PRECHAMPIONSHIP 2026-27 MANUAL

NCAA General Administrative Guidelines

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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 pre- and postgame activities (e.g., celebrations on the court, pre- or postgame press conferences), provided the applicable sports playing rules are satisfied and the following criteria are met. (Adopted: 12/15/22)

(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 (Adopted: 12/15/22)

(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 (i.e., rectangle, square, parallelogram) including any additional material (e.g., patch) surrounding the normal trademark or logo. (Adopted: 12/15/22, Revised: 7/21/26 effective 8/1/26)

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 • Division II

Section 10•1 Division II Philosophy

In addition to the constitution of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, as set forth in Constitution 1, members of Division II believe that a well-conducted intercollegiate athletics program, based on sound educational principles and practices, is a proper part of the educational mission of a university or college and that the educational well-being and academic success of the participating student-athlete is of primary concern.

Higher education has lasting importance on an individual's future success. As such, Division II supports the educational mission of college athletics by fostering a balanced approach in which student-athletes learn and develop through their desired academic pursuits, in civic engagement with their communities and in athletics competition. Division II athletics programs also are committed to establishing an inclusive culture in which persons of all backgrounds are respected and given the opportunity to provide input and to participate. Division II members abide by the following principles that help define and distinguish the division: (*Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22*)

(a) Division II colleges and universities are expected to operate their athletics programs with integrity and in a welcoming manner that complies with conference and NCAA rules and regulations. Institutional control is a fundamental principle that supports the institution's educational mission and assumes presidential involvement and oversight; *(Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22)*

(b) Division II members fund their athletics programs in a manner that aligns with the institution's budget and educational mission. This method of funding features a "partial scholarship" model that allows Division II schools to recognize student-athletes for their skills through athletics-based grants, but student-athletes can accept merit-based aid and academic scholarships as well; *(Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22)*

(c) Division II believes in a balanced approach that integrates athletics into the college experience and allows students to focus on their academic pursuits and participate in other campus and community activities. This "Life in the Balance" emphasis facilitates learning through: (*Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22*)

(1) **Academics.** Division II offers exceptional teacher-student ratios that provide student-athletes with a quality

education in the academic curriculum of their choice. The division structures its eligibility requirements to facilitate student-athletes earning their degrees, which is measured in part by an institution's student-athletes graduating at least at the same rate as the institution's student body; (*Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22*)

(2) **Athletics**. Division II supports athletics achievement through highly competitive programs that strive to participate in the division's 25 national championships, which offer the best access ratio among the NCAA's three divisions. Division II also supports a regionalization model in scheduling that reduces time away from campus and keeps athletics participation in perspective within the educational mission; (*Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22*)

(3) **Community Engagement**. Division II athletics programs actively engage with their communities to enhance relationships between student-athletes and community members and develop a shared civic experience. Division II promotes engagement at the local, conference and national levels, including at all Division II national championships; and (*Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22*)

(4) **Postgraduation Success**. Division II supports a higher education model that shapes student-athletes who graduate with the skills and knowledge to be productive citizens. The balanced approach allows student-athletes to focus on their academic pursuits, their internships, and whatever else it takes to prepare them for life after graduation; (*Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22*)

(d) Division II members support the utmost in sportsmanship by committing to a "game environment" initiative that establishes an atmosphere at athletics contests that is both energetic and respectful; and (*Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22*)

(e) Division II promotes student-athlete involvement in decision-making through campus, conference and national Student-Athlete Advisory Committees that provide leadership opportunities and offer a representative voice in the division's governance structure. (*Adopted: 1/31/22, Revised: 7/19/22 effective 8/1/22*)

Section 10•2 Division II Code of Conduct

CONDUCT POLICY STATEMENT

The NCAA expects each championship to exhibit an experience that represents the highest level of fair play and good sportsmanship. The NCAA and the NCAA Division II Championships Committee expect that student-athletes, coaches and administrators do their best to ensure participation in intercollegiate athletics promotes character development for all participants, enhances the integrity of higher education and promotes civility; therefore, championship events should adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility. These values should be manifest not only in athletics participation, but also in the broad spectrum of activities associated with the championship event. Accordingly, the Championships Committee will take strong action in response to any form of misconduct by student-athletes, coaches and/or administrators during the entire championship. This includes criticism of officials and a misconduct incident at the competition.

