



2020 DIVISION I
SOFTBALL
CHAMPIONSHIP

PRE-CHAMPIONSHIP
2019-20 MANUAL

NCAA General Administrative Guidelines

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THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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Section 1 • Introduction

During the 2019-20 academic year, the Association will sponsor 90 national championships – 42 for men, 45 for women, and three for both men and women. Of the men's championships, three 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, six 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 Pre-Championship 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.

The first section applies to policies applicable to all 90 championships, while the other two sections are sport-specific.

Section 1.1 Definitions

Pre-championship Manual. Resource for institutions to prepare for the championship.

Administrative Meeting. Pre-championship 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.

Non-predetermined 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, etc.).

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. Number of student-athletes per team allowed to dress in uniform and participate at the championship.

Tournament Physician. The physician designated by the host institution/conference to serve as the chief medical advisor for the championship.

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, etc.).

Section 3 • Concussion Management

[Reference: Concussion Management in Constitution 3.2.4.20 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Constitution 3.3.4.17 in the NCAA Division II Manual, and Constitution 3.2.4.17 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

The NCAA has adopted legislation that requires all active member institutions to have a concussion management plan for their student-athletes. Traveling institutions shall follow their concussion management plan while participating in NCAA championships. If a participating team lacks appropriate medical staff to activate its concussion management plan, the host championship concussion management plan will be activated.

The legislation notes, in part, that a student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be removed from athletics activities (e.g., competition, practice, conditioning sessions) and evaluated by a medical staff member (e.g., sports medicine staff, team physician) with experience in the evaluation and management of concussions; a student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion is precluded from returning to athletics activity for at least the remainder of that calendar day; and medical clearance for return to athletics activity shall be determined by the team physician or the physician's designee from the student-athlete's institution. In the absence of a team physician or their designee, the NCAA tournament physician will examine the student-athlete and will determine medical clearance. Within the rules of the sport and policies established for the championship, medical staff should have access to the injured student-athlete without interference (e.g., coach).

A concussion is a brain injury that may be caused by a blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an "impulsive" force transmitted to the head. Concussions can occur without loss of consciousness or other obvious signs. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the previous one (hours, days or weeks) can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having more severe and/or long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage and even death.

For further details, please refer to the NCAA [Sports Sport Science Institute website](#) for additional guidance.

Section 4 • Conduct

Section 4•1 Certification of Eligibility/Availability

[Reference: Certification of Eligibility/Availability in Constitution 3.2.4 and Bylaws 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 31.2.1.7.1, 31.2.1.7.1.2 and 31.2.2 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Constitution 3.3.4 in the NCAA Division II Manual and Bylaws 31.2.2 and 31.2.1.5 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 4•2 Drug Testing

[Reference: Bylaws 18.4.1.4 and 31.2.2 in the NCAA Division I Manual and Bylaws 18.4.1.4 and 31.2.3 in the NCAA Divisions II and III Manuals.]

Student-athletes who compete in NCAA championships may be subjected to drug tests in accordance with Bylaws 18.4.1.4 and 31.2.2 (Division I); 31.2.3 (Divisions II and III), 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 4•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 4•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 outline.

Section 4•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, etc.) 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 4•6 Student-Athlete Experience Survey

After each championship, institutional administrators, coaches and student-athletes will be asked to participate in a post-event survey intended to capture feedback on their recent championship experience. Institutional administrators and coaches will receive an email containing a link to the survey and will be asked to ensure participation from all student-athletes.

Section 5 • Elite 90™ Award

The Elite 90 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 on all teams competing at the finals site. Each institution that has at least one student-athlete qualify for the final round/site is eligible to nominate a student-athlete for the award. 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. To receive more information or access the online form and submit a nomination, go to ncaa.org.

Section 6 • Fan Travel

NCAA Travel provides an easy and affordable way 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 NCAA Travel help support NCAA student-athletes. Please direct your fans to NCAA.com/travel to search and book online hotel, car and air travel, all in one easy transaction.

Section 7 • Logo Policy

[Reference: Bylaws 12.5.4, 31.1.7 and 31.1.8 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Bylaw 12.5.4 in the NCAA Division II Manual and Bylaw 12.5.3 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 following criteria are met:

1. 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
2. The student-athlete's institution's official uniform (including numbered racing bibs and warmups) 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 2-1/4 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

It is essential that all research efforts be coordinated by a single entity within the national office structure in order to ensure maximum efficiency and quality, avoid unnecessary duplication of effort on the part of staff and membership, allow the NCAA to prioritize research efforts given the limited time and resources of our members and adhere to federal guidelines on the responsibilities of researchers to properly protect research participants from harm.

For the purpose of this policy, "research" is defined as any systematic collection of data for the purpose of drawing generalized conclusions.

Any proposal to conduct research must be submitted to the NCAA research staff for review at least six weeks before the project begins. Research to be conducted during NCAA championships or related events, and which involves competing student-athletes or attendees, is also subject to review. This includes all research, including that conducted by or under the direction of any employee, contractor or paid consultant of the NCAA. It also includes any research conducted by other persons, but funded totally or in part by the NCAA. Any research that detracts from the student-athlete experience or requires physical activity may not be permitted at the championships (preliminary rounds and finals sites). The NCAA retains sole discretion as to whether to allow such research.

Examples of activities considered research include: Conducting surveys of athletics administrators, college presidents, faculty, coaches and student-athletes; leading an organized focus group; funding an outside study under the auspices of the NCAA; conducting market research at championship events; secondary analysis of data originally collected by the NCAA from people for other purposes; any systematic collection of data from the membership or other entities; etc.

Section 9 • 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 September 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).

Division I Softball

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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 are:

EAST REGION

Jenny Allard
Head Softball Coach
Harvard University

SOUTH REGION

Sandy Atkins
Senior Woman Administrator
Troy University

SOUTH REGION

Jamie Pinkerton
Head Softball Coach
Iowa State University

SOUTHEAST REGION

Stephanie Simmons
Associate Athletic Director for Life Performance
University of Kentucky

WEST REGION

Erika Barnes
Senior Woman Administrator
University of Arizona

MIDWEST REGION

Matthew Larsen
Director of Athletics
North Dakota State University

SOUTH REGION

Kelly Gatwood
Assistant Commissioner for Sports Services
Conference USA

SOUTHEAST REGION

Michelle Meadows
Director of Athletics
Longwood University

SOUTHEAST REGION

Brandi Stuart
Executive Associate Athletics Director/SWA
University of Central Florida

WEST REGION

Ashlie Kite
Senior Associate Athletics Director
Long Beach State University

For additional information about the softball championship, contact:

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Brandi Stuart, chair

Executive Associate Athletic Director/Senior Woman
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Section 1•3 Regional Advisory Committees

[Reference: Regional Advisory Committees in the Division I General Section and Bylaw 21.4.1.5 in the Division I NCAA Manual.]

Each conference shall appoint a member of the advisory committee in its respective region to assist in the evaluation of teams throughout the season. Below are the members of the 2020 Division I softball regional advisory committees.

