



HOST OPERATIONS 2024-25 MANUAL

Division III Softball

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INTRODUCTION

This manual outlines the responsibilities of an institution/conference hosting this round of an NCAA championship. It is essential that each host institution/conference staff become familiar with the information and policies included in this manual.

The NCAA considers this hosting opportunity a partnership between the host institution/conference, competition site, committee and the NCAA. The primary objective of each individual involved in the administration of the championship shall be to provide a memorable championship experience for each participating student-athlete, coach, institutional staff member and championship attendee.

DEFINITIONS

Championship: Postseason competition conducted by the NCAA in a particular sport, in which eligible student-athletes and teams of active member institutions compete to determine the division champion (or National Collegiate champion in sports that do not have a separate division championship) in that sport.

Governing Sports Committee: The NCAA membership committee responsible for developing policies and procedures governing the administration and conduct of the championship under its jurisdiction, subject to the approval of the applicable division's governance structure and the requirements, standards and conditions prescribed by NCAA Bylaw 31.

Host Institution/Conference: An active NCAA member institution and/or conference selected to serve as host for a championship. The host shall administer the finances of an NCAA championship in accordance with the institutional/conference championship budget, as submitted during the selection process and approved by the governing sports committee.

Local Organizing Committee: A local organization formed in the city where a member institution/conference proposes to host an NCAA championship, to provide to the NCAA services and assistance in connection with the various activities related to the championship. The host institution/conference must be a part of the leadership of the local organizing committee.

NCAA Championships Manager: The staff member(s) representing the NCAA championships and alliances staff assigned to serve as administrator(s) for a championship.

ROLE OF NCAA

The NCAA championships and alliances staff, working in conjunction with the NCAA sport committees and other NCAA partners, will lead the planning efforts, management and execution of all NCAA championships and events. The NCAA will oversee all aspects of the championship and its related activities, including facility operations and space allocations, hotel accommodations, media and team operations, hospitality functions and social events, in venue entertainment, fan and sponsor events, broadcast programming, youth events, as well as many other aspects.

The NCAA will work closely with the host institution/conference, competition venue and local organizing committee to ensure that the championship provides a positive and rewarding experience for student-athletes and fans.

ROLE OF GOVERNING SPORT COMMITTEE

The NCAA's core purpose, values and envisioned future provide the framework for all actions in the committee's administration of the championship and its stewardship of the game. Within the framework and spirit of its charge, the governing sport committee will balance the principle of student-athlete well-being with its efforts to maximize exposure for intercollegiate athletics and revenues from the championship through policies and activities that are subject to the final authority of the NCAA Division III Presidents Council.

GAMEDAY THE DIII WAY

Division III promotes an atmosphere that is a respectful and engaging educational environment through athletics, for everyone through Gameday the DIII Way. Gameday the DIII Way establishes an expectation for championship hosts, coaches, student-athletes and spectators to focus on the common standards of safety, responsiveness, dignity and experience while participating or attending a championship event. We ask that each participant and attendee be personally accountable for their actions and do their part to ensure this event is a positive reflection of Gameday the DIII Way.

LGBTQ+ INCLUSION

LGBTQ+ inclusion ensures every student-athlete, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, may fully participate in and benefit from intercollegiate athletics. As a Division III championships host, you play a unique role in supporting the participating LGBTQ+ student-athletes' and coaches' overall well-being and sense of belonging. The LGBTQ+ communication resource offers several inclusive communications best practices.

2025 DIVISION III SOFTBALL COMMITTEE

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Section 1 • Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco Products

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Unless expressly permitted in writing by the NCAA (subject to the applicable NCAA legislative, and/or policy changes, and/or championship hosting arrangements at the NCAA), no alcoholic beverages or nonalcoholic beer may be sold or dispensed for consumption in the competition venue from the time the doors open until 90 minutes after the conclusion of the games and practices, nor shall any such beverages be brought to the competition venue during the championship (i.e., during the period from the time access is available to spectators until all patrons have left the competition venue or area used for competition) unless otherwise approved by the NCAA.

If permitted by private lease agreement, alcoholic beverages may be consumed inside the private suites, subject to the host's, venue's and/or concessionaire's compliance with certain insurance and indemnification requirements imposed by the NCAA. However, alcoholic beverages may not be delivered to private viewing suites on the dates of NCAA practice or competition. Additionally, it is not permissible for alcoholic beverages to be distributed or consumed in the competition venue outside the private viewing suites unless otherwise approved by the NCAA.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Tobacco products shall not be advertised, sold or dispensed at any championship event sponsored by or administered by the NCAA. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the venue; this includes cigars.

Section 2 • Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act, Title III prohibits private places of public accommodation (e.g., sports arenas) from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. The host institution/conference is required to confirm that each facility in which an NCAA championship or ancillary event occurs is in compliance with the ADA. The host institution/conference is responsible for determining if the competition site will be in compliance as of the dates of the championship. If the host institution/conference becomes aware that a competition site hosting an NCAA championship event will not be in compliance, it shall immediately notify the NCAA national office staff member with responsibility for the event to discuss the issue.

If the host institution/conference receives a request for an accommodation, which may require input from the NCAA, the host institution/conference shall immediately notify the NCAA national office staff member with responsibility for the event to address the request.

Section 3 • Awards

CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS PRESENTATION ENHANCEMENT TEMPLATE

To celebrate and enhance the student-athlete experience at the championship site, the NCAA will work with the LOC to implement a unique and fun way to recognize the champion(s) at the end of competition during the awards. These enhancements should help increase the excitement of the awards presentation and the level of championship branding exposure in photos for student-athlete's memories when looking back on their experience.

When considering what enhancements could work at your championship site, please consider your site and playing surface, whether your championship is indoor or outdoor and weather elements could be a factor, how many teams or individual student-athletes you may have participating in the awards presentation and your budget.

In most cases, enhanced staging and unique signage opportunities are great options for both indoor and outdoor sports. These items can be freestanding or attached to another item easily. Other ideas to consider would be logo cut outs, confetti, streamers, pyrotechnics/fireworks, a short video recap of championship performance(s), champion(s) or coach interview, utilizing pep bands or using an emcee or notable sport representative (i.e., Olympic Medalist) for the presentation.

These items can be covered through the operations budget, as well as the LOC budget. The NCAA has preapproved artwork with pricing available. If you need assistance with ideas or ordering the preapproved items, please contact Nathan Arkins at 317-917-6790 or narkins@ncaa.org. Otherwise, please work directly with your primary signage contact at the NCAA on overall ideas, approvals, production and implementation with the operations staff.

CHAMPIONS LOCKER ROOM PROGRAM

The NCAA has partnered with select NCAA licensees to celebrate the national champions of each of the 90 NCAA championships. Each team champion shall receive a national champions T-shirt and hat to commemorate the experience of winning a national title. A detailed explanation of the logistics of the locker room program will be provided in championship specific section of the manual. However, listed below is a summary of steps that should be followed when implementing the locker room program at all final championship sites.

- The product is for team champions only. Individual championships are not a part of the locker room distribution.
- Please remove all hangtags and stickers (if needed) on the merchandise before being distributed.
- The merchandise should be distributed to the winning team only immediately after the handshake as soon as the game has officially concluded. Extra product (if any) should be given to the team's equipment manager.
- All winning team inquiries about obtaining additional locker room product should be directed to Jared Hunt with Event 1 for T-shirts (jared.hunt@hanes.com) or Underground Printing for hats (ncaachamphat@undergroundshirts.com). Please contact David Clendenin, director of licensing, at the NCAA national office should you have any questions (dclendenin@ncaa.org or 317-917-6496).

CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS

The NCAA shall provide all awards for participation in an NCAA championship. The championship manager will provide a manifest of the awards being shipped to your site. You should inventory each box and award ensuring the appropriate quantity and label for the event.

The championship manager will also describe how the awards will be distributed during the championship event.

No additional awards, unless otherwise approved by the championships manager, should be presented to the student-athletes and coaches of the participating teams.

OR

Preliminary Rounds

MTM, Inc., the NCAA national office awards supplier, will send official NCAA participant medallions for the nonadvancing team's squad size (20) to the tournament director prior to competition. When the awards arrive, the tournament director should inventory all awards to be sure they are undamaged, are correctly inscribed and are in the appropriate quantities. The awards boxes should then be retaped, closed and secured in a limited-access area.

Finals

MTM, Inc., the NCAA national office awards supplier, will send official NCAA awards to the tournament director approximately two weeks prior to the championship. When the awards arrive the tournament director should inventory all awards to be sure they are undamaged, are correctly inscribed and are in the appropriate quantities. The awards boxes should then be retaped, closed and secured in a limited-access area.

No additional awards, unless otherwise approved by the championship manager, should be presented to the student-athletes and coaches of the participating teams.

ELITE 90 AWARD PRESENTATION

The NCAA Elite 90 Award was created to recognize the true essence of the student-athlete by honoring the individual who has reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in their sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among their peers. The Elite 90 Award is presented to the student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade-point average participating at the finals site for each of the NCAA's championships. Award winners must meet certain criteria including being a sophomore or above, participating in their sport for at least two years at their school, being an active member of their team, and being a designated member of the squad size at their championship. The member institution is responsible for submitting its student-athlete who has the highest GPA and meets all other requirements. The NCAA championships and alliances staff and the NCAA academic and membership affairs staff will determine the winner of this award for each championship and provide the name of the recipient to the NCAA championships manager as well as the local host shortly before the championship begins. The winner's name should not be released to the public until after they are publicly recognized. If appropriate, the championship manager can share the information with the coach of the winning student-athlete to make sure of that person's attendance. However, they should not inform the student-athlete. Olivia Baumhoer or a member of the NCAA media coordination staff will typically send a template of a release and the logo to the sports information director of the winner's institution the morning of the announcement to allow them time to prepare. In addition, the information will be given to the NCAA social media staff for them to prepare a graphic which will post shortly after the announcement.

Each championship should provide an appropriate forum to adequately recognize and celebrate this award winner among their peers and fans of the championship. In addition, information about this award winner may be included in local press releases about the championship and in public address and/or video board announcements during the championship.

Award Presentation

When determining the most appropriate time to present the Elite 90 Award, the NCAA and host staff should evaluate the time and venue that will create the greatest impact and amount of exposure for the award winner while also appropriately honoring and celebrating their accomplishments. The presentation should be semiformal in nature and not be rushed or overshadowed by other presentations or events surrounding it. The award winner should be visible, the announcement clearly audible and the award presentation should receive the full attention and respect of all of those in attendance. The standard award script is listed below:

At this time, we would like to present the Elite 90 Award. This award was instituted to recognize the true essence of the student-athlete by honoring the individual who has reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in their sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among their peers. The Elite 90 Award is presented to the student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade-point average participating at the finals site for each of the NCAA's 90 championships.

The recipient of the Elite 90 Award for Division X (sport) with a GPA of X.XXX in (major, is student-athlete and institution).

Presentation at the Student-Athlete Banquet

This award has traditionally been presented at the student-athlete banquet for most NCAA championships. In many cases the student-athlete banquet provides the best forum for the award presentation and greatest exposure for the winner as it is the one time when all championship participants and administrators are gathered in one place with a controlled, semiformal environment complete with a sound system and set program. Presenting at the student-athlete banquet also alleviates any potential conflicts with the winning student-athlete's participation in, or preparation for, an NCAA championship event. Guidelines for presentation of this award at the student-athlete banquet are:

- The award should be presented by either the banquet emcee, the NCAA committee chair or the NCAA championship manager.
- The award should be presented near the end of the program and be clearly recognizable as the premier award being given (see student-athlete banquet page for sample run of show).
- The award should be presented after attendees have had a chance to finish their meals.
- If video screens are available, the video slide or footage of the winning student-athlete provided by Van Wagner may be run as the individual is introduced.
- The coach of the winning student-athlete should be informed to help ensure the winner's attendance.
- If a photographer is at the student-athlete banquet or championship, a photo of the recipient receiving the award should be taken. This may be used in-venue during competition days to showcase the academic achievement of the student-athlete or provided to the student-athlete as a memento. The host sports information director should arrange to provide the winner's SID with a copy of the photo.
- If the award winner is recognized primarily at the student-athlete banquet, public address and video board announcements should be made whenever possible and applicable at the actual championship for additional exposure to fans who do not have access to the banquet.