Any institution that fails to submit the online form required for the sport administrator and have a complete and accurate signature page on file at the institution before the start of the first competition of the championship will be issued a fine of $500, with a private letter of reprimand to be sent to the conference commissioner, institutional chancellor/president, institutional athletics director, senior woman administrator, sports information director and compliance director.

MISCONDUCT

The NCAA Division II Manual Bylaw 18.02.4 defines misconduct as: **"... 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."**

EXPECTATIONS

Each games committee shall hold a pre-championship meeting with the representatives of participating institutions to review and explain the policies related to misconduct (as defined in Bylaw 18.02.4). The Division II Championships Code of Conduct is to be part of the championship(s) packet and delivered to all institutional representatives attending the championship(s) events.

If the act of misconduct occurs during the competition, under normal circumstances, the individual shall be allowed to complete the competition. An administrative hearing shall be held at the conclusion of the day's competition, during a break in the continuity of the championship (e.g., between rounds of a basketball tournament) when no competition is being conducted or at the conclusion of the championship. However, if the act of misconduct is so flagrant that it obviously violates the principles of fair play and sportsmanship, the games committee may immediately withdraw the student-athlete or institutional representative from the competition and conduct the hearing after this action. Other actions of misconduct shall be dealt with in a timely manner by the governing sport committee.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES, COACHES AND ADMINISTRATORS

- Have on file at the institution an accurate and complete Division II Code of Conduct signature page before the start of the first competition of the championship(s).
- Cooperate and participate in game ceremonies, team meetings, community engagement and championship competition.
- Discuss misconduct and possible consequences with all institutional personnel traveling with the team (official travel party and additional individuals).
- Have an administrator or designee present at all competitions.
- Communicate issues and concerns in an honest and timely manner with NCAA staff.
- Follow team, university and NCAA guidelines throughout all championship-related activities.
- Be respectful of other participants, spectators, coaches, administrators and other individuals at the championship(s) site.
- Abide by federal, state and local laws and regulations and facility requirements throughout the championship event.
- Display acceptable behavior on and off the playing field to ensure a positive experience for all participants.

POSSIBLE PENALTIES FOR MISCONDUCT

In accordance with Division II Championships Committee policy, the governing sport committee (or the games committee authorized to act for it) may impose any one or a combination of the following penalties on an institution or any student-athlete or representative of an institution guilty of misconduct that occurs incident to, en route to, from or at the locale of the competition or practice. The penalties include, but are not limited to:

a. Public or private reprimand of the individual;

b. Disqualification of the individual from further participation in the NCAA championship(s) involved;

c. Banishment of the individual from participation in one or more subsequent championships of the sport involved;

d. Cancellation of payment of the Association's travel guarantee to the institution for the individual involved;

e. Banishment of the institution from participation in one or more future championships in which its team in that sport otherwise would be eligible to participate;

f. Disqualification of an institution for a period of time from serving as host institution for one or more NCAA championships;

g. Cancellation of all or a portion of the honorarium for hosting an NCAA championship(s); and

h. Financial or other penalties different from (a) through (g) above, but only if they have prior approval of the Championships Committee.

All correspondence regarding a violation of the Code of Conduct will be sent to the chancellor/president of the institution, with a copy to the director of athletics and person(s) involved.

Participation in an NCAA championship is an accomplishment and it is expected that individuals and teams are committed to ensuring that the championship is a positive experience for all participants, fans and volunteers. Participation in these championship events is a privilege for the student-athletes, coaches and administrators and should be treated as such.

Section 10•3 On-Site Administrator at Team Championships

All team sports require that a designated individual be identified from each institution participating in the championship as the on-site administrator. This person may be any individual from that school with no on-site responsibilities. The role of the on-site administrator is to be present at the competition site and attend all events that are mandated for the team (e.g., travel from institution to and from the championship site, teleconferences/videoconferences, prechampionship meetings, practices, competition and community engagement, where applicable).