NAME	INSTITUTION	CONFERENCE
EAST REGION		
Jenny Allard	Harvard	Ivy League
Lonni Alameda	Florida State	Atlantic Coast
Mike Coutts	Maine	America East
Kristi Stefanoni	Massachusetts	Atlantic 10
Carl Taylor	Drexel	Colonial
Jen Goodwin	Yale	Ivy League
Julie Brzezinski	Fairfield	Metro Atlantic
Breanne Gleason	Central Connecticut State	Northeast
Ashley Waters	Boston U.	Patriot
MIDWEST REGION		
Matthew Larsen	North Dakota State	Summit League
Tyra Perry	Illinois	Big Ten
Kathryn Gleason	Northern Kentucky	Horizon
Christina Sutcliff	Northern Illinois	MAC
Pat Conlan	Georgetown	Big East
Matthew Mundell	Evansville	Missouri Valley
Amanda Eberhart	Nebraska Omaha	Summit
SOUTH REGION		
Sandi Atkins	Troy	Sun Belt
Jamie Pinkerton	Iowa State	Big 12
Kelly Gatwood	Conference USA	Conference USA
Patty Gasso	Oklahoma	Big 12
Amy Tudor	Western Kentucky	Conference USA
Kara Amundson	Murray State	Ohio Valley
James Landreneau	McNeese State	Southland
Josef Rankin	Alcorn State	SWAC
Kelley Green	Coastal Carolina	Sun Belt
SOUTHEAST REGION		
Brandi Stuart	UCF	American Athletic
Michelle Meadows	Longwood	Big South
Stephanie Simmons	University of Kentucky	SEC
Kristi Bredbenner	Wichita State	American Athletic
Erica Ayers	Jacksonville University	Atlantic Sun
Kathy Riley	Longwood	Big South
Lauren Watten	Bethune-Cookman	Mid-Eastern
Beth Torina	LSU	SEC
Stephaie DeFeo	Mercer	Southern

NAME	INSTITUTION	CONFERENCE
WEST REGION		
Ashlie Kite	Long Beach State	Big West
Erika Barnes	Arizona	Pac-12
Melanie Meuchel	Montana	Big Sky
Kelly Ford	Cal State Fullerton	Big West
Laura Berg	Oregon State	Pac-12
Josh Taylor	Nevada	Mountain West
TJ Hubbard	Utah Valley	WAC
Gordon Eakin	Brigham Young	West Coast

Section 1•4 Important Dates

Monday, March 16	Bid information to host regional and super regional competition available online (ncaa.org).
Monday, April 20	Deadline for submitting bid materials (proposed budgets) for hosting regionals and super regionals.
Sunday, May 10	6 p.m. Selection Show aired live on ESPN2. Selection and notification of teams participating in the championship.
Friday-Sunday, May 15-17	Regionals (regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy).
Thursday-Saturday, May 21-23 or Friday-Sunday, May 22-24	Super regionals. <i>Note: Super Regionals will be a three-day format</i>
Thursday-Wednesday, May 28-June 3	Finals, USA Softball Hall of Fame Stadium, Oklahoma City; Hosted by the University of Oklahoma and USA Softball.

CHAMPIONSHIP DATES

Regionals	Friday-Sunday, May 15-17, 2020 (regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy).
Super regionals	Thursday/Friday/Saturday or Friday/Saturday/Sunday, May 21-24, 2020.
Women's College World Series	Thursday-Wednesday, May 28-June 3, 2020; USA Softball Hall of Fame Stadium, Oklahoma City; Hosted by the University of Oklahoma and USA Softball.

DATE FORMULA

Regionals (16)	Two weeks before finals (Friday through Sunday)
Super Regionals (eight)	Thursday before Memorial Day (Thursday/Friday/Saturday or Friday/Saturday/Sunday)
College World Series	Thursday after Memorial Day (Thursday-Wednesday)

FUTURE DATES

	Regionals	Super Regionals	WCWS
2021	May 21-23	May 27-30	June 3-9
2022	May 20-22	May 26-29	June 2-8
2023	May 19-21	May 25-28	June 1-7

Section 1•5 Equipment

PRELIMINARY ROUNDS

All teams at the site must have access to all equipment. If there is a discrepancy in the quality of the equipment (e.g., batting cages), all teams must be provided equal time to use the best equipment.

BALL

The Rawlings NC12L is the official softball for the championship. Rawlings will supply balls for all championship rounds; no other softball shall be used during competition. Each team must furnish its own practice balls during regionals and super regionals. The NCAA will provide practice balls at the Women's College World Series.

BATS

Bats used in competition **MUST** appear on the NCAA Approved Softball Bat List. The bat list will be updated on the first Monday of January, March, April and July. You can access the list at www.sup.arbitersports.com. Additional lists will be posted when a manufacturer withdraws a bat model or the results of bat testing dictate assessing strikes and/or removing a model.

Coaches are reminded bats are to be checked before every game. Please provide umpires with a current bat list and highlight the bats your team will be using during each game.

BAT TESTING

Bat testing will be conducted on competition days (not practice days) during all NCAA Division I postseason rounds.

OTHER EQUIPMENT - SCREENS AND CHALK

Screens and chalk should be available for teams upon arrival on the practice fields. Two dozen practice balls in buckets (for batting cages only), two hitting tees and one protective screen should be available in each cage.

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 developed by other governing bodies and are 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 not played in accordance with the NCAA rules book, or those rules adopted by an outside organization.

The 2020 and 2021 NCAA Softball Rules and Interpretations shall be followed for the championship.

PROTEST PROCEDURES

Please refer to the [2020 and 2021 NCAA Softball Rules Book](#), Rule 7.2 on page 57, which outlines protest procedures for NCAA championship play.

LENGTH AND SCHEDULE OF GAMES

All games will be scheduled for seven innings. However, a five-inning, eight-run rule will be used in all rounds of the championship except the Women's College World Series Finals (best-of-three series). If play is stopped before a seven-inning game is completed and the eight-run rule is not in effect, it will resume at the point of interruption. Every attempt should be made to complete regional and super regional competition by Sunday. Competition may go to Monday when the following occurs: (1) weather or emergency situations occur that prevent completion of competition; (2) any one team has to play more than three games in a day; or (3) in order to complete competition by Sunday, it would be necessary to begin competition after 11 p.m. Sunday.

If competition has to be extended to Monday, it must be completed without starting a game after 11 p.m. Monday (if the regional final begins before 11 p.m. and an "if necessary" game becomes necessary to determine the regional champion, that game will immediately follow). Note: Each round gets one extra day to finish the round.

The committee reserves the right to revise the game schedule because of inclement weather.

Regional. If inclement weather limits play, every effort has been made to complete competition by Sunday and if competition cannot be completed by Monday, the team that will advance to the super regional will be based on the following:

0 games played	Highest seed
1 game played	Highest seed
2 games played	Highest undefeated seed
3 games played	Highest undefeated seed
4 games played	Highest undefeated seed
5 games played	Highest undefeated seed
6 games played	Winner of Game 6 unless each team has one loss; therefore, the teams are tied, then: 1) Head-to-head competition 2) Highest remaining seed

Super Regional. If inclement weather limits play, every effort has been made to complete competition by Sunday, and if competition cannot be completed by Monday, the team that will advance to the Women's College World Series will be based on the following:

0 games played	Highest seed
1 game played	Winner of Game 1
2 games played	If each team has a loss, the highest seed

Section 1•7 Uniforms

[Reference: Bylaw 12.5.4 in the Division I NCAA Manual.]

The home team shall select the desired uniform color first and it is the responsibility of the visiting team to wear a contrasting uniform color to the jersey of the home team. Discrepancies will be settled by the site representative in consultation with the umpire. As a reminder, when teams play back-to-back games, they must be prepared to change uniforms, if necessary. Determination of uniform colors must be approved by the NCAA representative. Noncompliance with this policy may result in "failure to follow procedures" as outlined in the NCAA Division I Manual. On the field, including the practice areas and dugout, each team is limited to eligible players in uniform and coaches, trainers, student-athletes and managers, all of whom shall be in appropriate team colors and within the allotted bench size.

LOGOS

Refer to General Administrative Guidelines, Section 7.

Section 2 • Determination of Championship Participation

Section 2•1 Championship Format

The championship provides for a field of 64 teams. Sixteen teams will be seeded and each of the seeded teams will be placed at one of the regional sites. Four teams will participate at each of 16 regional sites in a double-elimination tournament. The 16 teams advancing from regional competition will participate in a two-team, best-of-three super regional at eight sites.

The Women's College World Series will include the eight super regional winners.

Regional Format. The procedures outlined below shall be used in the conduct of all 16 softball regional competitions.

The regionals will be conducted for a three-day period beginning Friday, May 15. (Regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy.) All regional competition should be completed not later than the Sunday prior to super regionals. [Exceptions (i.e., weather) may preclude the completion of competition by Sunday; however, competition must be completed not later than Monday.]