In-Venue Presentation

The NCAA and host staffs are encouraged to look for opportunities for the Elite 90 Award winner to be presented their award in the championship venue during a time when most participants and fans are in attendance. While this may not be appropriate for championships that are spread out over multiple venues, large areas, or have multiple games in one day that disperses the crowd chronologically – it should be explored for championships in which most fans are gathered during a predetermined time frame and can provide their undivided attention to the award presentation. The presentation must also not conflict in any way with the student-athlete's participation or preparation for the championship. Examples could be:

- In a championship with two semifinals played on one day, the award winner could be recognized during the semifinal in which they are not participating.
- If the award winner is not participating or completes competition in the championship rounds of a sport but is still in attendance, they may be recognized during breaks between events, weight classes, heats or during a scheduled break in the game.
- The award winner could be recognized during a scheduled opening or closing ceremony at which all participating student-athletes are in attendance and fans are encouraged to attend.

Other in-venue recognition

If the Elite 90 award winner is not introduced live inside of the competition venue, public address and/or video board announcements recognizing the winner should be played during the championship to recognize this individual. Van Wagner will provide the following standard PA announcement sometimes accompanied by a video board slide. The championships manager (or Branding and Fan Experience representative at Equity and Growth championships) will need to provide Van Wagner the name of the winning individual and a headshot photo if a video board is used for the championship.

DIVISION III SOFTBALL

The Elite 90, an award founded by the NCAA, recognizes the true essence of the student-athlete by honoring the individual who has reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in their sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among their peers. The Elite 90 is presented to the student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade-point average participating at the finals site for each of the NCAA's championships.

The recipient of the Elite 90 Award for the 2025 NCAA Division III Softball Championship, with a cumulative grade-point average of (list GPA) in (list Major of Study), is (list winner and school: *Jane Doe of State University*).

Press Release

On the day of/or prior to the winner of the Elite 90 award being publicly recognized, the NCAA media coordination staff will send out a template of a standard press release to the sports information director of the winner's institution and to the NCAA championships administrator. For selected championships, a press release will be written by a member of the communications or media coordination staff and be provided to national media by the NCAA public relations. If appropriate, this press release may also be provided to the host for distribution to local media.

Social Media

The NCAA X (formerly Twitter) account will promote the 90 winners after the on-site announcement is made. Olivia Baumhoer will work with the social media staff to make sure they have appropriate information, including a photo to make the graphic and the timing of when to post.

- The host or NCAA championship manager should ensure a photo of the presentation is taken and emailed to socialmedia@ncaa.org.

For more information on the Elite 90 award winners, log on to ncaa.com/elite-90.

PARTICIPATION AWARDS

Preliminary Rounds

Due to the financial burden on a host institution, to be consistent with NCAA policy, and to provide each student-athlete participating in NCAA preliminary-round competition the same experience, mementos will NOT be permitted at preliminary rounds.

Finals

Participation awards are permissible (one per participant) if they meet the conditions outlined in Bylaws 16.1.4.2 and 16.1.4.3 and are provided by the NCAA selected student-athlete participation awards licensee. The NCAA championships and alliances group will be responsible for selecting the participation awards that will be provided. All participation awards will be distributed at the site of the championship(s). Hosts should work with the championship manager on award logistics.

Section 4 • Bands, Cheerleaders and Mascots

ADMISSION

A maximum of 25 band members plus the director, 12 uniformed cheerleaders plus the sponsor, and one costumed mascot will be admitted free of charge for each team. These individuals will be admitted via a gate list. If a band exceeds 25 individuals, the participating institution must purchase tickets for the additional band members.

Live animal mascots are not permitted.

ARTIFICIAL NOISEMAKERS

No air horns or artificial noisemakers are allowed. Electronic effects and bands may not play when the game is in progress.

ELECTRONIC AMPLIFICATION

Full bands are not permitted to use electronic amplification. Small bands (10 members or fewer) are permitted to use reasonable electronic amplification.

FIGHT SONGS/MUSIC

If a team does not have a band present, it may provide a recording of the institution's fight song to be played between innings. If only one of the two competing teams has a band, then the band and the electronic music should alternate playing. Only one band can play at a time. The host institution may be asked to provide electronic music in the event none of the participating teams brings a band.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The national anthem shall be sung or played by the band of one of the participating institutions (to be determined by a coin flip if there is not mutual agreement) just prior to the introduction of the starting lineups. If a singer or band is not available, the host shall provide a recording of the national anthem. The anthem shall be sung or played only before the first session each day.

Color Guard (finals only). The host institution may provide a color guard experienced at presenting the flags for the championship.

WARM-UP MUSIC

Each participating team may submit a playlist for the host institution to play during the respective team's eight-minute warm-up period. If the host can accommodate this, the host institution will inform the teams if they can submit their warm-up music via a playlist or via Dropbox. The lyrics and content of the selected music for the individual teams and host institution must be appropriate (e.g., no profanity or explicit lyrics) for all audiences. The games committee will be the final authority in determining whether music is appropriate. The submission of inappropriate warm-up music may result in a charge of a failure to follow policies and procedures. If a participating team does not provide music, the host may provide their standard warm-up music for that game at the site.

Section 5 • Banquet

REGIONALS AND SUPER REGIONALS

Due to the financial burden on a host institution, to be consistent with NCAA policy, and to provide each student-athlete participating in NCAA preliminary-round competition the same experience, **banquets and mementos will NOT be permitted at preliminary rounds.**

FINALS

For the championship finals, arrangements should be made for a banquet to be held Wednesday night prior to the championship for, at minimum, the official traveling party (25 persons) of each of the participating teams. Other people that should be on the guest list include members of the NCAA Division III Softball Committee, NCAA staff and additional host personnel (i.e., president, faculty athletics representative and workers greatly involved in the conduct of the championship). According to NCAA policy, game umpires may not attend the banquet or any hospitality function.

The director of athletics/commissioner and tournament director are the official banquet hosts. The format of the banquet should be determined in consultation with the softball committee and the NCAA championship manager. Usually, the participating teams feel more comfortable sitting together, so hosts may want to designate team tables using school colors, the team name and/or mascot. Members of the Division III Softball Committee should have a designated table near the front of the room. If a committee member is affiliated with one of the participating teams, they will sit with their team.

It is recommended that the agenda include short welcoming statements by a representative of the host institution, the NCAA softball committee chair and an emcee. Any other way to make the banquet special is encouraged by the softball committee. Members of the media and officials should NOT be invited to the banquet. Alcohol must not be available for consumption in connection with the championship. The NCAA championship banner should be visible in a prominent position.

Section 6 • Broadcasting/Internet

Please log on to ncaa.com/media for information regarding broadcast/internet rights. The Championship Host Guide to Live Stats, Championship Host Guide to Webstreaming and the NCAA.

Broadcasting Quick Reference Guide are resources to support this effort.

Section 7 • Championship Presentation/Fan Engagement

BRANDING

Ancillary Events

The NCAA prohibits host institutions/conferences from conducting special ancillary entertainment activities for fans in conjunction with the championship. Should another entity (e.g., convention and visitor's bureau) elect to stage such activities, the following policies shall apply:

- All plans must be approved in advance by the NCAA.
- NCAA marks, logos, name or references to the championship or tickets may not be used.
- No activity connected with the championship may be sponsored by an entity that is not an NCAA Corporate Champion/Corporate Partner (CC/P).
- Such an activity may not take place on property controlled by the competition venue.

No entity may contact NCAA CC/Ps directly. All such contact shall be directed through the NCAA staff.

Logos

The NCAA owns and controls all rights and interests in its name, logo, seal, trademarks and service marks. Use of these marks is prohibited without advance written approval by the NCAA. Host institutions/conferences should review information outlined in NCAA Bylaw 31.6.1. Only official NCAA Corporate Champions/Partners (CC/Ps) and licensees are permitted to use NCAA marks and logos in commercial advertising and promotions, unless written approval is provided by the NCAA Marketing staff. All proposed commercial advertising and promotions, if not by a CC/Ps, must be reviewed by the NCAA Marketing staff prior to approval and production.

GAME PRESENTATION

NCAA championship hosts are required to utilize NCAA provided public address announcer scripts, run-of-shows and video board content. Host and participating team messaging or video board content is not allowed. This includes promotion of upcoming events at the championship site, recognitions, and sponsorships. Any enhancements that you would like to propose for the event must be approved in advance by the championship manager.

Public Address Scripts

The public address announcer scripts allow game management/game presentation to keep the flow of the championship moving through the communication of important information to those in attendance. Communicate with your NCAA championship manager to secure a timing sheet PA script and run of show for the championship event you are hosting.

Video Boards

The NCAA will provide video board content to sites that have such capabilities. The video board content is important to the overall championship experience for student-athletes and those in attendance. Please work directly with your NCAA championship manager to identify if there is a Van Wagner producer assigned to the championship (final sites) or if content should be downloaded from the Van Wagner box site directly (preliminary rounds).

Questions related to video board content logistics should be directed to:

Brandon Anthony - Senior Producer
Van Wagner
Telephone: 925-354-5721
Email: banthony@vanwagner.com

IN-VENUE ENTERTAINMENT

NCAA championship hosts are encouraged to explore in-venue entertainment options during the championship to keep fans engaged, excited, and to enhance the atmosphere for both the fans and student-athletes. Various potential areas of in-venue entertainment and the guidelines associated with them are shared below. Please discuss any forms of in-venue entertainment you recommend with your NCAA championship manager for approval.

Break in Action Contests or Promotions

Hosts should consider continuing nonsponsored regular season halftime/quarter break/timeout contests and promotions or creating new, unbiased, nonsponsored promotions to use during NCAA championships. Entertainment can also include local performance groups or youth scrimmages. Guidelines and ideas for consideration:

- Must not include any commercial recognition (unless approved/provided by an NCAA corporate champion, partner or official equipment supplier and approved by a member of the NCAA Corporate Relations staff).
- Must be appropriate and in good taste.
- Must fit safely within given time constraints with no chance of interfering with the competition.
- Must not negatively impact the championship playing surface in any way.
- No links or resemblance to gambling.
- Participants must be randomly selected.
- No bias toward or against any participating team.
- Campus and venue rules must be considered when developing the contest or promotion.
- NCAA championship merchandise purchased by the host (e.g., extra volunteer apparel, committee or contributor gifts, items or certificates purchased from Event 1) make good prizes for these contests as prizes with commercial recognition are not permitted.

National Anthem Singers

Hosts are encouraged to explore their resources to bring in local, regional or even nationally recognized celebrities or groups to sing the national anthem (e.g., recording artists with strong local ties, military, local individuals, choir groups or bands). Guidelines and ideas for consideration:

- No bias toward or against any participating team (e.g., performers should not wear the apparel of a participating team).
- Performances should not come at a cost and will not be reimbursed by the NCAA.
- A brief description and thank you for the performing group or individual may be incorporated into the script, but no commercial recognition, sponsorship, sales or recruitment messages should be included.
- The national anthem should take two minutes or less to perform, however please build extra time into the script for introduction and placement of the color guard (if applicable).
- A pre-event rehearsal with the performer(s) and others involved is highly recommended.

Enhanced Team Introductions

Examples of this include using special music, smoke machines, flame units, on-field fireworks, team banners/flags, inflatable tunnels, youth athletes forming a tunnel or holding hands with student-athletes as they are introduced, etc. Guidelines and ideas for consideration:

- No bias toward or against any participating team and should be equally executed for all participating teams.
- Must fit safely within given time constraints with no chance of interfering with the competition.
- Must be appropriate and in good taste.
- Should be discussed with the NCAA championship manager in advance.

Musical Entertainment

Participating school bands will be scheduled into the overall championship presentation when they are available. When they are not, the host institution marching band, other school bands or local bands may be appropriate for entertainment during pregame, halftime or other breaks in the action or for greeting fans in the stadium entrance or other congregating areas.