If no one is sent or identified, the site representative is to notify the NCAA championship manager and Division II Championships Committee liaison to administer a fine of $500, with a private letter of reprimand to be sent to the conference commissioner, university chancellor/president university director of athletics, senior woman administrator, sports information director and compliance director. The NCAA championship manager will administer the fine and letter of reprimand to the institution(s).

This policy applies to the following sports: baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball.

Section 10•4 Make Game Day Yours

Division II promotes a game environment that is respectful and engaging for everyone through the Make Game Day Yours initiative. The initiative aims to create a positive game environment at Division II contests and promotes excellent customer service among hosts to both teams' fans, student-athletes, coaches and game officials.

Championship hosts should keep in mind the importance of safety, responsiveness and dignity in order to achieve a positive experience. We ask that each participant and fan be personally accountable for their actions and do their part to ensure this event is a positive reflection of Make Game Day Yours.

Section 10•5 Religious Conflicts

[Reference: Division II Championships Committee Policy.]

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 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. *(Revised: 1/12/99, 1/8/01, 1/9/01)*

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

Section 10•6 Lodging Policies

Participating institutions are expected to stay at the hotel assigned by the host and are responsible for confirming with the hotel the number of rooms they will require via submission of the rooming lists. If an institution prefers to stay in another hotel, the institution must use the rooms for persons accompanying the official travel party or will be charged a financial penalty as follows:

1. If the event is one to three nights, the institution will be required to pay for one night.
2. If the event is four or more nights, the institution will be required to pay for two nights.

The participating institution is expected to pay the penalty to the impacted hotel prior departing from the locale.

Division II Women's Soccer

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Section 1 • General Administration

Section 1•1 NCAA Tournament Operations Staff Contact Information

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Section 1•2 National Committee

Current members of the committee can be found at the following link: web1.ncaa.org/committees/#/reports/roster?committeeCode=2WSO

For additional information about the Division II Women's Soccer Championship, contact:

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Section 1•3 Important Dates

Monday, Oct. 12	First NPI ranking.
	Bids open for hosting preliminary round competition.
Monday, Oct. 19	Second NPI ranking.
Monday, Oct. 26	NPI rankings begin daily updates.
Wednesday, Nov. 4	Deadline for submitting required bid materials to host preliminary-round competition.
Sunday, Nov. 8	Deadline for eligible conferences to submit their automatic qualifiers.
Monday, Nov. 9	National committee selection call and notification of teams participating in championship. Selection show on ncaa.com at 7 p.m. Eastern time.
Tuesday, Nov. 10	Videoconferences with first and second round participants.
Friday, Nov. 13	First-round games.
Sunday, Nov. 15	Second-round games.
Tuesday, Nov. 17	Videoconference with third round participants.
Friday, Nov. 20	Third-round games.
Sunday, Nov. 22	Quarterfinal games.
Monday, Nov. 23	Videoconference with championship participants, 2 p.m. Eastern time.
Thursday, Dec. 3	2026 NCAA Division II Women's Soccer Championship, semifinals.
Saturday, Dec. 5	2026 NCAA Division II Women's Soccer Championship, final.
Wednesday-Saturday, Jan. 20-23	United Soccer Coaches Convention, Kansas City, Missouri.
Monday-Tuesday, Jan. 25-26	National Committee annual meeting.

DATE FORMULA

First Round/Second Round	Weekend before Thanksgiving (Friday and Sunday)
Third Round	Weekend of Thanksgiving (Sunday)
Quarterfinals	Weekend after Thanksgiving (Saturday)
Semifinals and Final	Two weekends after Thanksgiving (Thursday and Saturday OR Friday and Sunday)

FUTURE DATES

2027

Selections	Monday, Nov. 15
First Round/Second Round	Must be played Friday, Nov. 19 and Sunday, Nov. 21
Third Round	Must be played Sunday, Nov. 28
Quarterfinals	Must be played Saturday, Dec. 4
Semifinals/Final	Thursday, Dec. 9, and Saturday, Dec. 11

Section 1•4 Equipment

BALL

The Wilson Vivido match ball will be used in all NCAA tournament games. Only Wilson balls may be used for practice and warmups. These balls (Wilson Vivido) will be sent by the manufacturer to the tournament manager at the host institution for each round of competition. The host institution is responsible for "breaking in" the game balls for each tournament game. Participating teams may use the same brand of championship ball from their own inventory at practices and pregame.