If the regular game schedule is altered because of weather or unforeseen circumstances, the following guidelines may be used and teams will be informed by the NCAA representative: (1) Not more than three games by any one team will be scheduled in one day; (2) If possible, games will not be scheduled to begin before 9 a.m. or after 11 p.m.; (3) If competition cannot be completed Sunday, the last time to start a regional championship game (i.e., Games 6 and "if" 7) to complete regional finals is the Monday immediately preceding the super regional at 11 p.m.; (4) If play is suspended before Games 6 and 7 and the regional competition ceases, see the rain-delay advancement formula ([page 12](#)) outlined in this manual. Prospective host institutions must submit recommended starting times for all games with the pre-bid materials for approval by the NCAA Softball Committee and are subject to change.

For all four-team regional competitions, Games 1 and 2 will be played on the first day; Games 3, 4 and 5 will be played on the second day; Games 6 and 7 (if necessary) will be played on the third day.

The following procedure will be observed (games follow in chronological order — no exceptions to game order will be permitted):

DAY 1

Game 1	No. 2 vs. No. 3
Game 2	No. 1 vs. No. 4

DAY 2

Game 3	Winner Game 1 vs. Winner Game 2
Game 4	Loser Game 1 vs. Loser Game 2
Game 5	Winner Game 4 vs. Loser Game 3

DAY 3

Game 6	Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 5
Game 7	Winner Game 6 vs. Loser Game 6 (if necessary)

For additional information regarding the regional bracket, please refer to [Appendix A](#).

Super Regional Format. In all two-team super regional tournaments, Game 1 will be played on the first day; Game 2 on the second; and Game 3 (if necessary) on the third day. If there is a weather delay during super regional competition, teams will have three days to complete the super regional competition before the inclement weather policy will be applied.

The following procedure will be observed:

Day 1	Game 1
Day 2	Game 2
Day 3	Game 3 (if necessary)

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Regionals	Friday-Sunday, May 15-17, 2020. (Regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy. The host must be prepared to host Thursday if necessary.)
Super Regionals	Thursday/Friday/Saturday or Friday/Saturday/Sunday, May 21-24, 2020
Women's College World Series	Thursday-Wednesday, May 28-June 3, 2020

START TIMES

Starting times for regionals and super regionals will be recommended by the host institutions during the bid process, subject to the approval of the NCAA Softball Committee. Game times should be set 2 1/2 hours apart and must follow the championship format below. Game times are subject to change per the broadcast schedule.

Regional and super regional game-time policies:

- Thursday or Friday games shall be scheduled between noon and 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday games shall be scheduled between 10 a.m. and 8:30 p.m.
- Sunday games shall be scheduled between noon and 8:30 p.m.

The committee shall determine game times for the finals.

Note: Only Game 7 of regional competition will begin 30 minutes after the conclusion of Game 6 or earlier by mutual consent of both teams. (Changes subject to television.)

TRAVEL PARTY

Please refer to the NCAA travel policies for all information regarding transportation and per diem expenses. The travel policies can be found at: <http://www.ncaa.org/championships/travel/championships-travel-information>.

The travel party for the Women's College World Series is 28, the squad size is 20 student-athletes in uniform and the dugout size will be 35. The travel party size for regionals and super regionals is also 28 (20 student-athletes) and dugout size is 35.

On the field, including the practice field, bullpen and dugout, each team is limited to four official coaches in uniform (head coach, assistant coaches and volunteer coach), 20 eligible student-athletes in uniform, and student assistant coaches. Only uniformed personnel, including coaches and eligible student-athletes, may be permitted between the white lines and in the bullpens. Other non-uniformed personnel (up to the maximum of 35 individuals) in the dugout should be performing official team functions that they have performed during the season. A bat handler, who must be 13 years of age or older, does not count against the maximum limit of 35 individuals. Non-uniformed personnel in proper attire may participate in pregame warmups. Once a game begins, the athletic trainer or manager is permitted on the field only to perform his/her appropriate duty (e.g., warming up a pitcher is not considered an appropriate duty).

Reimbursable ground transportation. For team championships, if the institution is located more than 50 round-trip miles from the site of competition or the departure airport, or if the arrival airport is located more than 50 round-trip miles from the site of competition, the institution is eligible for reimbursement of ground transportation costs. The NCAA will not reimburse actual costs for ground transportation. Instead, a flat rate will be given to all eligible institutions. This amount may vary by championship, so please refer to the NCAA travel policies for specific details.

NCAA postseason policies for additional student-athletes traveling with teams:

- Up to five per team.
- May be in the dugout if within the 35 limit (they are expected to conduct themselves with the quality and behavior deserving a championship event and shall abide by all policies and procedures and will be removed if noncompliant).
- May NOT be in uniform or uniform jersey.
- Must be in institution-issued team apparel that is compliant with the logo policy (shorts, warmup, practice or travel shirts...NO JEANS or CUTOFFS).
- May not participate in any softball-related activities on the competition field (may keep stats while in the dugout, catch bullpen and line drills).

Section 2•2 Results

TEAM SCHEDULES AND ROSTERS

Deadline — January 14: Team schedules must be input on the stats site. Reference the schedule instructions for more information. Rosters should be updated before the team's first contest.

RATING PERCENTAGE INDEX (RPI)

The RPI is intended to be used as one of many valuable resources provided to the committee in the selection, seeding and bracketing process. It should never be considered anything but an additional evaluation tool. No computer program that is based on pure numbers can take into account subjective concepts (e.g., how well a team is playing down the stretch, what the loss or return of a top player means to a team or how emotional a specific conference game may be).

Several independent elements are combined to produce the RPI. These elements are part of the statistical information that can be utilized by each member in an objective manner. Each committee member independently evaluates a vast pool of information available during the process to develop individual preferences. It is these opinions — developed after many hours of personal observations (e.g., games watched); review of regional rankings submitted by coaches; discussion with coaches, directors of athletics, senior woman administrators and commissioners; and review and comparison of objective data — that dictate how each individual ultimately will vote on all issues related to the selection, seeding and bracketing process.

While the various elements of the RPI are important in the evaluation process, the tournament bracket each year is based on the subjectivity of each individual committee member to select the best at-large teams available and to create a nationally balanced championship.

Section 2•3 Selection Information

ALLOCATION OF BERTHS

The championship provides for a field of 64 teams. Thirty-two conferences are provided automatic qualification and the remaining 32 teams are selected at-large. Sixteen teams will be seeded. Each of the seeded teams will be placed at one of the regional sites and will host regional competition, provided a team bids to host and meets the hosting requirements. Four teams will participate at each of 16 regional sites in a double-elimination tournament. The 16 teams advancing from regional competition will participate in a two-team, best-of-three super regional at eight sites.

The eight super regional winners will advance to the NCAA Women's College World Series.

AUTOMATIC QUALIFICATION

Conferences that have been granted automatic-qualification privileges for the 2020 championship are:

America East Conference	Mid-American Conference
American Athletic Conference	Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference
ASUN Conference	Missouri Valley Conference
Atlantic 10 Conference	Mountain West Conference
Atlantic Coast Conference	Northeast Conference
Big 12 Conference	Ohio Valley Conference
Big East Conference	Pac-12 Conference
Big Sky Conference	Patriot League
Big South Conference	Southeastern Conference
Big Ten Conference	Southern Conference
Big West Conference	Southland Conference
Colonial Athletic Association	Southwestern Athletic Conference
Conference USA	The Summit League
Horizon League	Sun Belt Conference
The Ivy League	West Coast Conference
Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference	Western Athletic Conference

AT-LARGE SELECTION

The Division I Softball Committee will follow Bylaw 31.3.3 in selecting at-large participants. To be eligible for an at-large selection, a team must have an overall won-lost record of .500 or better against Division I competition.

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.

PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

An institution desiring to participate in the championship must complete all games (including conference tournament games) before the final scheduled selection Sunday, May 10 (preferably by 2 p.m.).

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Air Travel. If you are located more than 400 miles from the host site, please contact Short's Travel Management at 866-655-9215 as soon as possible to make your air travel arrangements. Be prepared to provide the names of the members of the travel party of 28.

Ground Travel. If you are within 400 miles from the host site, you will travel via bus and must make your arrangements via Short's Travel and GO Ground at 866-386-4951. The ground transportation portal may be accessed at www.gochampionships.com (same username/password used for Short's Travel expenses). You must advise the host institution of your travel arrangements by noon Wednesday, May 13.