Affiliated Award Recognitions

If appropriate, award winners for the given sport who are in attendance but not competing at the time of the scheduled recognition may be awarded on field during NCAA championships (e.g., Elite 90 award, coaches' association player of the year). Please consult with the NCAA championship manager to determine appropriateness. Sponsored awards should not be incorporated without approval from an NCAA Corporate Relations staff member.

Military Involvement

Military involvement in NCAA championships may include national anthem or break performances (military singer, instrumentalist, or band), color guard, fly-overs, parachute teams, and precision drill teams, etc. Please work with the NCAA Corporate Relations and Game Presentation team to finalize military involvement, as some elements may be influenced by partnership agreements. *Please see Military Involvement below for full description and guidelines.*

MILITARY INVOLVEMENT

The NCAA supports inviting the military to participate at NCAA championships if their involvement enhances the championship experience for student-athletes and fans while at the same time honoring the military in an appropriate and unobtrusive manner. At many NCAA championships, local or national military groups have been arranged by the host to perform during pregame, halftime or other breaks in the action. These performances have included, but are not limited to, national anthem performances (military singer, instrumentalist or band), color guard, presentation of large flags, fly-overs, parachute teams, precision drill teams, eagle releases around the national anthem, reunions of troops returning from overseas with their families, honorary recognitions, etc. Please discuss with your NCAA championship manager any forms of military involvement which you recommend, so the recommendation can be discussed with the NCAA Corporate Relations and Game Presentation teams as some elements may be influenced by partnership agreements.

Guidelines

- Involvement from military groups often requires substantial government paperwork. Fly-overs and parachute jumps will also require FAA approval to be handled by the host. Please allow adequate lead time to coordinate.
- Host connections with local military bases will be most cost-effective in arranging military involvement.
- No messages about military recruitment should be incorporated into on-field performances.
- General messages paying tribute to all military personnel and thanking the military unit which has performed are encouraged (e.g., "Let's give a big round of applause for tonight's performance from the United States Air Force Heartland of America Band... and for all of the American military service personnel who they proudly represent.").
- Requests for any type of presence on-site (e.g., booth space, interactive elements, inflatables, giveaway items or space within an NCAA fan festival) is not permitted unless discussed with your NCAA championship manager who will in turn discuss the request with the NCAA Corporate Relations team.
- Campus and venue rules must be considered when developing the presentation.
- All performing or volunteering military groups should be provided complimentary access to watch the championship before or after their presentation if possible. Please discuss this with your NCAA championship manager.
- When several military groups are in attendance and recognized during one game/session of a multiday championship, you may want to consider a theme night (e.g., Military Appreciation Day/Night). This should be discussed with your NCAA championship manager. The NCAA Marketing staff should also be involved if you do a theme night.

STUDENT-ATHLETE BANQUET

To celebrate and welcome all participating student-athletes and championship personnel at the final site, the host may provide a banquet (or other student-athlete recognition event). The number of guests, financial assistance provided by the NCAA and total budget shall be determined after consultation with the NCAA staff. NCAA corporate champions, partners or official equipment suppliers may receive approval to sponsor the banquet, but no local sponsors are permitted. Officials should not be included in this or any social event including the participating coaches and student-athletes. Per NCAA policy, student-athlete banquets (or other celebratory events) are not permitted at preliminary-round sites.

The NCAA may provide a video featuring the teams and student-athletes advancing to the final site depending on the amount of footage available and cost of obtaining. If practical, the NCAA staff will request the video from NCAA games presentation and inform the host.

The host will be responsible for coordinating all other details and logistics of the banquet including location, emcee, speakers, transportation, catering, A/V equipment, a printed program, etc., in consultation with the NCAA staff. The exact run of show and presentations included can be altered slightly to accommodate the number of student-athletes, teams and guests present as well as unique venue, sport or local elements. However, the run of show listed below and the 90-minute time frame should be used as a guiding template. Please note, that a 60-minute event is ideal, and the event should not last longer than 90 minutes.

Words of reflection or invocation are not required but may be included at NCAA student-athlete banquets. The NCAA supports a flexible policy which allows each host to follow the traditions and protocols of their university. If included, any words of reflection or invocation should be respectful and inclusive of all.

Run of Show

6:30 p.m.	Greet teams and student-athletes, direct to tables or attractions (emcee or NCAA chair)
	Soft A/V presentation (e.g., music, slideshow of participating teams and student-athletes, NCAA tribute video, DII or DIII branding video – optional)
6:45 p.m.	Welcome/comments to student-athletes and guests from the event emcee and/or a city/host institution representative
6:50 p.m.	Dinner buffet lines open or plated dinner served
7:20 p.m.	Guest Speaker (optional)
7:40 p.m.	Comments by Head Coaches or Q&A with selected student-athletes (optional)*
	1. Team 1
	2. Team 2
	3. Team 3
	4. Team 4
7:50 p.m.	Comments by the NCAA committee chair and the presentation of Elite 90 Award
	Championship Video (if available)
7:55 p.m.	Closing Comments (emcee with talking points from NCAA or NCAA chair)

**Comments by head coaches may not be practical at some championships, especially those with many teams or individual qualifiers.*

Best Practices

While the guidelines above provide a standard framework for the student-athlete banquet, the event should be tailored to suit the needs, size and unique aspects of the championship. The purpose of the event is primarily to congratulate, celebrate and welcome all of the participating student-athletes to the NCAA championship and the host community.

DIVISION III SOFTBALL

The most successful NCAA student-athlete banquets have often been enhanced by unique venues, décor, interactive features, program enhancements or keepsake items that showcase the uniqueness of the host city or region and their excitement to host the NCAA championship. The NCAA will rely on the creativity of the host for development of these items. The formality of the event, attendee attire, appropriate number and type of speakers, level of interaction between student-athletes, etc., varies from sport to sport. The NCAA championship manager can help advise the host on sport specific nuances.

The host will assume the lead production role for the student-athlete banquet but should seek the advice and approval of the NCAA championship manager on such items as location, budget, timing, final run of show, speaker, menu, giveaway items (some may be provided free of charge by NCAA official equipment suppliers) and additional enhancements. Some past student-athlete banquet enhancements that have been well received are listed below. Please note, however, that the potential impact of all possible banquet enhancements on student-athletes should be weighed against appropriateness, available budget and other needs of the overall championship.

Sample Enhancements

- Unique venue – a skybox club overlooking the host university’s football stadium; a historical or cultural center; an aquarium or museum where brief tours can be incorporated into the programming; an iconic restaurant, theater or arena in the area; a beach party setting; etc.
- Slideshow – before and/or after the formal presentation, a slideshow of participating team or student-athlete images is shown on video boards or mixed with NCAA branding messages (host is responsible for collecting images from schools or preliminary round hosts).
- Speakers – relevance to the participating student-athletes is the most important factor. Former NCAA champions or graduating student-athletes who went on to professional or Olympic fame in the given sport are ideal. However, other options available at no or little expense to the host should be explored as some speakers transcend their sport or profession. Examples of previous speakers include Todd Martin – Tennis, Dot Richardson – Softball, President of the USGA – Golf, Bill Belichick – Lacrosse (Boston), ESPN personalities, comedians, motivational speakers, well-known football or basketball coaches at the host institution, etc.
- Photo opportunities – opportunities for teams or individuals to pose for a photo in front of a championship backdrop (possibly with the championship trophy) or in conjunction with unique or iconic elements of the area (e.g., with giant hanging shark in Florida, with longhorn steer in Texas, in winners circle at Churchill Downs, overlooking city skyline, football stadium).
- Favors unique to the sport or area – examples include mini soccer balls, mini lacrosse sticks, baseball shaped cheese – Wisconsin, make-your-own beach flip flops – Florida; please check with your championship manager regarding budget, appropriateness and possibility of items provided by official equipment suppliers before pursuing.
- Special entrances for student-athletes – red carpet into venue, spotlights, limos, local youth teams wearing team colors or with pom poms/signs to greet the student-athletes.
- Band/DJ/Interactive Games – are generally only appropriate in more informal settings with numerous teams of both genders, relaxed time constraints, fun atmosphere, etc.
- Event 1/Championship merchandise – sales booth or display area with order forms on-site.
- Special Olympics Component – speaker, athletes, etc. (recommended for all DIII championships).

Coaches’ Association Award Guidelines

The primary purpose of NCAA student-athlete banquets is to honor, celebrate and welcome participating student-athletes in a concise and entertaining manner. Coaches’ association awards and other presentations not directly related to the championship itself may be considered for inclusion if they are in the best interest of the attending student-athletes:

- The presentation should be relevant and provide a significant enhancement to the banquet programming for the student-athletes (awards or speakers which have limited relation to the championship or significance to the student-athletes will detract from their enjoyment and the attention they pay to other programming).
- The presentation should be brief (in most cases it should be limited to 5-10 minutes, but should never exceed 30 minutes).

- Awards should be limited to those presented to participating student-athletes and coaches or those which have some special significance to the student-athletes in attendance.
- The presentation should be secondary in significance and placement in the programming to any official NCAA championship presentations.
- If these conditions are not met, other championship related platforms should be explored by the NCAA to assist the coaches' association.
- All final decisions on inclusion of coaches' association awards, other presentations, scripts and presenters should be made by the NCAA staff with the best interest and overall experience of the student-athlete in mind.
- NCAA staff may call on leadership team members to assist in delivering and explaining the specific decisions to the coaches' association as needed.

Section 8 • Commercialism/Contributors

SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Activation of Corporate Champion and Corporate Partner Program. The NCAA may request/require that certain areas of the competition site be made available for use by NCAA Corporate Champions or Corporate Partners (CC/Ps) for the purpose of marketing/promotional events/activities. If such requests are made, the host institution will provide requested space or similar accommodations.

Local Organizing Committee Hospitality. If approved by the NCAA, the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) has the option to host specified events during the championship. Commercial identification of any kind at any LOC function is prohibited unless specifically approved by the NCAA. The NCAA must approve all uses of NCAA logos, names, or other graphics (including school logos). The LOC shall submit detailed proposals (e.g., location, date, time, food and beverage, entertainment, budget), to the NCAA for review and approval at least 60 days in advance of the event. Any such events are conducted at the LOC's expense.

Other Functions. To enhance the experience for participating institutions, fans, and alumni during NCAA championships, the NCAA (in conjunction with a third-party agency) may facilitate an official hospitality program in or outside of the competition site.

PREMIUMS GUIDELINES

The competition venue shall provide to the NCAA a set of guidelines, like those outlined below, that identify items that are not permitted in the venue no fewer than 120 days prior to the first NCAA championship related event. The NCAA will then utilize and share that information with its NCAA Corporate Champions and Corporate Partners.

Laser Pointers. Laser pointers of any kind are not allowed.

Noisemakers. Artificial noisemakers of any kind including but not limited to, air horns, electronic instruments, inflatable noisemakers, etc., are not permissible. Facility personnel are responsible for confiscating prohibited items at the entrance points or removing such items from the facility. Megaphones may be used for voice amplification, but they shall not be used as a distraction.

Promotional Items. Promotional items (e.g., cups, shakers, flags) with commercial slogans or identification, other than those from NCAA Corporate Champions and Partners, are not allowed on the premises. Items such as newspapers, handbills, flyers, memorabilia, T-shirts, caps, etc., except products sold/distributed by the NCAA or its agents, may not be distributed on the premises.

Signs, Flags, Banners. Large signs, flags or banners are not permissible. It is the facility personnel's responsibility to confiscate all prohibited articles. Items that can be held by one individual, reflect good sportsmanship and do not block the view of other ticketed patrons may be permitted. In no case may a sign, flag or banner be affixed to the facility.

Video Camera/Still Camera Policies. Ticketed patrons shall not bring video equipment into the facility on game days. Still cameras with a lens no longer than four inches are permissible on any day.

NCAA CORPORATE CHAMPION AND CORPORATE PARTNER PROGRAM

The NCAA Corporate Champions and Corporate Partners Program (i.e., corporate sponsors of the NCAA), managed by the NCAA along with TNT Sports and CBS Sports, authorizes the exclusive rights to license NCAA trademarks, tickets and taglines in commercial promotions with respect to the NCAA championships.