Following competition, one ball shall be given to the nonadvancing team. The host institution may keep the remaining balls or use them as promotional giveaways during the game or donate them to a local youth group.

BALL PERSONS AND ROTATION

The host institution must arrange for a minimum of four ball persons (preferably six). These ball persons must be at least 12 years of age. A six-ball rotation will be used for all rounds of the championship. One ball will be in play. One ball will be on each sideline on each half of the field and one ball will be at the scorer's table.

Section 1•5 Rules

Per NCAA Bylaw 17.32, 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 the NCAA rules books, or those rules adopted by an outside organization.

The NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules shall be followed to the letter.

SUSPENDED GAMES

In the case of inclement weather or other factors leading the referee to suspend a game, the officials, games committee and coaches shall refer to the NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules. *For NCAA championship competition, a game must be played for the full 90 minutes (as opposed to 70 minutes for the regular season) to be considered a complete game.*

If a game is suspended or postponed, it will be the decision of the games committee and the referee to determine if the game can be continued that day. If conditions dictate that the game cannot be completed, the NCAA site representative and tournament director shall contact Zach Christopher (office: 317-917-6112). Only after contacting Mr. Christopher may a game be suspended until the next day or moved to an alternate site. Teams should be prepared with footwear for any playing surface.

If a site is experiencing inclement weather prior to kickoff, the decision on safety/field playability will be made in conjunction with the referee, site representative and host athletic trainer.

Section 1•6 Uniforms

Competing teams shall have both light- and dark-colored jerseys, and light- and dark-colored stockings available. In preliminary-round competition, the home team must wear a uniform in clear contrast with the visiting team. In case of conflict, the designated home team must wear white or light-colored uniforms. The higher-seeded team is home team for preliminary-round competition, except the quarterfinal round where the host team is the home team.. For the semifinals and final, the games committee will determine the home teams.

Student-athletes competing in an intercollegiate soccer championship shall wear the official uniform of their institution in competition and related ceremonies. This applies to both warmups and competitive uniforms.

All uniforms and equipment worn by participating student-athletes must comply with the rules of the game outlined in the Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Book.

LOGOS

Refer to General Administrative Guidelines, Section 7.

Section 2 • Determination of Championship Participation

Section 2•1 Championship Format

The NCAA Division II Women's Soccer Championship provides for a 56-team, single-elimination tournament. Regional berths are assigned based on access ratio. The approved regional bid allocation is as follows:

Region	2026-27 Berths
Atlantic	7
Central	8
East	6
Midwest	8
South	6
South Central	6
Southeast	8
West	7
Total	**56**

FIRST AND SECOND ROUNDS

Teams will compete in three- or four-team sites in the first and second rounds. Depending on the number of regional berths, the Nos. 1 and 2 seeds may have a bye in the first round.

In regions with six berths, teams will be paired within their respective region with the No. 4 seed vs. No. 5 seed, No. 3 seed vs. No. 6 seed, No. 2 seed vs. the winner of the No. 3/No. 6 seed game and the No. 1 seed vs. the winner of the No. 4/No. 5 seed game.

In regions with seven berths, the No. 2 seed will play the No. 7 seed in the first round. In regions with eight berths, the first-round matchups will be the No. 1 seed vs. No. 8 seed and No. 4 seed vs. No. 5 seed.

The two top-seeded teams in each region shall be offered the opportunity to host, provided minimum site selection criteria are met and a bid has been submitted.

THIRD AND QUARTERFINAL ROUNDS

Provided minimum site selection criteria are met and the field is accessible, the host will alternate by region.