Lodging. The host institution has reserved 18 rooms for each team. Please obtain hotel information from the tournament director. At regionals and super regionals, all teams must stay at the designated hotel and use the appropriate number of rooms unless you receive a written release from the hotel manager. Otherwise, you will be financially responsible for the rooms.

Section 2•4 Selection Criteria

The Division I Softball Committee will meet in-person or via teleconference to make the final selections, regional and super regional site determinations and pairings.

Announcement of the entire 64-team bracket will be made by the NCAA tentatively at 10 p.m. Eastern time, May 10, on ESPNU.

The Division I Softball Committee shall have full authority to select the number of at-large teams to compete in the respective regional tournaments. The committee may consider other outstanding teams from automatic-qualifying conferences and independent teams for the at-large selections. The committee shall appoint regional advisory committees to assist it in evaluating teams, but recommendations of the regional advisory committee members are not binding upon the committee.

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 Softball Committee has received approval from the Competition Oversight Committee to consider the following criteria in the selection of at-large teams for the softball championship (not necessarily in priority order):

CRITERIA

- Rating Percentage Index (25% the institution's winning percentage; 50% opponents' success; 25% opponents' strength of schedule); also bonus points for wins against the top 50 teams and penalty points for losses against the teams 225 and below.

- Head-to-head competition.
 - Results of the RPI
 - record against ranked teams 1-25; 26-50; 51-100; 101-150;
 - average RPI win; and
 - average RPI loss.
 - Results versus common opponents.
 - Significant wins and losses.
 - End-of-season results

In making bracket assignments, the closest geographical consideration will be used as well as the ability to separate conference opponents during regional competition. Per Bylaw 31.1.3.2.5, seeded teams will have an opportunity to host regional competition provided they meet all hosting requirements and have submitted a bid to host by the April 20 deadline. Selection of teams shall be completed Sunday, May 10.

Section 2•5 Site Selection

Any institution or conference interested in hosting a preliminary round of the 2020 NCAA Division I Softball Championship must submit a proposed budget, facility evaluation form, key contacts form and video board questionnaire (if applicable) to be considered to host. A separate proposed budget and key contacts form must be submitted for each round that an institution or conference is interested in hosting.

Committee/site representative's per diem, mileage and luggage fees will be paid directly by the NCAA and not the host institution. Game officials will be reimbursed via the ArbiterPay system for their game fee, per diem, mileage and luggage fees. Hosts will no longer pay these fees.

For both the game officials and committee/site representatives, hosts will pay lodging expenses and be reimbursed by the NCAA through the budget process. However, if the NCAA manages the hotel block for the game officials, the officials' lodging expenses shall be directly billed to the NCAA. The NCAA typically manages the officials' hotel block at the final site for championships.

All bid-related forms can be accessed via the following website: <https://web1.ncaa.org/champsBidV20/exec/login>. The deadline to submit all materials for hosting preliminary rounds is **April 20, 2020**.

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

[Reference: Bylaw 31.4 in the NCAA Manual.]

A final financial report from each championship site must be submitted via the online host reporting system to the NCAA not later than 60 days after the competition.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding the bid process, please contact the NCAA Championships and Alliances staff at 317-917-6397 or championshipbid@ncaa.org.

PROSPECTIVE HOSTS

Host bid information and deadlines will be included in NCAAConnect in the coming months. The list below provides facility requirements for softball championship hosts.

1. **Facility Enclosure and Parking:** The facility must be enclosed in order to charge admission, with a minimum seating capacity of 500 unobstructed-view seats. On-site parking must be provided for teams, tournament personnel and umpires.
2. **Field Dimensions:** The distance of the outfield fences shall not exceed 235 feet. Outfield fences shall be a minimum of 190 feet in left and right fields (200 feet preferred). If a portable fence is used, it must be placed at a distance of 200 feet in left and right fields, and 220 feet in center field. All portable fencing must be secured so as to prevent balls from rolling under. The outfield fence is required to be a minimum of four feet but highly recommended to be a minimum of six feet. Please see the 2020 and 2021 NCAA Softball Rules Book for future requirements.

3. **Backstop:** Backstop, sideline and outfield fences must enclose the playing field. There must be a minimum of 25 feet and a maximum of 30 feet from home plate to the backstop and from the baselines to the fence or dugout. When the backstop is wood, cement or brick, it must be padded from dugout to dugout, beginning not higher than one foot off the ground and extending to the top of the wood, cement or brick, or six feet from the ground, whichever is shorter.
4. **Field Surface and Bases:** For all NCAA postseason competition, the infield must be skinned (no turf), and the outfield must be natural grass or a grass-like synthetic surface. It is preferred that institutional field stencils are not within the competition field. While Rule 2.4 makes it permissible to stick a label on the rise of the base, for NCAA postseason competition, only a sticker or label with NCAA branding may be used.
5. **Dugouts:** Dugouts must be covered and enclosed from spectators. In the case of an "if" game, it may be necessary to change dugouts. If both teams agree, teams may stay in the previous game's dugout; however, the determination of home team is followed, with no exceptions. No more than 35 people are allowed in the dugout.
6. **Bullpens:** Two separate bullpen areas of comparable composition to the competition field (dirt is preferred) and distance from dugouts, must be provided. Bullpens must be separated from the spectator area. (PITCHERS: Pitchers for the upcoming game may use the bullpen area provided it does not interfere with the game in progress and only when the bullpen area is not in use by either of the participating teams. If either participating team desires to use a bullpen, then neither bullpen may be used by teams preparing for upcoming games.)
7. **Batting Cages:** If only one batting cage is available at the site, all teams will have equal time in the cage prior to their game. The home team uses it first. The batting cage may be used while another game is being played if it does not interfere with the game in progress. If two batting cages of equal quality are available, each team will use one cage.
8. **Warmup Area and Equipment:** Visiting teams must have equal access to an equitable, restricted warmup area with adequate space to run, stretch and throw. This area must be in immediate proximity to the playing field. Also, hosts must provide, in the participant manual, a list of equipment available to all teams (i.e., screens, pitching machines, etc.) and a list of indoor facilities.
9. **Lighting:** A lighted facility is required to host preliminary rounds. The minimum lighting requirement for television is 125 foot-candles.
10. **Electronic Scoreboard and Press Box:** An electronic scoreboard and public address system (including back-up, if possible) must be available. Institutions are also required to have (at a minimum) a three-sided covered press box with internet and telephone access. A covered interview area must be provided, separate from spectator and hospitality areas.
11. **Tarp:** All facilities must have field and bullpen tarps, which must be used appropriately for all areas in the event of inclement weather. Grounds crew must be available during all practices and games.
12. **Locker Rooms:** Hosts must provide equal access, for all teams, to conveniently located, similar facilities (locker rooms or team rooms) with appropriate air conditioning/heat. The facilities will be used not only for dressing and meeting, but also as a safe space during inclement weather. Teams will maintain possession of the locker room during games delayed by weather until the contest has been completed. If locker rooms are not available, two equitable areas must be designated for participating teams. **Plans need to be made for all teams for inclement weather situations**, which may include teams staying on buses. (See Appendix C, page 30, for information regarding team/locker room assignments.)
13. **Restroom Facilities:** Restroom facilities must be conveniently located to dugouts and reserved exclusively for student-athlete use during the game. If permanent restroom facilities that meet these requirements are not present, high-end temporary restrooms (flushable and running water) are acceptable if they are conveniently located, reserved exclusively for student-athlete use and cleaned regularly. It is not acceptable for student-athletes to share restroom facilities with spectators, nor should players be expected to walk great distances to reach the designated facilities.
14. **Athletic Training Facilities:** Athletic training facilities on site must be available to all teams. The facility should be stocked with necessary equipment and staffed with appropriate personnel prior to and during all games and practices. If permanent facilities are not available, tents may be used to meet this requirement.
15. **Umpire Facilities:** A private dressing area for umpires (both male and female) must be provided. Portable locker rooms, recreational vehicles, etc., may be used; however, a tent does not fulfill this requirement.
16. **Scouting Seats:** Three scouting seats per team shall be reserved behind home plate (rows one and two). Only official members of the coaching staff are permitted in the scouting seats. It is acceptable to provide alternate scouting seat locations if requested by the coach and the host can accommodate the request.