The host shall not solicit or permit involvement by any corporations or entities whose products may be in competition with any of the NCAA corporate champions or corporate partners. All proposed commercial involvement must receive prior approval of the NCAA.

NCAA Corporate Champions and Corporate Partners are dedicated to emphasizing the role of athletics in higher education, support all 90 NCAA Championships and are granted a wide variety of benefits, including certain category exclusivity around use of NCAA logos, trademarks, designations and championship tickets.

For more information and a current list of corporate champions and partners, please click on the following link:

[NCAA Corporate Champions & Partners](#)

LOCAL CONTRIBUTOR PROGRAM

Currently, local non-CCP corporate entities are not permitted to utilize the NCAA's registered marks, logos, tickets, name or references to the championship in a promotional/commercial manner. If a host institution/conference has an interest in using value-in-kind contributors, the contributor plan must be approved in advance by the NCAA Corporate Relationships staff. The LOC is permitted to involve a local contributor in the championship only as a sponsor of LOC activities or as a ticket package purchaser (pending NCAA approval of said local entities and approval of the arrangement).

Local contributors may only be referred to as local contributors of the LOC. Local contributors may not use the word/phrase, "official," "official sponsor of" or "corporate champion/partner" in any manner. Local contributors will not receive any in-venue or on-site recognition/branding/exposure, with the exception of small signage in private hospitality locations; in the souvenir (print or digital) game program, and/or additional digital advertisement space. In being recognized, these local contributors must be referenced as supporters of the local organizing committee, and not of the NCAA. Any recognition, branding and/or exposure creative must be submitted to the NCAA Corporate Relationships staff for review and approval.

Local contributors may be provided an opportunity to purchase an advertisement in the souvenir game program, provided the corporation is not a competitor of any NCAA Corporate Champion. All advertisements must be submitted to the NCAA Corporate Relationships staff for advance approval. As noted above, local contributors who purchase an NCAA-approved ticket package may not receive recognition of any kind without the advanced approval of the NCAA staff.

NCAA TRADEMARKS

NOTE: These general guidelines do not include merchandise designs. All product designs must be submitted through the NCAA's licensing program administered by The Collegiate Licensing Company. Inquiries should be directed to the NCAA licensing staff. [Click here for more information about the NCAA licensing program.](#)

1. ALL uses of NCAA trademarks or logos must be submitted to the NCAA for approval.
2. [Click here for the most current list of NCAA licensed or owned trademarks.](#)
3. Downloads of NCAA logos may be obtained through the [NCAA Digital Library](#).
4. The NCAA's position on inclusion of ® and ™ marks is first and most prominent use.

The location of the trademark and how it is used is the primary factor in determining if a trademark symbol should be included in text. If the protected logo location is prominent and the primary focus on the page or product design, an ® or ™ in the text is not necessary. However, if the logo location is placed lower on the page or is secondary to the message being delivered, an ® or ™ in the text or header (first use only) should be inserted.

In the case of NCAA Women's Final Four, an ® is required after NCAA and after Women's Final Four. The NCAA owns "NCAA" and "Women's Final Four", but "NCAA Women's Final Four" is not a registered mark in itself: NCAA® Women's Final Four®.

To further expand, if the NCAA primary logo, which displays the registered mark, is used in a prominent position; NCAA Women's Final Four would require an R-ball only after the Four because the NCAA has already been identified as a registered mark. NCAA Women's Final Four®.

5. In radio and television advertising, NCAA should only be pronounced as N-C-A-A or N-C-double-A. It should not be referenced as "N-C-two-A" or in any other fashion.
6. Official names cannot be changed or abbreviated unless specifically trademarked (Final 4, F4).
7. There may be no registration of, or use of, NCAA marks within internet domain names unless advance approval from the NCAA is secured and ownership of the URL is maintained by the NCAA. Such use of NCAA marks in Internet directories is prohibited; however, members may use an NCAA mark within a member URL, provided such NCAA mark does not appear in the domain name portion of the URL. By way of example, members may use the following URL: memberx.edu/ncaa.

Identification of commercially named venues on NCAA materials

- For the purposes of providing information about and promoting the location of an NCAA championship, the venue/competition site of any round of NCAA championships can be printed, in text-only, on any and all pertinent materials bearing NCAA marks (subject to NCAA approval of the graphics).
- The logo of a commercially named venue cannot be used on any materials bearing NCAA logos or trademarks.
- The venue's name and information (without use of logos) will also be included on the dedicated website that the NCAA will provide to sell tickets.

NCAA logo use by commercially named venues

For the purposes of providing information about and promoting the sale of NCAA tickets, the venue/competition site of any round of NCAA championships is permitted to display (subject to NCAA approval of the graphics) the championship site-specific logo as recognition of the event being held in its facility. The NCAA logo must be in the form of a link to a dedicated web page that will be established and/or assigned by the NCAA championship administrator to sell the NCAA tickets.

The following conditions apply to this NCAA logo use:

- The NCAA championship site-specific logo can be used by the venue to communicate the NCAA event as one of the upcoming events at the facility. The NCAA logo must be used only once and only as a part of a group of other logos of events being held at the venue.
- The one-time logo use is limited to the site's "home web page" or "event web page."
- The NCAA logo must be placed in a location on the venue's web page so that there is clear and defined separation between the NCAA logo and any other commercial logos (including that of the commercially named venue). [This is because NCAA Corporate Champions/Corporate Partners and Turner/CBS have graphic exclusivity in the use of NCAA logos and marks.] Logos of the venue's or the website's advertisers/sponsors may be used on the home/event web page even with the NCAA's championship site-specific logo on the same page if those commercial entities are clearly separated from the NCAA logo (e.g., are on a different colored background and are located at the bottom of the website page).
- The venue is not permitted to claim to be "the home," a host or co-host of any session of the NCAA championship.
- The logo provided by the NCAA championship staff cannot be modified in any way.
- ALL uses of NCAA logos must be submitted to the NCAA staff for approval.

NCAA trademarked protection language

NCAA trademarks benefit from consistent "source identification" to the public through basic legal language attributing ownership.

The legal statement should be used on "printed" materials of all types for all NCAA trademarks, except where there is agreement by key staff stakeholders that aesthetic or space limitations prevent legal language. The legal statement is NOT required when the NCAA blue disk or the word NCAA is used alone and part of NCAA-produced materials without any of the conditions below.

- Printed items that display logos of other business entities/organizations (i.e., corporate champions/corporate partners, network partners, official suppliers, official licensees, local organizing committees and NCAA members).
- Printed items that are produced to be "used" by other business entities/organizations including NCAA members and host institutions.
- Printed items produced for advertisement/promotional purposes (i.e., magazine and newspaper ads, NCAA souvenir publication ads, posters, newsletters).

The NCAA requires protection language as outlined below. This does not have to be prominently displayed language and is expected to be included as some form of "mouse print."

The examples below are written only to represent the most typical examples. If you are unsure of exact wording for a specific example, please contact David Lovell at dlovell@ncaa.org or 317-917-6222.

For blue disc and/or secondary (word) mark, please use:

- NCAA is a trademark of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

For blue disc/secondary marks plus another NCAA trademark, please use (for example):

- NCAA and March Madness are trademarks of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.
- NCAA, NCAA Sweet Sixteen and Road to the Final Four are trademarks of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

For Blue Disc/Secondary marks plus another NCAA trademark used with other authorized business entities, please use (for example):

- The NCAA, March Madness, Men's Final Four and Women's Final Four are trademarks owned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association. All other licenses or trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

NCAA Licensed Trademarks:

College World Series and Women's College World Series: The NCAA is the exclusive licensee of these marks, registered by Major League Baseball, in connection with the NCAA Division I Men's Baseball Championship and the Division I Women's Softball Championship.

All other licenses or trademarks are property of their respective holders.

Helpful Links:

[The NCAA's Advertising and Promotional Standards](#)

[NCAA Trademarks](#)

[NCAA Trademark Protection Program](#)

[NCAA Digital Library](#)

[NCAA Corporate Champions and Corporate Partners](#)

OFFICIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS/LICENSEE SUPPLIERS

The NCAA licensing program is designed to ensure the quality and consistency of all of the NCAA's Championship Event merchandise, protect the intellectual property of the NCAA and our member schools, and generate revenue to enhance programs that support NCAA student-athletes.

Any premiums and/or other merchandise that bear NCAA Marks, brackets, taglines or other NCAA references must be produced by an official NCAA Licensee or NCAA Official Equipment Supplier. There may be royalties or other related costs associated with such items. If the NCAA is unable to identify a current NCAA Licensee or NCAA Official Equipment Supplier to provide a specific piece of merchandise, the NCAA will work to sublicense (on a short-term basis) a company that can provide the specific item.

For a list of NCAA licensees and official equipment suppliers, [NCAA Licensing - ncaa.org](#).

ADVERTISING/SIGNS/"LOOK AND DÉCOR"

- Advertising/Banners/Signs/Displays.** The host shall not permit advertising, marketing identification, banners, signs or displays of any kind to be hung, posted or displayed anywhere within the general public seating/viewing area of the competition, practice and/or ancillary event venue(s) (i.e., any place that can be seen from the playing surface or seats), including the scoreboard and the playing surface prior to or during the conduct of the championships, other than NCAA, media partner or NCAA corporate champion/partner branding/recognition (e.g., signage, banners, scoreboards, LED scorer's table, video board, ribbon board, PA announcements) approved by the NCAA. Any permanently affixed (or previously leased) advertising banners, signs, cup holders, select equipment bearing corporate marks (e.g., TVs, computer monitors, stats monitors or displays), product/exhibit displays (e.g., car displays, branding exhibits/kiosks) shall be covered with décor elements or other NCAA directed elements by the competition, practice and/or ancillary event venue(s) and at the expense of the venue(s) as specified by the NCAA, including costs of production and installation and strike. Similarly, for any surrounding areas/facilities that are to be used by the NCAA for official events, no advertising, marketing, identification, banners, signs, decals, sampling,

distribution or displays of any kind shall be hung, posted or displayed anywhere within those areas unless authorized by the NCAA. All professional signage/marks/pennants/banners/retired numbers/etc. may continue to be displayed. NCAA staff representatives have the discretion, during their site visit or when on-site in advance of the tournament, to have the building staff remove a sign/banner. Collegiate championship banners or those with retired numbers of collegiate performers can remain. All usage of marks must follow NCAA brand guidelines and must be approved by NCAA staff in advance.

- b. **Alcohol/Tobacco/Gambling.** All alcohol, tobacco and gambling advertisements/corporate identification within broadcast view or viewable by game attendees in the competition venue bowl must be covered at the expense of the host or venue. Any alcohol, tobacco or gambling advertising that is deemed by the NCAA as not viewable from within the bowl does not need to be covered, whether in the concourse or in ancillary venues. All other advertisements/corporate identification in the noted areas must, at a minimum, not be backlit unless otherwise authorized by the NCAA. This would apply to preliminary rounds and the championship rounds for all the NCAA's 90 championships.
- c. **External Signs.** All exterior venue corporate signage, other than professional franchise identification, must be covered as specified by the NCAA and must be covered with décor elements as specified by the NCAA at the expense of the competition, practice and/or ancillary event venue(s).
- d. **Commercially Named Venues.** Commercially named competition, practice and/or ancillary event venue(s) may display no more than two preexisting interior signs consisting only of the competition, practice and/or ancillary event venue(s)' name at the top of the venue, with placement designated by the NCAA. The competition, practice and ancillary event venue(s) signage design and placement must be approved by the NCAA. If the commercially named competition, practice and/or ancillary event venue(s) is with an existing NCAA Corporate Champion or Corporate Partner, the NCAA, in its sole discretion, may allow additional branding of the commercially named venue(s).
- e. **Covering existing signage/product branding.** Regarding any signage that is to be covered in accordance with these bid specifications, the practice, competition and/or ancillary event venue(s) shall not limit or prohibit the ability of the NCAA to use signage or other elements of its own third-party designees in covering such existing signage/product branding.
- f. **NCAA Corporate Champion and Partner Branding/Recognition.** The NCAA shall have the right to display branding/recognition (e.g., signage, banners, scorer's table, video board, ribbon board, PA announcements, inflatables, projections, kiosks, decals, window clings, lighting, street teams, logos) for the Association, its corporate champions and partners and media partners inside and outside of the competition, practice and/or ancillary event venue(s). These locations, include but are not limited to the concourse, within the competition bowl and venue exterior without limitation.
- g. **Official Stickers and Stencils.** The NCAA shall provide the competition venue with the appropriate stickers/field stencils for the approved playing surface markings for the championship.
- h. **Fan Promotional Materials.** If the facility approves, patrons are permitted to bring in small signs and non-noise-making items. Items may include any (non-CCP) commercial identification.
- i. **Digital Inventory.** At no charge, the NCAA will have full access to use and control all LED and other digital signage inventory, both internal and external to the competition venue. This includes TV monitors, video screens, video walls, LED fascia, and all internal and external signage, digital or otherwise. This includes all digital inventory to be made available at the time of the championship, inclusive of any inventory that may be added by the venue after this bid document is signed.