2026 Third and Quarterfinal Rounds - Host listed first:

- East vs. Atlantic
- Central vs. Midwest
- Southeast vs. South
- West vs. South Central

FINALS

Following the completion of the quarterfinals, the four advancing teams will be seeded based on NPI and then placed into the bracket.

DAYS OF COMPETITION

Preliminary-round sites hosting first- AND second-round matches must play on Friday and Sunday. Preliminary-round sites hosting third- and quarterfinal-round matches must play on Friday and Sunday.

NOTE: If an institution competing in the championship has a No-Sunday Play form on file with the NCAA, the location at which they are playing must play their matches on Thursday and Saturday.

START TIMES

The below dates and times pertain to all sites of the championship. Changes to these dates and times will only be permitted if extenuating circumstances exist. All changes must be approved by the women's soccer committee.

Required game times are:

First Round	*All matches must be played on Friday, Nov. 13. If an institution competing at this site has a no-Sunday Play form on file with the NCAA, the site must play the match(es) on Thursday, Nov. 12. Kick-off times are as follows:* • *Sites without lights, two first-round matches – 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. local time.* • *Sites without lights, one first-round match – 1 p.m. local time.* • *Site with lights, two first-round matches – noon and 3 p.m. local time.* • *Sites with lights, one first-round match – 3 p.m. local time.* ***NOTE: For sites with two first-round games, the host institution will play in the second game.***
Second Round	*All matches must be played on Sunday, Nov. 15. (If an institution competing at this site has a no-Sunday Play form on file with the NCAA, the site must play the match on Saturday, Nov. 14.) Kick-off times are as follows:* • *Sites without lights – 1 p.m. local time.* • *Sites with lights – 3 p.m. local time.*
Third Round	*All matches must be played on Friday, Nov. 20. (If an institution competing at this site has a no-Sunday Play form on file with the NCAA, the site must play the match on Thursday, Nov. 19.) Kick-off times are as follows:* • *Sites without lights - 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. local time.* • *Sites with lights - noon and 3 p.m. local time.* • *NOTE: The host institution will play in the second game.*
Quarterfinal Round	*All matches must be played on Sunday, Nov. 22. (If an institution competing at this site has a no-Sunday Play form on file with the NCAA, the site must play the match on Saturday, Nov. 21.) Kick-off times are as follows:* • *Sites without lights – 1 p.m. local time.* • *Sites with lights – 3 p.m. local time.*
Semifinals	*5 p.m. and 8 p.m.*
Final	*4 p.m.*

TRAVEL PARTY

The official travel party is 28. The number of active student-athletes on a roster for competition is 24. This roster may not change once set prior to the start of competition on a given weekend (i.e., first and second rounds, third and quarterfinal rounds, semifinals and finals).

On its bench, each team is limited to a maximum of 36 persons. The tournament manager may provide one additional bench credential for a physician or doctor. This additional credential is not meant for an athletic trainer.

TEAM BENCHES

The home team, or higher-seeded team if at a neutral site, shall occupy the bench to the left of the scorer's table (when facing the field).

Section 2•2 Results

The sports information director of the host institution, or an appointed representative, is responsible for reporting all tournament results.

REGULAR-SEASON SCORE REPORTING AND STATISTICS

The score-reporting and stats-reporting processes are now combined for Division II women's soccer. Schools will submit all schedule and results information to the NCAA statistics site (**web1.ncaa.org/stats/StatsSrv/login**). Specific instructions and reporting deadlines will be communicated to SIDs in a memo from the media coordination and statistics staff. For questions regarding the reporting process, please contact Liz Wacienga (**lwacienga@ncaa.org** or 317-917-6495).

Section 2•3 Selection Information

ALLOCATION OF BERTHS

The championship provides for a maximum of 56 teams, with each of the eight regions receiving championship berths based on access ratio. Twenty-one conferences have been granted Automatic Qualification (AQ) privileges. The remaining teams will be selected at-large by the women's soccer committee.