17. Videotaping: All team cameras shall be unmanned and located in a designated area in center field. The host will provide three-foot-high platforms in both right- and left-center fields, approximately 20 feet from center field. If a facility cannot provide this, teams should be given equitable access to a similar location for videotaping. Right View Pro cameras or similar electronic devices must be covered during competition. The site representative or a designee will check the cameras periodically to ensure they're operational.

Rule 5.9.1 – A team may film or videotape only contests in which it is playing, but may record (from video truck, satellite feed or airwaves, not video camera) any game that is or will be televised. Recording from the dugout is PROHIBITED during NCAA postseason play. Exception: A tournament host may stream video of all games in its tournament and is not restricted to filming and streaming video of only games in which it is a participant.

18. Video Review Area: To accommodate postgame review per Rule 5.9.9, for NCAA postseason competition, hosts shall provide an area for review (a private area as close to the field as possible). Television or institutional replay equipment may be used. Note: Institutional equipment includes video from either participating team.

HOST REPORTING SYSTEM

An online proposed budget must be completed for each round of competition you wish to host. For those institutions submitting bids for multiple rounds, a “copy” function is available and will allow you to transfer budget information between rounds. The appropriate round and date of competition must be indicated on each budget. Please be sure to include projected ticket sales in the Receipts section.

As a result of the restructuring of the online budget system, there no longer is an “unbudgeted disbursements” section. Therefore, all lodging expenses for officials and site representatives (if needed) must be included in your budget. Officials' fees, per diem and travel expenses do not need to be included, nor do per diem and travel expenses for site representatives — the NCAA will pay those expenses directly.

FACILITY EVALUATION FORM

A facility evaluation form must be completed by each institution interested in hosting preliminary-round competition.

If you submitted a facility evaluation form for this championship last year, the responses to a number of questions will auto-populate with information you submitted last year. Please verify or edit those responses as needed, and provide responses to all blank questions. Please refer to [page 17](#) of this manual for site selection procedures.

KEY CONTACTS FORM

The key contacts form and instructions are available online. Please complete a key contacts form for each round of competition you wish to host. A “copy” function is also available for the key contacts form, allowing you to transfer this information between rounds. The appropriate round and date of competition must be indicated on each key contacts form. NOTE: The tournament director must be institutional staff with decision-making responsibilities, preferably with oversight of the softball program.

Personnel who will administer the competition should be listed on the key contacts form. Please pay close attention to contact names and addresses listed for receivables. Items such as signage, balls, awards, hydration equipment, etc., will be mailed to the listed address(es). In order to receive all supplies and equipment in a timely manner, it's imperative that this information is accurate. Please include the proper mailing address for overnight deliveries. P.O. Box addresses are not acceptable.

SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN

Based upon a review of current and future championships competition venues, discussions with safety and security experts, and its own expertise and knowledge, the NCAA has established a Safety and Security Advisory Group (SSAG) to develop a compilation of Best Practices for NCAA Championships, which can be found in the “Help/Other Resources” tab in the championship host portal. We urge each competition venue to take these Best Practices into account when developing its safety and security program.

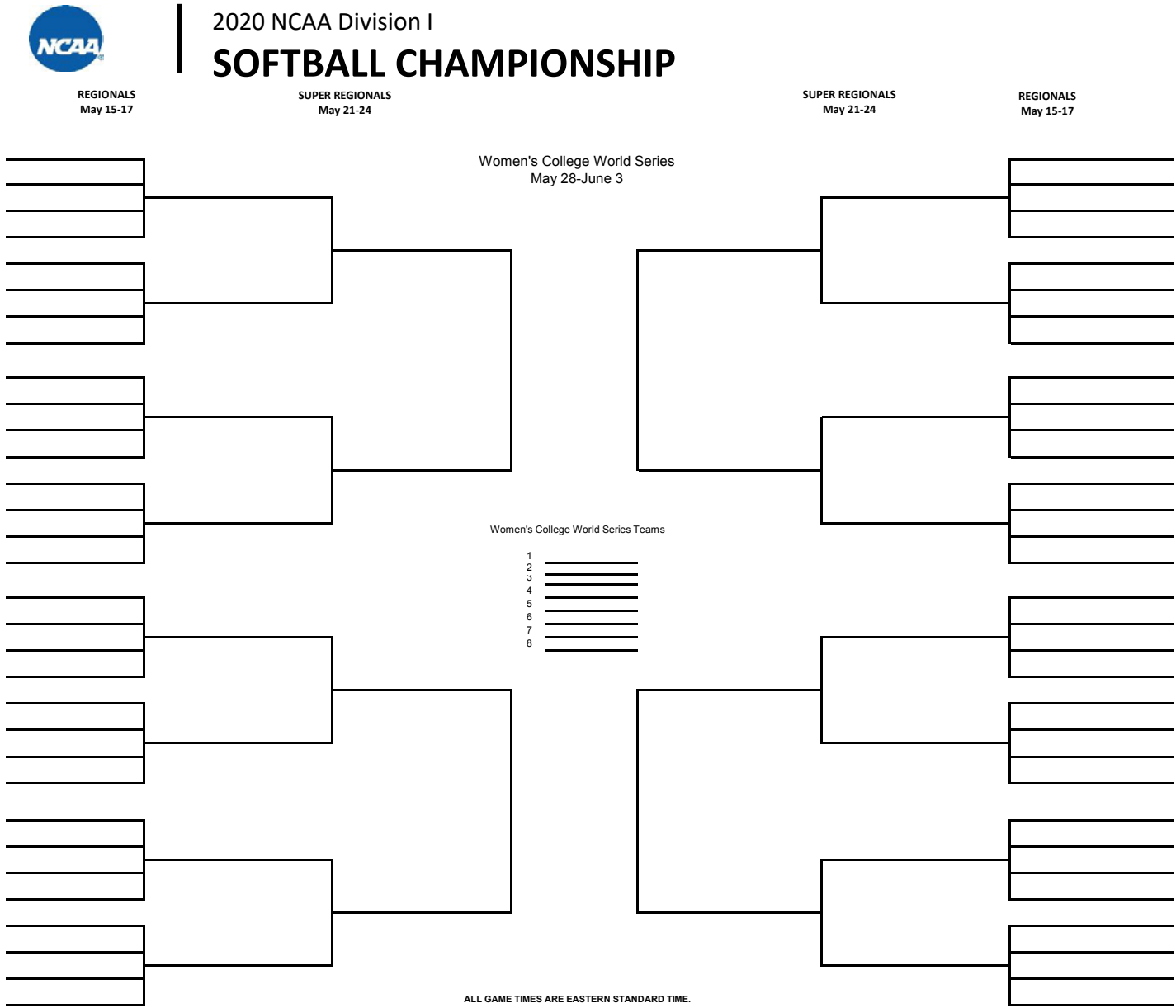
As part of your bid, please submit a safety and security plan for your venue, which would be inclusive of the NCAA Championships Safety and Security Team contact information form, located in Appendix A of the [Best Practices document](#). In order to be considered for championship site selection, this plan must be uploaded to the bid portal.