Section 9 • Drug Testing

The NCAA is dedicated to fair and equitable competition throughout each round of NCAA championships and strongly supports the drug-testing program established by its membership, to safeguard the health and safety of the participating student-athletes.

Comprehensive drug testing details for hosts can be found [here](#).

Section 10 • Equipment

EQUIPMENT INFORMATION

The NCAA will provide certain championships relevant equipment (sideline hydration product, sideline hydration equipment, etc.) on a sport-by-sport basis that must be used in all championship activity. The purpose of the product and equipment is to hydrate student-athletes for competition. Each championship will receive information from the NCAA pertaining to any product and equipment that will be provided. Following the championships, each host site will be required to provide the NCAA with a completed inventory sheet (template provided by the NCAA) and pictures for proof of performance.

CUPS, COOLERS AND WATER BOTTLES

Drinking cups, water coolers, ice chests, cooler carts and water bottles should be provided for each scheduled practice or competition of any round of an NCAA championship. Participating teams shall place any premix fluid replacement in the NCAA-issued coolers and water bottles when applicable. Only cups, cans, coolers or water bottles provided by the NCAA may be used during championships. If applicable, the host may retain the coolers, cooler carts and ice chests after the competition. Reoccurring host sites are strongly encouraged to use the same equipment the following year unless otherwise notified by the NCAA. Participating teams may retain the water bottles and bottle carriers after the competition.

EQUIPMENT HYDRATION PROGRAM

Coca-Cola will provide a bottled water product (e.g., Dasani), POWERADE powder, and when applicable, POWERADE in bottles. Participating teams and student-athletes in NCAA championships continue to be free to use/consume permissible hydration beverage(s) of their own choice in the NCAA-provided equipment. Equipment carrying any branding other than POWERADE, however, will not be permitted on the sidelines during NCAA championships.

If a championship also receives POWERADE-branded squeeze bottles, they should be provided to student-athletes. Non-POWERADE-branded squeeze bottles brought by teams/student-athletes will not be allowed.

If the host must provide and/or purchase product for any NCAA championship use (e.g., student-athlete banquet, committee tent/suite, hospitality areas, media areas), the host must purchase and provide only Coca-Cola products (e.g., Dasani, POWERADE, Coca-Cola, Sprite).

Competitors of NCAA Corporate Champion Coca-Cola may not provide product (beverages, water, isotonic) for any NCAA championship, even if the competition offers product for free or at a reduced cost. The championship budget will cover the purchase of Coca-Cola beverage products.

Use of NCAA-Provided Coolers from Previous Years

The host may use previously supplied equipment from the NCAA, specifically POWERADE equipment with approval from the NCAA. However, unless approved by the NCAA (which is often possible), they must be used in areas not within television or photographer view [they may not be used on the sidelines or within the competition area(s)].

If you have any questions regarding any of this information, please contact Corey Bray (317-917-6076; cbray@ncaa.org).

Preliminary-Round Sites NOT Receiving POWERADE Branded Equipment and Product

The host institution may use items other than POWERADE-branded equipment. These items, however, must not display any commercial marks (e.g., logos and graphics of commercial products such as Gatorade), or such marks must be covered completely (this requirement applies on the sidelines and in competition areas, media areas or any other back-of-house areas).

If the host must provide and/or purchase product for any NCAA championship use (e.g., student-athlete banquet, committee tent/suite, hospitality areas, media areas), the host must purchase and provide only Coca-Cola products (e.g., Dasani, POWERADE, Coca-Cola, Sprite). Participating teams and student-athletes in NCAA championships continue to be free to use/consume permissible hydration beverage(s) of their own choice; however, equipment carrying any branding other than POWERADE, as referenced above, must be absent of any commercial marks.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Scoreboard. If possible, scoreboards shall display the names of the participating institutions rather than “Home” and “Visitors.” Otherwise, a generic “Home” should be used on the scoreboard for all games rather than the host institution’s mascot.

Softballs. The Rawlings NC12L is the official softball for the championship. Seven dozen softballs (regionals) and three dozen softballs (super regionals) will be shipped directly from the manufacturer to the attention of the tournament director. If the softballs do not arrive by noon local time the Tuesday before competition, please contact Corey Bray at cbray@ncaa.org or 317-917-6076.

Video Screens. If electronic video replay screens are available, they may be used at the facility's expense. Replays of any umpires' calls are not permissible. Video screens may not display advertising.

Section 11 • Facility

BARREL COMPRESSION TESTING

Barrel Compression Testing (BCT) will be conducted on competition days (not practice days) during all NCAA postseason rounds. Each site MUST provide a G4 SSL or WSU bat testing fixture, table, three (3) chairs, and the NCAA-provided notebook containing the appropriate distinctive stickers and testing log sheets. The bat testing areas should be close to the practice area, yet private, and sheltered from weather (e.g., sun, wind, rain). If an indoor facility is close to the practice area, that is preferred. If not, a tent should be provided if an outdoor covered area is not available. Refer to Appendix A for additional details for bat testing requirements.

Following BCT, the host will be responsible for securing any bats that fail BCT and sending them, along with the NCAA-provided notebook with the completed log sheets, to the person designated by the NCAA Softball Rules Committee for further evaluation and testing.

CONCESSIONS

Food and beverage prices shall be no higher than similar events or primary tenants in the facility. The host will retain all revenue from food and beverage concessions.

Vending. No food, beverage or merchandise, of any nature, may be vended or dispensed in the seating areas. Selling is restricted to the concession stand and established selling locations.

DECORATING AND ADVERTISING

NCAA Signage. The NCAA will provide a basic signage package to each regional and super regional host to enhance the appearance of the facility and to identify the facility as an NCAA championship site. The package will include NCAA blue disk banners, ncaa.com banners, softball sport icon logo banners and NCAA Division III banners.

Signs or banners promoting the participating teams are permissible under the following circumstances:

- (1) They are hung only inside the dugout or outside the field of play (not allowed on the outfield fence);
- (2) Signs held by fans do not block the view of other spectators;
- (3) The games committee approves them regarding appearance and content; and
- (4) They do not include commercial identification.

Covering Signage. The facility shall not permit any advertising banners, signs or displays of any kind to be hung, posted or displayed anywhere within the seating area (i.e., any place that can be seen from the playing field or seats), including the scoreboard and fence, during the championship session or practices, as specified by the NCAA. No local/school radio banners are allowed. A listing of the commercial signage in your venue should be listed on the facility evaluation form submitted with your bid materials.

Directional Signs. Directional signs should be posted in all areas used by the participants, media and public.

Institutional Signage. Institutional signage does not need to be covered. Permanent (not seasonal) championship banners may be displayed. Temporary/seasonal banners must be taken down.

Videoboards and Electronic Messages. No electronic board advertising of any kind or messages promoting non-NCAA events in the facility may be displayed during practice or competition. The following kinds of messages are permissible: announcements of results from other NCAA competition; reminders that NCAA merchandise and concessions are on sale in the concourse; or any public-service announcements or promotional messages specifically provided by the NCAA. The NCAA will provide videoboard programming upon request (regionals, super regionals and finals).

FACILITY USE

The competition facility shall be reserved for the exclusive use of the NCAA beginning at 8 a.m. two days (one day for regionals and super regionals) before the competition through the conclusion of the final game. Hosts should ensure staffing and facilities are prepared for one day beyond the final scheduled game if weather delays cause a postponement resulting in an additional day of competition. All space shall be available, and the facility set up no later than one a half hours before the beginning of the first practice.

Playing facilities used in the Division III Softball Championship must meet the following requirements:

1. The complex must be enclosed so that admission can be charged.
2. Game field.
 - a. A skinned infield and natural grass outfield and artificial surfaces will be considered.
 - b. There must be 25 feet (maximum 30 feet) from home plate to the backstop. When the backstop is wood, cement or brick, padding is required from dugout to dugout, beginning no higher than 1 foot off the ground and extending to the top of the wood, cement or brick or 6 feet from the ground, whichever is shorter.
 - c. It is highly recommended that the playing field be enclosed completely by sideline fences and a permanent home-run fence in a smooth arc of not more than 235 feet from home plate.
 - d. Fields with a 6-foot or taller fence are highly recommended to be a minimum of 190 feet in left and right fields and 220 feet in center field. Fields with a 4-foot fence are highly recommended to be a minimum of 210 feet in left and right fields and 230 feet in center field. For all new construction, it is required that the fence be 6 feet or higher and be a minimum of 200 feet in left and right fields and 220 feet in center field.
 - e. An institutional field with a 4-foot fence must be a minimum of 210 feet in left and right fields and 230 in center field, and it is highly recommended that a municipal field with a 4-foot fence used by the institution be at those same distances.
 - f. If a temporary home-run fence is used, it must be secured so as not to collapse on and displace the foul pole. For an unfenced field, an out-of-bounds line shall be used to define dead-ball areas.
 - g. Fence guards are recommended to ensure student-athlete safety.
 - h. The pitching distance must be 43 feet from the front of pitcher's plate to the back of home plate.
 - i. Foul poles are required. The pole should be single-colored and extend a minimum of 10 feet, or the recommended height of at least 20 feet from the ground and shall be immediately adjacent to or attached to the outside of the home run fence. It is recommended that the color of the foul pole contrast with the ball and background so it will stand out, preferably white or optic orange. Beginning in 2019, foul poles on institutional fields shall be a minimum of 10 feet high and be either white or optic orange.
 - j. Baselines must be 60 feet.
 - k. Foul lines should be four inches wide on dirt infield and two to four inches wide in the outfield.
 - l. Bullpens must be within close proximity to the game field and dugout areas for both teams.
 - m. The distance from the front center of the pitcher's plate to the outfield grass shall be a 60-foot arc.
 - n. Priority will be given to hosts with lighted fields (or access to lighted fields), all other criteria being equal.
 - o. Dugouts must accommodate 32 persons. It is recommended that dugouts be covered. Provide cups, water, ice and a trash can in each dugout.
 - p. The scoreboard must be visible and operate properly. All corporate identification must be covered or removed.
 - q. Priority will be given to hosts with a full infield tarp and adequate tarp personnel for tarping the field on short notice. This should be accomplished without involvement of participating teams.