AUTOMATIC QUALIFICATION

The following conferences will receive an AQ for the 2026 NCAA Division II Women's Soccer Championship:

California Collegiate Athletic Association	Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association
Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference	Mountain East Conference
Conference Carolinas	Northeast-10 Conference
East Coast Conference	Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference
Great American Conference	Pacific West Conference
Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference	Peach Belt Conference
Great Lakes Valley Conference	Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference
Great Midwest Athletic Conference	Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference
Great Northwest Athletic Conference	South Atlantic Conference
Gulf South Conference	Sunshine State Conference
Lone Star Conference	

Section 2•4 Selection Criteria

The following criteria shall be employed by a governing sports committee in selecting participants for NCAA championships competition. *[Reference: Bylaw 18.4.3 in the NCAA Manual.]*

SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for at-large selection, an institution must have a minimum of 10 scheduled in-region games on the institution's schedule. Teams are not required to have an overall Division II win-loss record of .500 or better.

Only contests played against varsity intercollegiate teams of four-year, degree-granting institutions that conduct a majority of their competition in that team sport against varsity intercollegiate teams of four-year, degree-granting institutions located in Canada and the United States, its territories or possessions shall be considered in meeting the 10 scheduled in-region game minimum or counted in a team's won-lost record (conference tournament games can count toward this minimum). Competition against service teams, semiprofessional teams, amateur teams, two-year colleges and club teams shall be excluded. A member institution shall limit its total regular-season playing schedule with outside competition in the sport of women's soccer in any one year to 18 contests (games or scrimmages), except for those contests excluded per NCAA Bylaw 17.

SELECTION CRITERIA

In addition to the availability of student-athletes for NCAA championships and nullification, at-large teams will be selected using the NCAA Power Index (NPI), the system that houses the division's statistical data and objectively applies the selection criteria to the data based on the sport committee's established weighted criteria. NPI will determine the at-large teams selected to the championship after the Automatic Qualifiers (AQ) have been designated.

NPI is a combination of the following: winning percentage; strength of schedule; home-away multiplier; quality win bonus; and overtime results (when applicable).

The NPI weights for Division II Women's Soccer are the following:

Win%/SOS	H/A Win/Loss	QWB	QWB Multiplier	Overtime	Minimum Wins
25/75	1.1/0.9	0.500	54.5	1.00/0	9+

NPI rankings will be published weekly on Mondays beginning four weeks prior to selections. Daily pushes will begin two weeks prior to selections.

See the **Division II NPI Weights, Q&A and Guide** for additional information on the NPI weights.

PAIRINGS

Each participating team shall be assigned to a tournament site within the team's respective region. All pairings are outlined in the bracket located in the Appendixes of this manual.

Section 2•5 Site Selection

Any institution interested in hosting preliminary-round competition of the 2026 NCAA Division II Women's Soccer Championship must submit a proposed budget, respond to sport-specific questions, and ensure the institution's key contacts and facility information are up to date via the Championships Bid and Host Profile 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."

Please note the change in process that allows all member institutions to regularly and easily access their profiles by visiting **championships.ncaa.org.** For profile issues, user access or to reset a password, please email **championshipbid@ncaa.org** or contact the respective championship manager.

PROSPECTIVE HOSTS

Host bid information and deadlines will be included on the ncaa.org membership website once available.

Note the proposed budget form has changed slightly to allow us to collect more detailed information when relevant. The form is now an expandable/collapsible tree format with the ability to upload supporting documents. As part of the bid, prospective hosts must enter a budgeted amount for the following items:

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

For both the game officials and committee/site representatives, hosts will pay for their lodging expenses and be reimbursed by the NCAA.

CHAMPIONSHIPS BID AND PROFILE SYSTEM

The Championships Bid and Host Profile portal can be accessed at **championships.ncaa.org**. The deadline to submit all bid materials for this championship is **Monday, Nov. 2**.

As a reminder, prospective hosts' budgets should include committee/site representative's lodging expense, game officials' lodging expense, state and city taxes/fees, if applicable, and any ticket fees. Committee/site representative's per diem, mileage and luggage fees will now be paid by the NCAA instead of the host institution. Game officials will be reimbursed via the RefQuest system for their game fees, per diem, mileage and luggage fees.