Appendixes

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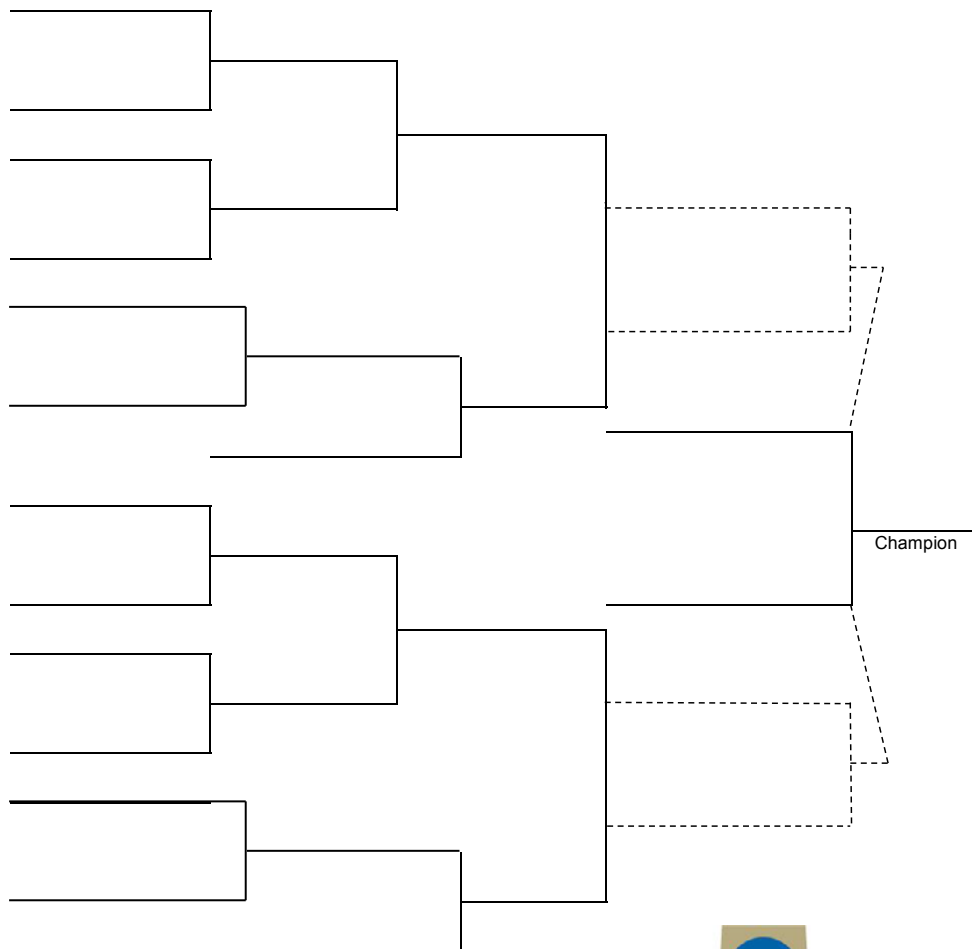
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Appendix A • Brackets





2020 NCAA Women's College World Series



Appendix B • Sport Sponsorship

EAST REGION

America East Conference (7)

University at Albany
Binghamton University
University of Hartford
University of Maine, Orono

University of Maryland, Baltimore County
University of Massachusetts Lowell
Stony Brook University

Atlantic 10 Conference (10)

University of Dayton
Fordham University
George Mason University
George Washington University
La Salle University

University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Rhode Island
St. Bonaventure University
Saint Joseph's University
Saint Louis University

Atlantic Coast Conference (13)

Boston College
Clemson University
Duke University
Florida State University
Georgia Institute of Technology
University of Louisville
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

North Carolina State University
University of Notre Dame
University of Pittsburgh
Syracuse University
University of Virginia
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Colonial Athletic Association (8)

College of Charleston (South Carolina)
University of Delaware
Drexel University
Elon University

Hofstra University
James Madison University
University of North Carolina Wilmington
Towson University

The Ivy League (8)

Brown University
Columbia University-Barnard College
Cornell University
Dartmouth College

Harvard University
University of Pennsylvania
Princeton University
Yale University

Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (11)

Canisius College
Fairfield University
Iona College
Manhattan College
Marist College
Monmouth University

Niagara University
Quinnipiac University
Rider University
Saint Peter's University
Siena College

Northeast Conference (10)

Bryant University
Central Connecticut State University
Fairleigh Dickinson University, Metropolitan Campus
Long Island University-Brooklyn Campus
Merrimack College*

Mount St. Mary's University
Robert Morris University
Sacred Heart University
Saint Francis University (Pennsylvania)
Wagner College

*Not eligible for NCAA championship competition.

Patriot League (7)

Boston University
Bucknell University
Colgate University
College of the Holy Cross

Lafayette College
Lehigh University
U.S. Military Academy

MIDWEST REGION

Big East Conference (8)

Butler University
Creighton University
DePaul University
Georgetown University

Providence College
St. John's University (New York)
Seton Hall University
Villanova University

Big Ten Conference (14)

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Indiana University, Bloomington
University of Iowa
University of Maryland, College Park
University of Michigan
Michigan State University
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

University of Nebraska, Lincoln
Northwestern University
The Ohio State University
Pennsylvania State University
Purdue University
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Horizon League (9)

Cleveland State University
University of Detroit Mercy
University of Illinois at Chicago
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
Northern Kentucky University

Oakland University
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
Wright State University
Youngstown State University

Mid-American Conference (11)

University of Akron
Ball State University
Bowling Green State University
University at Buffalo, the State University of New York
Central Michigan University
Kent State University

Miami University (Ohio)
Northern Illinois University
Ohio University
University of Toledo
Western Michigan University

Missouri Valley Conference (10)

Bradley University
Drake University
University of Evansville
Illinois State University
Indiana State University

Loyola University Chicago
Missouri State University
University of Northern Iowa
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Valparaiso University

The Summit League (7)

University of Nebraska Omaha
University of North Dakota
North Dakota State University
Purdue University Fort Wayne

University of South Dakota
South Dakota State University
Western Illinois University

SOUTH REGION

Big 12 Conference (7)

Baylor University
Iowa State University
University of Kansas
University of Oklahoma

Oklahoma State University
University of Texas at Austin
Texas Tech University

Conference USA (12)

University of Alabama at Birmingham
Florida Atlantic University
Florida International University
Louisiana Tech University
Marshall University
Middle Tennessee State University

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
University of North Texas
University of Southern Mississippi
University of Texas at El Paso
University of Texas at San Antonio
Western Kentucky University

Ohio Valley Conference (12)

Austin Peay State University
Belmont University
Eastern Illinois University
Eastern Kentucky University
Jacksonville State University
Morehead State University

Murray State University
Southeast Missouri State University
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
University of Tennessee at Martin
Tennessee State University
Tennessee Technological University

Southland Conference (12)

Abilene Christian University
University of Central Arkansas
Houston Baptist University
University of the Incarnate Word
Lamar University
McNeese State University

Nicholls State University
Northwestern State University
Sam Houston State University
Southeastern Louisiana University
Stephen F. Austin State University
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Southwestern Athletic Conference (10)

Alabama A&M University
Alabama State University
Alcorn State University
University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff
Grambling State University

Jackson State University
Mississippi Valley State University
Prairie View A&M University
Southern University, Baton Rouge
Texas Southern University

Sun Belt Conference (10)

Appalachian State University
Coastal Carolina University
Georgia Southern University
Georgia State University
University of Louisiana at Lafayette

University of Louisiana Monroe
University of South Alabama
University of Texas at Arlington
Texas State University
Troy University

SOUTHEAST REGION

American Athletic Conference (8)

University of Central Florida
University of Connecticut
East Carolina University
University of Houston

University of Memphis
University of South Florida
The University of Tulsa
Wichita State University

ASUN Conference (8)

Florida Gulf Coast University
Jacksonville University
Kennesaw State University
Liberty University

Lipscomb University
University of North Alabama*
University of North Florida
Stetson University

Big South Conference (9)

Campbell University
Charleston Southern University
Gardner-Webb University
Hampton University
Longwood University

Presbyterian College
Radford University
University of South Carolina Upstate
Winthrop University

Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (11)

Bethune-Cookman University
Coppin State University
Delaware State University
Florida A&M University
Howard University
University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Morgan State University
Norfolk State University
North Carolina A&T State University
North Carolina Central University
South Carolina State University

Southeastern Conference (13)

University of Alabama
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
Auburn University
University of Florida
University of Georgia
University of Kentucky
Louisiana State University

University of Mississippi
Mississippi State University
University of Missouri, Columbia
University of South Carolina, Columbia
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Texas A&M University, College Station

Southern Conference (7)

East Tennessee State University
Furman University
Mercer University
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Samford University
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Western Carolina University

*Not eligible for NCAA championship competition.