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3. Practice fields and other designated areas.
 - a. Area(s) to accommodate two full-team warmups.
 - b. Two separate pitching warm-up areas that each include two pitching plates and two home plates.
4. All on-site corporate signage, with the exception of NCAA corporate champions or partners, must be covered or removed.
5. Adequate restrooms must be available on site (portable or permanent and accessible for the disabled). Members of the institution's bench allotment must have a restroom available to them that is not used for the public during game days.
6. Athletic training area must be available on site (tent may be used).
7. It is suggested that hosts secure an indoor practice facility in case of inclement weather.
8. Designate an umpire locker room or at minimum a dressing area with restrooms and access to running water.
9. Determine availability of a back-up competition field.
10. Confirm field maintenance.
11. If a bat handler is provided, only the host institution may provide the bat handler. The individual must be a minimum of 10 years of age and may not be a team member from any participating institution.
12. Towels must be available for umpires.
13. If the host provides a pitching machine, the machine must be available for all teams for practices.
14. If applicable, check operation of lights and PA system.
15. A hospitality area/cool down tent should be available for the teams. Also, designate a hospitality area for the umpires. Hydration products should be provided in both areas.
16. Designate seating for the NCAA committee members/site representatives, NCAA championship manager and secretary-rules editor adjacent to the field. Post signage noting NCAA STAFF AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS ONLY.
17. Designate seating for the media, an interview area and cooldown areas for both visiting and home teams, and post appropriate signage.
18. Designate a drug-testing area to be used if the championship is selected for drug testing.
19. Implement security measures for restricted access areas (locker rooms, press conference area, hospitality, etc.)
20. Implement crowd control procedures. Identifiable security personnel (at least one individual) should be at the facility during competition. Security should be provided for umpires to and from their locker room.
21. Designate an area for the sale of championship merchandise.
22. Designate a private area in which student-athletes can change uniforms.
23. Arrange for clean up after each day's competition.
24. Provide telephone number for teams to call for schedule/field condition updates in the event of inclement weather.
25. Only POWERADE or generic cups and coolers are permitted.

LAUNDRY SERVICES

Hosts must provide laundry services to advancing teams that are required to wear a uniform in which they have competed during the tournament. The tournament director should coordinate when and where teams should drop off and pick up laundry.

ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING WITH NCAA SITE REPRESENTATIVE

The NCAA site representative at each site will meet the day before competition begins with the tournament director and facility manager. The site representative may request that additional personnel participate in the meeting.

NCAA SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Athletic Training Room. Provide an athletic training room stocked with towels and other necessary equipment, and staff it with the appropriate personnel before, during and following the games and practice sessions.

Entrances. Entrances must be staffed by an adequate number of event personnel. Signage should be posted to clearly identify all entrances (e.g., team personnel, ticket holders, media).

Team Personnel Entrance. An entrance must be identified for participating student-athletes and coaches.

Locker Rooms. Locker rooms are not required; however, if the host team has a locker room, a comparable area must also be provided for the visiting team. Locker rooms with shower facilities should be provided for the umpires. Two locker rooms should be provided for the umpires, if necessary. A sign reading, "NCAA Use Only" shall be posted on the umpires' locker room(s). If locker rooms are not available, a private, secure area must be provided for weather emergencies. Additionally, a private restroom should be provided to teams that are different than the public restrooms.

Signs. Signs should be posted to identify the teams' and umpires' locker rooms.

Supplies. Each locker room must be clean and adequately supplied with towels, toilet paper, water and ice for all practices and games. The NCAA committee/site representative will inspect the locker rooms before the first practice.

Media Areas. The areas used for the media workroom and the postgame interviews should be in close proximity to one another and to the locker rooms/dugouts to facilitate the media's work and access for coaches and student-athletes. Ensure there is an adequate distance between the interview area and the game field so that interviews can be conducted without interruption. The media workroom and interview room must be separate rooms (e.g., not one room divided by a curtain). Neither should be adjacent to the hospitality area.

Access/Security. Event personnel should be stationed outside the media workroom and interview area to check credentials. These individuals should be instructed that only credentialed individuals may enter the areas. Umpires specifically are prohibited from entering these areas.

Backdrop (finals only). The NCAA will provide a media backdrop with the NCAA Division III branding to be hung behind the table in the interview area.

Holding Area. An area adjacent to the interview area shall be designated as a holding area for student-athletes and coaches waiting to be interviewed. The area should be situated so that student-athletes and coaches do not have to walk through the actual interview area to reach the holding area. Chairs and DASANI water should be provided.

Postgame Interview Area. The postgame interview area should be "dressed" appropriately to reflect the prestige of the event by: (a) hanging the NCAA media backdrop behind the table or placing NCAA championship signage and logos on the walls; (b) using draping on tables and other areas as necessary; (c) setting up a platform for the interviewees and moderator; (d) printing name plates with the institutional logo and names of the coaches and student-athletes; and (e) providing a sound system. If possible, a separate microphone should be provided for the head coach and each student-athlete. The same press conference moderator should interview both teams after each game.

Refreshment Area. If necessary, a refreshment area should be set up adjacent to or in the media workroom to accommodate the working press throughout open practices (if applicable) and competition. Only Coke and DASANI products should be provided in the refreshment area, and only NCAA, POWERADE and/or generic drinking cups (devoid of commercial identification) should be used.

Workroom. The media workroom should be equipped with Internet access (preferably wireless), an adequate number of electrical outlets and other necessary supplies. NCAA logos should be displayed appropriately.

NCAA Committee/Games Committee Meeting Room. The meeting room should be large enough to accommodate 12 people comfortably. This room should be close to the game field and not visible to the public.

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Team Seating Area. The host should designate areas in or near the stands for participating teams when they are not competing. There should be seating for a minimum of 25 individuals per team. Teams should be seated in separate areas.

Team Warmup. Provide separate spaces for two teams to use for stretching and warmup as they are waiting for their game to begin. Hydration products should be accessible in this area.

Team Cool Down Area. A team cool down area must be provided either inside or outside for teams after the games. The outside cool down areas should be shaded, with preferences of a tent to provide shade. Refreshments (i.e., Powerade, water) should be iced down and placed in or near the cool down area for the teams.

PARKING

There should be an adequate number of parking spaces adjacent to the venue for team personnel, umpires, NCAA committee/staff and media. In addition, designate an area for team buses to drop off and pick up team personnel with credentials. Parking passes should be provided.

VIDEOTAPING

Designate a videotaping area and indicate its location on the facility map included in the championship packet. Participating teams may use one camera from the designated videotaping area. Make it clear to the coaches that they may videotape only their own games; videotaping for scouting purposes is not allowed. Determine whether a video credential is required and whether the video area requires additional security (roped off/monitored). Parents and fans shall not be permitted to videotape from the designated videotaping area. At regionals and super regionals, parents and fans may videotape their own games from the stands only, using only a handheld video camera (i.e., no tripod or monopod). At the finals, all games will be webcasted and archived on ncaa.com; therefore, videotaping by individuals other than team videographers is not permitted. Additionally, there should be no videotaping in the dugout once the game begins.

Section 12 • Financial Administration

AUDIT

Sites will be randomly selected for financial and box office audits following the championship.

The NCAA will make every effort to notify sites selected for audits within 30 days after the approval of financial reports but reserves the right to audit a site up to one year after the championship. Receipts, facility settlements, expense reimbursements and honorariums are subject to change until the audits are reviewed and accepted by the NCAA. If selected for audit, the documentation requested could include box office audit reports or sales summaries; ticket purchase invoices or statements; unsold tickets; invoices, contracts or timesheets supporting all expenses; general ledger; bank statements; check copies and reconciliations; competition venue rental agreement; and any other documentation to support all information reported on the host financial report. In addition, overages between budgeted and actual numbers will be reviewed.

APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET

As part of the site-selection process, each prospective host must submit a proposed budget for approval by the NCAA. All receipts and expenses associated with the championship competition shall be included in the proposed budget. This includes lodging expenses for officials and site representatives, if applicable. The proposed budget must be submitted and approved by the NCAA before the first competition date of the championship. Additionally, best efforts should be made by the host to forecast expected ticket sales from the given championship.

The host institution is responsible for adhering to championship expenses as approved by the NCAA, including (but not limited to) competition site rental, maintenance, insurance, printing of tickets, ushers, maintenance personnel, ticket sellers, ticket takers, minor officials, police and security, promotion, publicity, advertising, meetings, banquets, medical staff. Other expenses not included in the original proposed budget must be approved in advance by the NCAA.

It is also incumbent upon the host to understand and remit all necessary taxes related to the sale of tickets to the given championship for sales made by both the NCAA and the host at their given state and locality. All consideration must be given by the host for certain relief of taxes with respect to the NCAA's not-for-profit status under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Additionally, certain championships may be required to provide an outside letter of attestation speaking to their tax status provided by an outside CPA/accounting firm.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Host institutions must complete the online financial report, which includes accurately reporting all revenues and expenses, within 60 days after the final date of competition at the site (if applicable). An automated email will be generated notifying the host of the final, approved settlement payable/receivable amount. Remittance of any amount due to the NCAA should be made to the NCAA upon approval of the financial report by the NCAA staff and receipt of the automated email noted above. If requested, the host may be required to provide all supporting documentation to validate the revenues and expenses of their site. As a best practice, hosts are encouraged to upload all appropriate receipts, ticket audits and other supporting documentation to their host report on the "Summary" tab as documentation supporting each line of their revenue and expense figures.

Financial reports showing net receipts are not considered complete until payment is received at the national office. Institutions that fail to meet the 60-day reporting period will be assessed the following penalties: 60-90 days past due (25% reduction in honorarium), 91-120 days (50% reduction in honorarium) and 121 days or more (100% reduction in honorarium). If the financial report results in the NCAA paying the host, the NCAA will make its best efforts to reimburse the host within five business days of the report being approved by the NCAA accounting department.

DRUG TESTING EXPENSES

The budget for drug testing expenses should only be completed and returned to Drug Free Sport if the host has been notified that drug testing will occur. The drug-testing budget and expenses are separate from the financial report form. The drug-testing budget form is an appendix in the [drug testing manual](https://ncaa.org/Student-Athlete%20Programs/Health%20and%20Safety) (ncaa.org/Student-Athlete Programs/Health and Safety).

PARTICIPANTS

The NCAA will reimburse the competing institutions for transportation and per diem expenses in accordance with the NCAA travel policies. Once the championship is completed, participating institutions should submit reimbursement through the [Travel Expense System \(TES\)](#) within 45 days of the competition. Please note that if you host a championship, the submission of per diem and/or transportation reimbursement is in addition to the host budgeting and approval process defined above.

SITE REPRESENTATIVES

The NCAA site representative's hotel room and tax shall be paid (via direct bill) by the host institution and submitted on the financial report. All other expenses (i.e., per diem, travel) will be paid directly by the NCAA.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation. The NCAA shall pay for the rental of cars for a predetermined number of game officials and the NCAA committee representative(s). The championships staff will approve the individual to get a rental car and the individual will need to call Short's Travel to book.

Local Transportation for Teams. For team sports, eligible for reimbursable ground transportation, teams must arrange ground transportation through Short's Travel. Individual sports, eligible for reimbursable ground transportation receive mileage reimbursement in accordance with the travel policy.

Air Transportation for Teams. If a school is eligible for air transportation, all air travel must be booked through Short's Travel.

NCAA Championship Travel Policies

Section 13 • Game Management

ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

The NCAA committee member/site representative will conduct a mandatory administrative meeting before the start of competition to review championship matters. Key host institution personnel and the crew chief/umpire-in-chief shall also attend the administrative meeting. It is mandatory that each institution's head coach attend the meeting, and it is strongly encouraged that the athletics director, senior woman administrator or designated institutional administrator (other than a member of the softball coaching staff), as well as the athletic trainer and sports information director, of each participating institution also attend the meeting.

At regionals and super regionals, the administrative meeting should be held the evening before competition, a hybrid option may be used if needed.

The administrative meeting will occur Wednesday evening prior to the championship event beginning.

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The use of electronic audio or video devices that transmit information from any location in the facility to the field (e.g., video to video; audio to audio; video skill pictures on the field) is not permitted. Statistical information may be entered into electronic equipment (e.g., smart phones, tablets, laptops) but may not be accessed or retrieved during the game.

EVENT PERSONNEL

The tournament director is responsible for recruiting personnel to assist in the hosting efforts. The personnel required will vary, depending on the facility.

Entertainment. Depending on the type of entertainment, the numbers of support personnel will vary. In the past, host institutions have provided:

1. Hospitality room/area monitor.
2. Team host or hostess for each visiting team.

Facility Management. Depending on the facility, the number of people needed in each category will vary. In addition to the number designated by the tournament director, it is beneficial to have four or five persons who can perform a variety of tasks. The following are the types of personnel needed:

1. Adequate security, with at least one identifiable security person.
2. Ticket sellers.
3. Ticket takers.
4. Concession workers.
5. NCAA merchandise sellers.
6. Clean-up crews.
7. Adequate number of personnel (i.e., approximately five individuals, not including the NCAA site representatives or team personnel) on site if it is necessary to tarp the field.
8. An individual to perform bat testing in conjunction with the site representative.

