknowledged the current discussion around the game ball color and opted not to discuss further at this time but will reconsider the championship ball color in the future.
 - n. **Internal team review.** The committee heard presentations from each internal team member and made suggestions and recommendations for the 2026 championship. The committee commended the internal team's work, and the changes implemented based on feedback and is encouraged by the team's responsiveness to new ideas for 2026.
8. **2026 championship.**
- a. **2026 committee timeline.** The committee affirmed the timeline for 2025 worked well and will hope to use a similar timeline in 2026 with minor changes but ultimately waited on confirming meeting dates until the new committee structure is finalized.
 - b. **2026 host site.** The committee noted the excitement for the 2026 host and is encouraged by initial planning.
9. **Committee structure and roster.** The committee noted the webinars stemming from the Decision-Making Working Group on the new committee structure for Division I

Championships. The committee noted that there were more questions than answers available and decided to discuss the potential changes once more information is available and final.

- 10. NCAA Power Index (NPI) selection criteria presentation.** The committee heard a presentation from Tim Danehy, the creator of the NPI selection metric. Mr. Danehy provided a basic understanding of the system, the differences to the current criteria, and looked at past three years of data if they were using NPI to evaluate the criteria. The committee expressed interest in continuing conversations with Mr. Danehy over the course of the next several months to evaluate the potential change of selection criteria in the coming years. The committee notes that a potential change is not imminent.
- 11. Inclement weather policy.** The committee noted the need to have an official inclement weather policy as one currently does not exist. The committee will submit the inclement weather policy in a future report for approval.
- 12. Committee chair.** The committee unanimously approved Lindsey Thomas, senior associate athletics director at the University of Florida, as the committee chair.
- 13. Joint meeting with men's lacrosse committee.** The committee met jointly with the men's lacrosse committee to review various items including strategic plans, future site selection, selection criteria, and to review the success of the joint lacrosse championships. (See the joint committee report.)
- 14. Women's lacrosse manuals review.** The committee reviewed the various manuals and instructed staff to make the appropriate updates for 2024-25.
- 15. 2026 annual meeting.** The committee agreed to meet June 8-9, 2026.

Committee Chair: Samantha Eustace, Mercer University, Big South Conference

Staff Liaison(s): Caleb Kolby, Championships and Alliance

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Attendees:	
Derek Cowherd, University of Louisville.	
Samantha Eustace, Mercer University.	
Cathy Reese, University of Maryland-College Park.	
Bonnie Rosen, Temple University.	
Lindsey Thomas, University of Florida.	
Absentees:	
Suzette McQueen, Kent State University.	

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Guests in Attendance:
Mara Banfield, National Coordinator of Officials.
Sofia Basurto, ESPN.
Tim Danehy, NPI.
Ian Dunning, ESPN.
Aaron Katzman, ESPN.
Mallory Kenny, ESPN.
Dan Kole, ESPN.
Liz Robertshaw, IWLCA.
Stefanie Smith, NCAA Women's Lacrosse Secretary-Rules Editor.
Lindsay Tomani, ESPN.
NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:
Caleb Kolby, Markell Staton.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Kenzie Baker, Lucas DuMars J.D. Hamilton, Jessi Faulk, Alyssa Palmer, Shannon Sullivan, and Allison Zwarka.