WEST REGION**Big Sky Conference (7)**

California State University, Sacramento
 Idaho State University
 University of Montana
 University of Northern Colorado

Portland State University
 Southern Utah University
 Weber State University

Big West Conference (8)

University of California, Davis
 University of California, Riverside
 University of California, Santa Barbara
 California Polytechnic State University

California State University, Fullerton
 California State University, Northridge
 University of Hawaii, Manoa
 Long Beach State University

Mountain West Conference (9)

Boise State University
 California State University, Fresno
 Colorado State University
 University of Nevada, Las Vegas
 University of Nevada, Reno

University of New Mexico
 San Diego State University
 San Jose State University
 Utah State University

Pac-12 Conference (9)

University of Arizona
 Arizona State University
 University of California, Berkeley
 University of California, Los Angeles
 University of Oregon

Oregon State University
 Stanford University
 University of Utah
 University of Washington

West Coast Conference (6)

Brigham Young University
 Loyola Marymount University
 University of the Pacific

Saint Mary's College of California
 University of San Diego
 Santa Clara University

Western Athletic Conference (7)

California Baptist University*
 California State University, Bakersfield
 Grand Canyon University
 University of Missouri-Kansas City

New Mexico State University
 Seattle University
 Utah Valley University

*Not eligible for NCAA championship competition.

Appendix C • Postseason Preliminary Rounds Information

PRELIMINARY-ROUND FACILITIES AND GAMESMANSHIP

Institutions that do not or choose not to meet the facility, crowd management and game management requirements set forth in the Division I Softball Pre-Championship Manual, may not be eligible to host the following year, even if they are a seeded team.

ATMOSPHERE

Hosts must provide a neutral atmosphere that enhances the student-athlete experience for all participating teams (e.g., announcer, in-venue fan treatment, equitable locker rooms, access to facility and equipment).

ARTIFICIAL NOISEMAKERS

The use of artificial noisemakers, air horns, cow bells, ball buckets, etc., and electronic amplifiers by student-athletes and team personnel is prohibited while on site for competition. For the purpose of this rule, the field, bullpens and dugouts are considered to be on site. See Rule 5.11 (page 41) of the 2020 and 2021 NCAA Softball Rules Book.

Fans are also prohibited from using artificial noisemakers while on site.

CROWD MANAGEMENT, SAFETY & SECURITY

Hosts will provide uniformed security for teams, including when moving to and from locker rooms, press conferences, etc. At no time should coaches and student-athletes move among spectators without uniformed security.

EQUIPMENT

All teams at the site must have access to all equipment. If there is a discrepancy in the quality of the equipment (e.g., batting cages), all teams must be provided equal time to use the best equipment.

PRACTICE AND GAME PROTOCOLS

PRACTICE TIMES

Practice times should be assigned in accordance with the first-day competition schedule. Team practices on the competition field will be at least one hour; however, practice sessions may be longer if the length is equal for all participating teams. Note: A team may not arrive at a site a day early due to its practice time (see NCAA reimbursement policies).

GAME TIMES

Game times must be 2 1/2 hours apart.

Regionals. Games may be scheduled on Friday and Sunday, noon to 8:30 p.m. local time, and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. local time. (Regional competition will be conducted Thursday-Saturday for those regionals with a team that has a no-competition-on-Sunday policy. Thursday games may be scheduled noon to 8:30 p.m. local time.)

Super Regionals. All super regionals are televised by ESPN, which will set the game days and times in conjunction with the Softball Committee. Games for super regionals may be Thursday-Saturday or Friday-Sunday.

All game times are subject to change per the broadcast schedule.

LENGTH OF GAME - HALTED AND INTERRUPTED GAMES

All games shall be seven innings except if the Eight-Run Rule (Rule 6.14) is applied. If play has been stopped before seven innings have been completed, the Halted and Interrupted Game Rule shall be in effect (Rule 6.18).

EIGHT-RUN RULE

The Eight-Run Rule (Rule 6.14) will be in effect for all postseason games until the best-of-three championship final games are played (between the final two teams of the championship). For the championship best-of-three series, the Eight-Run Rule will be set aside.

SUPER REGIONAL WEATHER DELAYS

If there is a weather delay during super regional competition, teams will have three days to complete the super regional competition before the inclement weather policy (Section 1.6) will be applied.

PREGAME PROTOCOL

If a practice field is available, teams may warm up on the practice field (equal amount of time for each team). Each team is allowed five minutes for its individual line drills/warmup practice on the competition field.

After both teams have completed use of the batting cages and warmup areas (use of those facilities is established by the tournament director), it is possible to move onto the game field area for warmup under the following conditions:

1. The preceding game has ended and both participating teams have cleared the field and dugout area.
2. Team equipment is stored in the dugout or along the outfield fence so the grounds crew may water the entire infield area (including foul territory).
3. Warmup before the designated pregame protocol (30 minutes before the game) is limited to the outfield area nearest the team's dugout until the infield crew has left the field.
4. If time remains after the grounds crew has completed its work, and before the start of the designated 30-minute pregame protocol, a team may field ground balls on the dirt in the foul territory behind first or third base in the outfield.

TEAM INTRODUCTIONS PROTOCOL (non-starters followed by starters)

1. Visiting team (lines up on the baseline in front of the dugout, facing dugout; first player lines up nearest home plate, with the last person named lining up nearest first base).
2. Home team (lines up on the baseline in front of dugout, facing dugout; first player lines up nearest home plate, with the last person named lining up nearest third base).
3. Introduction of umpires (stand behind home plate).

POSTGAME INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Mandatory for the head coach and requested student-athletes.

For all games except the Championship Series game that concludes the Women's College World Series, there will be a 10-minute cooling-off period. Following the conclusion of the cooling-off period, the winning team will attend the press conference first, followed by the non-winning team. For the Championship Series game that concludes the Women's College World Series, the runner-up team will attend the press conference first, followed by the national championship team.

Only credentialed members of the media and participating institutions' administration shall attend the postgame press conference.

Uniformed security shall escort coaches and student-athletes to and from postgame press conferences and other media obligations.

DETERMINATION OF HOME/AWAY

The home team for the first round will be the higher-seeded team. In subsequent games, the home team will be determined according to the following formula:

1. The games committee shall designate as home team the institution that has been home team the fewest times (regionals and finals are considered separately).
2. If two teams have been home team an equal number of times but visiting team an unequal number of times, the team that has been the visitor most often shall be designated as the home team.
3. If two teams have been both home team and visiting team an equal number of times, and if the two teams previously met, the visitor in the initial game shall be the home team in the second game.
4. If games between the same teams are back-to-back, the home team shall be the visitor from the previous game, regardless of the number of times either team has been home or visitor.
5. If two teams have been both home team and visiting team an equal number of times, the team that was the visitor in its preceding game shall be the home team, unless both teams were the visitor in their preceding games.

6. If the preceding formula does not prevail, the higher-seeded team shall determine if it would like to be home or visitor.
7. When teams play back-to-back games, they must be prepared to change uniforms and dugouts, if necessary.

DETERMINATION OF TEAM/LOCKER ROOM USAGE

The host team must allow the visiting team access to their locker room if: 1) the visiting team is assigned to the host team's dugout based on the determination of the home team formula; 2) the locker rooms are attached to the dugouts; and 3) there are only two locker rooms at the competition field.

If only two locker rooms are available at the regional sites, the two competing teams will have full access to their assigned locker rooms beginning at the start of their on-field warmups until the completion of the game. The host institution may access its locker room when using the attached dugout during a game and when the final game of each day is complete.

At super regionals, the host institution will be permitted to use its locker room regardless of being designated as the home or visiting team; however, if the locker room is attached to the dugout designated to a visiting team, the home team must vacate the locker room two hours before the scheduled start of the game. Regardless of locker room location, the designated visiting team will bat first and occupy the first base dugout and the designated home team will bat second and occupy the third base dugout.

If only one locker room is available at the softball facility, no team will have access to the host institution locker room. The host institution may access its locker room only after it has completed its final game of each day.

Locker room facilities will be used not only for dressing and meeting, but also as a safe space during inclement weather. Teams will maintain possession of the locker room during games delayed by weather until the contest has been completed. If locker rooms are not available, two equitable areas must be designated for participating teams. **Plans need to be made for all teams for inclement weather situations**, which may include teams staying on buses.