Game Personnel. In addition to umpires, who are recommended by the NCAA Softball Umpire Program and approved by the Division III Softball Committee, the following personnel are needed for each game:

1. Official scorer.
2. One scoreboard operator.
3. One public-address announcer.

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4. At least one qualified statistician.
5. Adequate number of grounds crew personnel to facilitate adherence to the game schedule.
6. Drug-testing couriers, if applicable.
7. At least two retrievers of out-of-play foul balls and home run balls.
8. One individual to monitor the weather-safety website. This individual should not have other duties (e.g., SID) that would interfere with this responsibility. (The website must be activated and available before competition. Note that it may take one to two days to receive the institutional password after it is requested, so please plan accordingly.)

Key Institutional Personnel. The tournament director, sports information director, facility manager and athletic trainer play key roles in the championship's success.

Public-Address Announcer. The public address announcer is one of the key factors in a successful championship. The host should attempt to confirm the services of a professional announcer with experience in announcing softball games. If possible, the announcer should be assisted before the competition by the host sports information director, who shall provide statistics and game notes for the participating teams. The announcer also should be provided approved scripts and public address announcements from the NCAA (e.g., NCAA corporate champions/partners, sportsmanship, promotional announcements about the next day's matchups, NCAA merchandise sales).

All announcements should pertain only to the Division III Softball Championship, except for reporting scores from other NCAA championship competition. If a special announcement is needed, it should be made only at the direction of the NCAA site representative/committee member or championship manager. At no time should commercial sponsors or contributors other than official NCAA corporate champions/partners be recognized.

The announcer should be encouraged to attend the pretournament administrative meeting to: (1) learn the correct pronunciation of all involved individuals (student-athletes, coaches, institutional personnel, umpires and NCAA committee members); (2) confirm team information; and (3) become familiar with the pregame protocol.

The announcer and all scorer's table personnel are expected to remain neutral, refrain from showing bias toward any participating team and refrain from wearing apparel with host institution or conference logos.

Tournament Director. The tournament director may serve solely in this capacity at the scorer's table; they may not also serve as scoreboard operator, timer, public-address announcer, etc. This is to ensure that the tournament director can oversee all aspects of the competition and be readily available to address any issue that may arise.

GAMES COMMITTEE

Regionals and Super Regionals. The site representative will serve as the chair of the games committee, which also will consist of the host institution's director of athletics (or designated representative), the softball facility manager/tournament director and the umpire crew chief or off umpire.

Finals. At the finals, the Division III Softball Committee shall serve as the games committee. The Division III Softball committee will consult the umpire crew chief and tournament director, as necessary, on games committee matters.

Games Committee Duties. The games committee at each site will actively supervise the conduct of each championship session.

HOME TEAM DETERMINATION

For all regionals and super regionals competition, the home team will bat last and occupy the host institution's regular season home dugout. The host institution must make all teams aware on the participating team call what the regular season home dugout is, so they are aware and take the infield warmup first (eight-minute warmup).

The home team shall have choice of uniform. The visiting team is expected to wear a contrasting color jersey. As a reminder, when teams play back-to-back games against different opponents, the team must be prepared to change dugouts and uniforms, if necessary. However, if the same two teams play in back-to-back games due to an if-necessary game, those teams shall remain in the same dugout and uniform as the first game in the doubleheader, and simply switch home team designation via the home team determination formula, if needed. The site representative will advise on this process as needed. Determination of uniform colors must be approved by the NCAA site representative. Noncompliance with this policy may result in a charge of a failure to follow policies and procedures.

The higher-seeded team for the first day of competition at regionals and super regionals will be the home team. In subsequent games, the home team shall be determined according to the home team determination form. The home team determination forms for regionals and super regionals will be shared with selection materials and will be used to track the number of times each team has been the home team and the visiting team. If a coin flip is needed to decide the home team via the home team determination worksheet, the higher seed team in the matchup shall make the call on the coin flip for heads or tails. The double flip procedure will no longer be utilized.

LENGTH AND SCHEDULE OF GAMES

Game Times. Game times should be scheduled a minimum of two and a half hours apart. Tournament directors should be prepared to review participating institutions' game times during the teleconference conducted with the teams before regional and super regional competition.

Regional and super regional start times are determined by the NCAA. Host institutions can request an alternate start time which will be approved or denied by the national softball committee. The host must submit this request when their bids are submitted.

If games run long and game start times fall behind the championship schedule, time must be permitted for field maintenance and warm-up periods for both teams before the start of the next game. In these situations, the shortened pregame warm-up format shall be used. Awards ceremonies (announcement of players) following elimination games should still be conducted even if games are running behind schedule.

All games shall be seven innings, except that a five inning, eight-run rule will be used in all rounds of the championship, including the championship series. If play is stopped before a seven-inning game is completed and the eight-run rule is not in effect, the game shall resume at the point of interruption. For all rounds of the championship except the national championship game, if a game is both halted and regulation, regulation will take precedence assuming reasonable efforts to complete the game have been made and have failed. The games committee shall determine reasonable efforts.

Every attempt should be made to complete regional and super regional competition by their respective end dates. Competition may be scheduled one additional day if: (1) weather or unforeseen circumstances prevent the completion of competition on the originally scheduled final day of competition; (2) to complete competition on the scheduled end date, it would be necessary to begin a game after 11 p.m. local time; or (3) completing competition would require a team to play three games in one day.

NOTE: A team may be required to play three games in the same day on the rain date to complete the preliminary round.

If competition must be extended to the additional day, it must be completed without starting a game after 11 p.m. If the regional or super regional final begins before 11 p.m. that day and an "if necessary" game becomes necessary to determine the champion, that game will immediately follow.

If play is suspended before the regional or super regional championship game and competition at that round ceases, see the rain-delay advancement formula outlined below.

Regionals. If inclement weather limits play, every effort has been made to complete competition by Sunday and 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 (i.e., the teams are tied), then:
 - 1) Head-to-head competition
 - 2) Highest remaining seed

Super Regionals. If inclement weather limits play, every effort has been made to complete competition by Saturday and competition cannot be completed by Sunday, the team that will advance to the finals will be based on the following:

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

MEDICAL PROCEDURES

Each scheduled practice and contest requires: (1) the on-site presence of a person qualified and delegated to render emergency care to a stricken participant; (2) planned access to a physician for prompt medical evaluation of the situation, when warranted; (3) planned access to a medical facility, including a plan for communication and transportation between the competition site and the medical facility for prompt medical services, if warranted; (4) access to a working telephone or other telecommunications device, whether fixed or mobile; and (5) a thorough understanding by all parties, including the leadership of the visiting teams, of the personnel and procedures associated with the emergency-care plan. The entire athletics staff (coaching, medical and paramedical personnel) is required to become proficient in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques. The host must provide standard procedures and equipment for handling injuries involving blood.

The head athletic trainer shall: (1) contact participating teams to determine any special athletic training needs; (2) explain the medical procedures at the administrative meeting, noting athletic training room hours and services, and telephone numbers for off-hours assistance (e.g., local emergency care clinic, nearest hospital); (3) arrange for towels, cups, water and ice for all practices and games; and (4) designate an athletic training area at the competition site.

PAIRINGS AND HOSTS

The Division III Championships Committee implemented a waiver to traditional bracketing principles for two-years. The new bracketing principles include:

- No conference opponents in the first round of a regional.
- NPI Rank 1-4 will be the No. 1s and NPI rank 5-8 will be the No. 2s.
- No. 1s and No. 2s will be bracketed based on super regional matchups, providing a possibility that the top eight teams could advance to the round of eight (final site for softball).
- Brackets will then be built outward based on protecting the final eight teams using geographic proximity.

Hosts will be selected based on meeting the minimum hosting requirements while maintaining geographic proximity. In general, the higher ranked team would be the host school. This is only true if an acceptable bid meeting minimum bid specification requirements was submitted by the school and the other parameters (geographic proximity, etc.) are in place. However, with the new protection pilot, the highest ranked NPI team may not always host. Seeding will be a consideration when selecting hosts but is not determinative. NPIs will not be calculated after each round of the championship. The NPI used for selection to the championship will be used throughout the championship for seeding. This is a two-year pilot to assess the financial impact and success of the program.

POSTPONEMENT AND ADJUSTMENTS TO SCHEDULE

If issues (e.g., weather, travel) dictate a change in the schedule, the NCAA site representative must receive approval from the NCAA **before** rescheduling and/or extending the days of competition. You **must** contact NCAA Championship Manager Corey Bray at 317-917-6076. **See selection material** for general policies regarding weather delays and see the Length and Schedule of Games section in this manual for guidelines to determine the winner of the respective round if competition is unable to be completed.

PRACTICES

Participating teams must be allowed to practice on the game field for at least one hour the day before competition, weather permitting. A separate practice field or area must be designated for additional practice time. At regionals, practice times will be assigned based on travel distance. The team that travels the greatest distance will have the first choice of practice times. Teams that arrive in the locale the evening before the practice day will be considered local

(i.e., deemed to have traveled zero miles) when assigning practice times and will select their practice times after teams that travel to the site on the practice day and before the host institution. The host institution will have the last choice of practice times, given that no travel is necessary. Transition time (approximately 10 minutes) for teams to move between the game field and the practice field/area should be included in the practice schedule. If a pitching machine is available for practices for the host team, it must be available for all teams. Practices on the practice day are **closed** and may not be used for scouting purposes. Teams are expected to exercise proper field care when using designated practice areas. The NCAA site representative will monitor all practices.

The sport committee reserves the right to decide on the use of the game field for practice based on weather condition updates provided by the games committee. It is recommended that the host should secure an indoor practice site that is available to all teams throughout the tournament in the event weather prohibits practice on the game field. Please inform all teams that no equipment will be made available for any practices in indoor facilities. The indoor practice facility should have space to pitch and hit, preferably a cage area and a pitchers' area.

PREGAME PROTOCOL

Pregame Format. The pregame format will be shared with teams, hosts and site reps with selection materials.

Teams may warm up in the outfield (on the grass and dirt in foul territory as the field is being prepared) while the field crew is preparing the infield. If the competition facility does not have adequate space to allow both teams to take ground balls on dirt in foul territory, the teams may share the infield to take ground balls for a maximum of three minutes before the eight-minute warm-up periods. Both coaches may agree to forego the three minutes of shared infield. Each team will be permitted a maximum of eight minutes for infield practice on the game field before each contest.

Team Introductions and National Anthem. Before introductions, teams will line up on the baseline in front of their respective dugouts as the announcer introduces each team. Teams should line up with nonstarters closest to home plate, then starters, and then coaches closest to first and third bases. The national anthem will be played or sung before the first game of each session and a special designee may throw out the first pitch. In subsequent games in the same session, teams will be announced, but the national anthem and the first pitch ceremony are eliminated. If a moment of silence is approved to be observed, it should occur before the national anthem.

PROTESTS

Rule 7.2 of the [2024-2025 NCAA Softball Rules](#) outlines the protest procedures for NCAA softball championship play.

SITE REPRESENTATIVES

A member of the Division III Softball Committee or an individual designated by the committee will serve as the NCAA site representative. The NCAA staff will provide the name and contact information of the assigned site representative to the respective tournament director.

The site representative will contact the tournament director before their arrival. Please confirm the site representative's arrival and departure times and whether they will need lodging. In addition, review the championship schedule, including meeting, practice and game times, with the site representative.

SOFTBALLS

The Rawlings NC12L, with a maximum compression of 275-375 pounds, is the official softball for the championship. Rawlings Sporting Goods Company, Inc. will ship seven dozen softballs to each regional host and three dozen softballs to each super regional host. No other ball shall be used.

Homerun balls at all rounds should be given to the respective batters. Game balls may be awarded to seniors at all rounds if a sufficient supply of softballs is available to complete the tournament.