FACILITY PROFILE

Institutions interested in hosting preliminary-round competition of the Division II Women's Soccer Championship must add (or ensure accuracy of) facility information for the applicable competition venue. This information is located at **championships.ncaa.org**. Any supporting information – e.g., facility diagram, pictures – may be uploaded and attached to that facility's profile. This information will be made available to the sport committee to aid in their deliberations of prospective host sites.

All postseason matches must be contested on fields with dimensions of 115 to 120 yards by 70 to 75 yards. If the higher-seeded team cannot accommodate these requirements by modifying its field or finding another field within the community to use, the next highest-seeded team that can accommodate these requirements will be selected to host. Hosts who submit incorrect field dimensions may face disciplinary action by the sport committee.

All preliminary-round hosts are required to webstream all games contested at the site. Additionally, hosts are required to facilitate video exchange and to identify how they will disseminate game footage in the bid process.

KEY CONTACTS

Each institution should list and then maintain its key contacts associated with each sport and the institution. Individuals can be added via the Championships Bid and Host Profile portal at **championships.ncaa.org**.

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**.

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

[Reference: Division II Championships Committee policy in the NCAA Manual.]

A final financial report from each championship site must be submitted via the Championships Bid and Host Profile portal under the "budget" tab not later than 60 days after the event.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding the bid process, please contact Zach Christopher at 317-917-6112 or email us at **championshipbid@ncaa.org**.

Appendixes

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Appendix A • Sport Sponsorship

ATLANTIC REGION

Independent (5)

Allen University
Bluefield State College
Salem University (West Virginia)
Shaw University
Virginia State University

Mountain East Conference (12)

University of Charleston (West Virginia)
Concord University
Davis & Elkins College
Fairmont State University
Frostburg State University
Glenville State University
Point Park University
Shawnee State University*
West Liberty University
West Virginia State University
West Virginia Wesleyan College
Wheeling University

Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (17)

Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
California University of Pennsylvania
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
Gannon University
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania
Mansfield University of Pennsylvania
Millersville University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown
Seton Hill University
Shepherd University
Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
West Chester University of Pennsylvania

**Institution ineligible for 2026-27 championship per Division II membership guidelines.*

CENTRAL REGION

Great American Conference (7)

East Central University
Harding University
Northwestern Oklahoma State University
Oklahoma Baptist University
Ouachita Baptist University
Southern Nazarene University
Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (13)

University of Central Missouri
University of Central Oklahoma
Emporia State University
Fort Hays State University
Missouri Southern State University
Missouri Western State University
University of Nebraska at Kearney
Newman University
Northeastern State University
Northwest Missouri State University
Pittsburg State University
Rogers State University
Washburn University

Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (16)

Augustana University (South Dakota)
Bemidji State University
Concordia University, St. Paul
University of Jamestown
University of Mary
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Minnesota State University Moorhead
University of Minnesota, Crookston
University of Minnesota Duluth
Minot State University
Northern State University
University of Sioux Falls
Southwest Minnesota State University
St. Cloud State University
Wayne State College (Nebraska)
Winona State University

EAST REGION

Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference (12)

University of Bridgeport
Caldwell University
Chestnut Hill College
Dominican University (New York)
Felician University
Georgian Court University
Goldey-Beacom College
Holy Family University
Lincoln University (Pennsylvania)
Post University
Thomas Jefferson University
Wilmington University (Delaware)

East Coast Conference (8)

D'Youville College
Daemen College
Mercy University
Molloy University
Queens College (New York)
Roberts Wesleyan College
St. Thomas Aquinas College
College of Staten Island

Northeast-10 Conference (10)

Adelphi University
American International College
Assumption University
Bentley University
Franklin Pierce University
Pace University
Saint Anselm College
Saint Michael's College
Southern Connecticut State University
Southern New Hampshire University

MIDWEST REGION

Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (10)

Davenport University
Ferris State University
Grand Valley State University
Michigan Technological University
Northern Michigan University
Purdue University Northwest
Roosevelt University
Saginaw Valley State University
University of Wisconsin-Parkside
Wayne State University (Michigan)