TICKETS/CREDENTIALS/AWARDS

TICKETS

Hosts are required to provide each team with 75 tickets behind team dugouts and up to an additional 25 tickets elsewhere in the stadium for regionals, and 100 premium tickets for super regionals. Hosts must hold tickets for teams until the team confirms the number of tickets to be used, not later than 5 p.m. local time on the Tuesday before the first scheduled competition.

Host institutions may choose to purchase tickets for students; however, the institution is financially responsible for those tickets. Tickets may not be charged to the championships budget.

CREDENTIALS

The following credentials will be distributed at the administrative meeting: 30 participant credentials, one media credential for the sports information director, two all-access credentials for institutional administrators and five to be used at the institution's discretion (total of 38 credentials). Only the personnel with the appropriate credential will be permitted in credential-required areas (e.g., team warmup areas, locker/team rooms, etc.). The squad size and official travel party will remain at 20 and 28, respectively.

AWARDS

Participant medallions will be given at regional and super regional sites to the non-advancing teams. Each non-advancing team will receive 20 medallions (squad size). Teams may purchase additional medallions at the following link: <http://www.mtmrecognition.com/ncaa/>.

WEATHER POLICY

If the regular game schedule needs to be altered due to weather or unforeseen circumstances, the following guidelines shall be used before the NCAA representative informs the teams:

Not more than three games by any one team will be scheduled in one day.

If possible, games will not be scheduled to begin before 9 a.m. or after 11 p.m.

If regional competition cannot be completed Sunday, the last time to start a regional championship game (e.g., Games 6 and “if” 7) to complete the regional finals is the Monday immediately preceding the super regional at 11 p.m.

If super regional competition cannot be completed as scheduled, the last time to start a super regional championship game (e.g., Game 3) to complete the super regional finals is the Monday immediately preceding the Women’s College World Series at 11 p.m.

If play is suspended before the completion of the regional and super regional and competition ceases, teams will be advanced per the formula (see the rain delay advancement formula, length and schedule of games) in the pre-championship manual.

If the game schedule cannot be adhered to, time must be permitted for field maintenance and warmup periods for both teams before the start of the next scheduled game. There should be not less than 45 minutes between games except for between Games 6 and 7 at regionals (30 minutes). The grounds crew should be allowed 15 minutes, with five minutes for line drills and four minutes for team introductions.

FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. **Facility Enclosure and Parking.** The facility must be enclosed in order to charge admission, with a minimum seating capacity of 500 unobstructed-view seats. On-site parking must be provided for teams, tournament personnel and umpires.
2. **Field Dimensions.** The distance of the outfield fences shall not exceed 235 feet. Outfield fences shall be a minimum of 190 feet in left and right fields (200 feet preferred). If a portable fence is used, it must be placed at a distance of 200 feet in left and right fields, and 220 feet in center field. All portable fencing must be secured so as to prevent balls from rolling under. The outfield fence is required to be a minimum of four feet but highly recommended to be a minimum of six feet. Please see the 2020 and 2021 NCAA Softball Rules Book for future requirements.
3. **Backstop.** Backstop, sideline and outfield fences must enclose the playing field. There must be a minimum of 25 feet and a maximum of 30 feet from home plate to the backstop and from the baselines to the fence or dugout. When the backstop is wood, cement or brick, it must be padded from dugout to dugout, beginning not higher than one foot off the ground and extending to the top of the wood, cement or brick, or six feet from the ground, whichever is shorter.
4. **Field Surface and Bases.** For all NCAA postseason competition, the infield must be skinned (no turf), and the outfield must be natural grass or a grass-like synthetic surface. It is preferred that institutional field stencils are not within the competition field. While Rule 2.4 makes it permissible to stick a label on the rise of the base, for NCAA postseason competition, only a sticker or label with NCAA branding may be used.
5. **Dugouts.** Dugouts must be covered and enclosed from spectators. In the case of an “if” game, it may be necessary to change dugouts. If both teams agree, teams may stay in the previous game’s dugout; however, the determination of home team is followed, with no exceptions. No more than 35 people are allowed in the dugout.
6. **Bullpens.** Two separate bullpen areas of comparable composition to the competition field (dirt is preferred) and distance from dugouts, must be provided. Bullpens must be separated from the spectator area. (PITCHERS: Pitchers for the upcoming game may use the bullpen area provided it does not interfere with the game in progress and only when the bullpen area is not in use by either of the participating teams. If either participating team desires to use a bullpen, then neither bullpen may be used by teams preparing for upcoming games.)
7. **Batting Cages.** If only one batting cage is available at the site, all teams will have equal time in the cage prior to their game. The home team uses it first. The batting cage may be used while another game is being played if it does not interfere with the game in progress. If two batting cages of equal quality are available, each team will use one cage.
8. **Warmup Area and Equipment.** Visiting teams must have equal access to an equitable, restricted warmup area with adequate space to run, stretch and throw. This area must be in immediate proximity to the playing field. Also, hosts must provide, in the participant manual, a list of equipment available to all teams (i.e., screens, pitching machines, etc.) and a list of indoor facilities.
9. **Lighting.** A lighted facility is required to host preliminary rounds. The minimum lighting requirement for television is 125 foot-candles.
10. **Electronic Scoreboard and Press Box.** An electronic scoreboard and public address system (including back-up, if possible) must be available. Institutions are also required to have (at a minimum) a three-sided covered press box with internet and telephone access. A covered interview area must be provided, separate from spectator and hospitality areas.

11. **Tarp.** All facilities must have field and bullpen tarps, which must be used appropriately for all areas in the event of inclement weather. Grounds crew must be available during all practices and games.
12. **Locker Rooms.** Hosts must provide equal access for all teams to conveniently located, similar facilities (locker rooms or team rooms) with appropriate air conditioning/heat. The facilities will be used not only for dressing and meeting, but also as a safe space during inclement weather. Teams will maintain possession of the locker room during games delayed by weather, until the contest has been completed. If locker rooms are not available, two equitable areas must be designated for participating teams. Plans need to be made for inclement weather situations for all teams, which may include teams staying on buses. (See Appendix C, page 30, for information regarding team/locker room assignments.)
13. **Restroom Facilities.** Restroom facilities must be conveniently located to dugouts and reserved exclusively for student-athlete use during the game. If permanent restroom facilities that meet these requirements are not present, high-end temporary restrooms (flushable and running water) are acceptable, if they are conveniently located, reserved exclusively for student-athlete use and cleaned regularly. It is not acceptable for student-athletes to share restroom facilities with spectators, nor should players be expected to walk great distances to reach the designated facilities.
14. **Athletic Training Facilities.** Athletic training facilities on site must be available to all teams. The facility should be stocked with necessary equipment and staffed with appropriate personnel prior to and during all games and practices. If permanent facilities are not available, tents may be used to meet this requirement.
15. **Umpire Facilities.** A private dressing area for umpires (both male and female) must be provided. Portable locker rooms, recreational vehicles, etc., may be used; however, a tent does not fulfill this requirement.
16. **Scouting Seats.** Three scouting seats per team shall be reserved behind home plate (rows one and two). Only official members of the coaching staff are permitted in the scouting seats. It is acceptable to provide alternate scouting seat locations if requested by the coach and the host can accommodate the request.
17. **Videotaping.** All team cameras shall be unmanned and located in a designated area in center field. The host will provide three-foot-high platforms in both right- and left-center fields, approximately 20 feet from center field. If a facility cannot provide this, teams should be given equitable access to a similar location for videotaping. Right View Pro cameras or similar electronic devices must be covered during competition. The site representative or a designee will check the cameras periodically to ensure they're operational.

Rule 5.9.1 – A team may film or videotape only contests in which it is playing, but may record (from video truck, satellite feed or airwaves, not video camera) any game that is or will be televised. Recording from the dugout is PROHIBITED during NCAA postseason play. Exception: A tournament host may stream video of all games in its tournament and is not restricted to filming and streaming video of only games in which it is a participant.

18. **Video Review Area.** To accommodate postgame review per Rule 5.9.9, for NCAA postseason competition, hosts shall provide an area for review (a private area as close to the field as possible). Television or institutional replay equipment may be used. Note: Institutional equipment includes video from either participating team.