Great Lakes Valley Conference (15)

Drury University
University of Illinois at Springfield
University of Indianapolis
Lewis University
Lincoln University of Missouri
Maryville University of Saint Louis
McKendree University
Missouri University of Science and Technology
University of Missouri-St. Louis
Quincy University
Rockhurst University
Southwest Baptist University
Truman State University
Upper Iowa University
William Jewell College

Great Midwest Athletic Conference (12)

Ashland University
Cedarville University
University of Findlay
Kentucky Wesleyan College
Lake Erie College
Malone University
Northwood University
Ohio Dominican University
Thomas More University
Tiffin University
Ursuline College
Walsh University

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Lone Star Conference (16)

Angelo State University
Dallas Baptist University
Eastern New Mexico University
Lubbock Christian University
Midwestern State University
Oklahoma Christian University
St. Edward's University
St. Mary's University (Texas)
Sul Ross State University
Texas A&M International University
Texas A&M University Texarkana*
University of Texas at Dallas
The University of Texas at Tyler
The University of Texas Permian Basin
Texas Woman's University
West Texas A&M University

Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (13)

Adams State University
Black Hills State University
Colorado Christian University
Colorado Mesa University
Colorado School of Mines
Colorado State University Pueblo
University of Colorado Colorado Springs
Fort Lewis College
Metropolitan State University of Denver
New Mexico Highlands University
Regis University (Colorado)
Western Colorado University
Westminster College (Utah)

**Institution ineligible for 2026-27 championship per Division II membership guidelines.*

SOUTH REGION

Gulf South Conference (12)

University of Alabama in Huntsville
Auburn University at Montgomery
Christian Brothers University
Delta State University
Lee University
Mississippi Christian University
University of Montevallo
Spring Hill College
Trevecca Nazarene University
Union University
Valdosta State University
University of West Alabama

Independent (2)

University of Puerto Rico, Bayamon
Tuskegee University

Sunshine State Conference (11)

Barry University
Eckerd College
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (Florida)
Florida Institute of Technology
Florida Southern College
Lynn University
Nova Southeastern University
Palm Beach Atlantic University
Rollins College
Saint Leo University
University of Tampa

SOUTHEAST REGION

Conference Carolinas (16)

Barton College
Belmont Abbey College
Chowan University
Converse College
Emmanuel College (Georgia)
Erskine College
Ferrum College*
Francis Marion University
King University
Lees-McRae College
University of Mount Olive
University of North Carolina at Pembroke
North Greenville University
Shorter University
Southern Wesleyan University
Young Harris College

Independent (1)

Edward Waters University

Peach Belt Conference (10)

Clayton State University
Columbus State University
Flagler College
Georgia College
Georgia Southwestern State University
Lander University
Middle Georgia State University*
University of North Georgia
University of South Carolina Aiken
University of South Carolina Beaufort

South Atlantic Conference (11)

Anderson University (South Carolina)
Carson-Newman University
Catawba College
Coker University
Emory & Henry College
Lenoir-Rhyne University
Lincoln Memorial University
Mars Hill University
Newberry College
Tusculum University
Wingate University

**Institution ineligible for 2026-27 championship per Division II membership guidelines.*

WEST REGION

California Collegiate Athletic Association (14)

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
California State University, Chico
California State University, Dominguez Hills
California State University, East Bay
California State University, Los Angeles
California State University, Monterey Bay
California State University, San Bernardino
California State University, San Marcos
California State University, Stanislaus
University of California, Merced
Fresno Pacific University
Humboldt State University
Menlo College
San Francisco State University

Great Northwest Athletic Conference (8)

Central Washington University
Montana State University Billings
Northwest Nazarene University
Saint Martin's University
Seattle Pacific University
Simon Fraser University
Western Oregon University
Western Washington University

Pacific West Conference (10)

Biola University
Chaminade University
Concordia University Irvine
Dominican University of California
University of Hawaii at Hilo
Hawaii Pacific University
Jessup University
Point Loma Nazarene University
Vanguard University
Westmont College