STATISTICS

The keeping of statistics is an integral part of the championship's success and every effort should be made to provide an accurate and efficient crew. The host institution sports information staff must email game scores to ncaa-content@turner.com and post scores on its institutional website within 30 minutes of the conclusion of each game. Box scores should be provided to participating teams within 30 minutes. Each facility should have easy access to one high-speed printer and one copier. The facility will be responsible for the installation, service costs and paper for the copier for the tournament.

TEAM DUGOUTS

Dugout Assignments. For regionals, the home team shall occupy the host institution's regular season dugout and the visiting team shall occupy the host institution's regular season away dugout. For super regionals, the host institution should always remain in the host institution home dugout, and the visiting institution in the host institution's visiting dugout. Dugout designations shall be provided on the participating team call. No attended video cameras may be in the dugout, including social media. You may have unattended cameras in the dugout. Dugout props are allowed in the dugout, but the site representative or NCAA Division III Softball sport committee reserves the right to remove dugout props if they are interfering with the competition. Tournament directors should consult with the site representative and NCAA championship manager before removing any dugout prop.

Bench Size. A maximum of 20 student-athletes (squad size) must be designated prior to each game as eligible for competition. The squad size and roster can be changed in-between games. The number of individuals allowed in the dugout may not exceed 32 individuals (33 if the host institution provides a bat handler). Two of those 32 individuals must be medical personnel. All student-athletes in the dugout are allowed to be in uniform, but only the designated squad size are eligible to play.

NOTE: The host will provide a media credential for each institution's sports information director, and this individual is not included in the 30 participant credentials/bench passes.

UNIFORMS

The home team shall choose the uniform color. The visiting team shall wear a contrasting uniform color from the home team. Teams should bring two sets of uniforms to each round and be prepared to change between games, if necessary. However, if the same two teams play in back-to-back games due to an if-necessary game, those teams shall remain in the same dugout and uniform as the first game in the doubleheader, and simply switch home team designation via the home team determination formula. The site representative will advise on this process as needed.

WEATHER

If weather conditions could alter the approved schedule, the tournament director and/or site representative must contact the NCAA championship manager before any decisions to change the schedule are finalized and communicated to participants. Be prepared to summarize the weather situation and have a recommendation for an alternate schedule.

Section 14 • Health & Safety Considerations

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 with event staff and personnel including, among others, those relating to concussion management, catastrophic injury prevention, inclement weather and independent medical care, consulting with institutional legal, medical and risk management personnel as necessary. These requirements and related information can be found in applicable division manuals, sports playing rules and the materials located on the [NCAA Sport Science Institute website](#). A nonexhaustive list of some of the key health and safety considerations is provided below. More detailed information on each of these topics can be found in the [Interassociation Recommendations: Preventing Catastrophic Injury and Death in Collegiate Athletes](#) and the [NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook](#).

- Blood-Borne Pathogens and Other Biohazards.
- Catastrophic Incidents and Emergency Action Plans.
- Cleaning and Disinfection.
- Inclement Weather, Air Quality and Other Environmental Considerations.
- Independent Medical Care.
- Medical Facilities.
- Medical Disqualification, Removal and Return to Activities.
- Medical Staff: Resources, Communications, Training and Responsibilities.
- Medical Supplies and Equipment.
- Medical Treatment (including for, among others, the following emergency conditions):
 - Asthma.
 - Burners (Brachial Plexus Injuries).
 - Cardiac Emergencies.
 - Cervical Spine Injuries.
 - Concussion and Traumatic Brain Injury.
 - Diabetic Emergency.
 - Head and Neck Injury.
 - Heat Illness and Heat Stroke.
 - Hypothermia.
 - Mental Health Emergencies.
 - Rhabdomyolysis.
 - Sickle Cell and Other Exertional and Nonexertional Collapse.
 - Skin Infections.
- Prescription Medications, Banned Substances and Drug Testing.
- Protective Gear and Equipment.
- Sexual Violence.
- Visiting Team Care and Coverage.

In addition, and as a supplement to the legislative and policy requirements and related guidance described above, the following health and safety considerations and expectations will also apply to all championship events.

Ambulance Service

Planned access to an ambulance shall be provided by the championship host. If it is determined that an ambulance should be provided on site, the championship host shall obtain the ambulance service and the incurred cost is reimbursable by the NCAA. Any ambulance used must be equipped in accordance with all applicable government regulations and industry medical and safety standards.

Coaches, Officials, Event Staff and Spectators

Host institutions should consult, as necessary, with applicable institutional legal, medical and risk management personnel to determine and appropriately plan for the management of emergency and other health and safety incidents involving individuals other than student-athletes that may occur at the championship event or venue.

Medical Staff Credentials and Access

Travel party credentials for participating institutions will include credentials for medical personnel; provided it is the responsibility of the participating institution to include medical personnel in their normal credential numbers. Institutions may include medical staff beyond travel party limits provided they pay for the additional numbers with institutional funds. Competition site access can be secured by acquiring session tickets through purchase or an institutional pass list.

Any medical staff traveling with participating teams will have access to their team participants with the assistance of host medical staff, should an injury occur. If medical staff are not to be seated with the team during any championship event for any reason, they should communicate to host medical staff their seat locations and host medical staff should be prepared to provide all participant medical staff with the necessary credentials to access and provide necessary escort to the team locker room or athletic training room in the event of an emergency. Typically, an access point from the stands supervised by security will allow access by medical personnel to student-athletes.

Portable Immersion Tubs

Portable immersion tubs (hot or cold) are permitted at championship events only where use is a component of an established emergency or other health and safety plan and managed under the direction of sports medicine staff, an athletic trainer or physician in accordance with all applicable institutional and government health regulations and requirements.

Section 15 • Hydration Product

POWERADE

Equipment Information

The NCAA will provide certain championships relevant equipment (sidelines hydration, competition playing equipment, etc.) on a sport-by-sport basis that must be used in all championship activity. The purpose of the equipment is to hydrate student-athletes for competition. Each championship will receive information from the NCAA pertaining to any equipment that will be provided. Following the championships, each host site will be required to provide the NCAA with a completed inventory sheet (template provided by the NCAA) and pictures for proof of performance.

Cups, Coolers and Water Bottles

Drinking cups, water coolers, ice chests, cooler carts and water bottles should be provided for each scheduled practice or competition of any round of an NCAA championship. Participating teams shall place any premix fluid replacement in the NCAA-issued coolers and water bottles when applicable. Only cups, cans, coolers or water bottles that are provided by the NCAA may be used during championships. If applicable, the host may retain the coolers, cooler carts and ice chests after the competition. Reoccurring host sites are strongly encouraged to use the same equipment the following year unless otherwise notified by the NCAA. Participating teams may retain the water bottles and bottle carriers after the competition.

Hydration Program

Coca-Cola will provide a bottled water product (e.g., Dasani), POWERADE powder, and when applicable, POWERADE in bottles. Participating teams and student-athletes in NCAA championships continue to be free to use/consume permissible hydration beverage(s) of their own choice in the NCAA-provided equipment. Equipment carrying any branding other than POWERADE, however, will not be permitted on the sidelines during NCAA championships.

If a championship also receives POWERADE-branded squeeze bottles, they should be provided to student-athletes. Non-POWERADE-branded squeeze bottles brought by teams/student-athletes will not be allowed.

If the host must provide and/or purchase product for any NCAA championship use (e.g., student-athlete banquet, committee tent/suite, hospitality areas, media areas), the host must purchase and provide only Coca-Cola products (e.g., Dasani, POWERADE, Coca-Cola, Sprite).

Competitors of NCAA Corporate Champion Coca-Cola may not provide product (beverages, water, isotonic) for any NCAA championship, even if the competition offers product for free or at a reduced cost. The championship budget will cover the purchase of Coca-Cola beverage products.

Use of NCAA-Provided Coolers from Previous Years

The host may use previously supplied equipment from the NCAA, specifically POWERADE equipment with approval from the NCAA; however, unless approved by the NCAA (which is often possible), they must be used in areas not within television or photographer view [they may not be used on the sidelines or within the competition area(s)].

If you have any questions regarding any of this information, please contact Corey Bray (317-917-6076; cbray@ncaa.org).

Preliminary-Round Sites NOT Receiving POWERADE-Branded Equipment and Product

The host institution may use items other than POWERADE-branded equipment. These items, however, must not display any commercial marks (e.g., logos and graphics of commercial products such as Gatorade), or such marks must be covered completely (this requirement applies on the sidelines and in competition areas, media areas or any other back-of-house areas).

If the host must provide and/or purchase product for any NCAA championship use (e.g., student-athlete banquet, committee tent/suite, hospitality areas, media areas), the host must purchase and provide only Coca-Cola products (e.g., Dasani, POWERADE, Coca-Cola, Sprite). Participating teams and student-athletes in NCAA championships continue to be free to use/consume permissible hydration beverage(s) of their own choice; however, equipment carrying any branding other than POWERADE, as referenced above, must be absent of any commercial marks.

Section 16 • Insurance

On-campus event:

The host institution must maintain and provide proof of at least \$1 million of Commercial General Liability (CGL) insurance on an occurrence form for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including Products Liability (including completed-operations coverage), coverage for contractual liability, independent contractors, and personal and advertising injury. Coverage cannot exclude liability arising from athletic participation, spectators, alcohol or food-borne illness. The certificate of insurance (COI) must be submitted to the NCAA prior to competition. State institutions subject to state governing tort laws are permitted to provide proof of limited liability under state laws instead of CGL coverage. (This is the minimum requirement per NCAA bylaws).

Off-campus event:

The host institution must maintain and provide proof of at least \$1 million of Commercial General Liability insurance on an occurrence form for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including Products Liability (including completed-operations coverage), coverage for contractual liability, independent contractors, and personal and advertising injury. Coverage cannot exclude liability arising from athletic participation, spectators, alcohol or food-borne illness. The certificate of insurance (COI) must be submitted to the NCAA prior to competition. State institutions subject to state governing tort laws are permitted to provide proof of limited liability under state laws instead of CGL coverage. (This is the minimum requirement per NCAA bylaws).

The venue must maintain and provide a minimum of \$1 million in Commercial General Liability insurance on an occurrence form for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including Products Liability (including completed-operations coverage), coverage for contractual liability, independent contractors, and personal and advertising injury. Coverage cannot exclude liability arising from athletic participation, spectators, alcohol or food-borne illness. The NCAA must be named as an additional insured.

NOTE: All insurance must be provided by an insurance company with an A.M. Best Rating of A-, VII or higher.

Section 17 • Lodging

NCAA Nonpredetermined Preliminary-Round Competition

For all NCAA nonpredetermined preliminary round competition, unless otherwise stated, the host institution/agency or the NCAA (see sport specific section for details) shall make reservations for the participating institutions/student-athlete(s) and advise them of the arrangements. Hosts must upload the hotel arrangements or room holds into the championships bid portal when submitting their bid. Each host should hold at minimum 17 doubles for each participating team at their site. The selected hotel properties shall be within 30 miles (30 minutes) of the competition site and be priced at a fair and reasonable market room rate. The selection of a competition site may be dependent on availability and quality of rooms for participating institutions/student-athletes. All teams at one site do not need to stay in the same hotel, but the hotels must be of equal quality. Complimentary hot breakfast, meeting rooms and internet is strongly preferred and must be noted in your proposed bid. Each participating institution/student-athlete is obligated to confirm or cancel the accommodations.

Championship participants are mandated to stay at the NCAA's contracted hotel properties for the event. Any participants staying outside of the NCAA contracted hotel block(s) will not be reimbursed.

The participating institution may use the rooms for persons accompanying the official traveling party.

If an institution fails to make satisfactory arrangements for use of assigned rooms with the hotel, full charges for the rooms will be billed to the institution.

MERCHANDISING

The hotels must understand that the NCAA exclusively has exclusive first right of refusal to sell products licensed by the NCAA for merchandising at the selected hotels. If the NCAA executes this right, the hotel agrees to provide space in its lobby, tables, electricity, dedicated phone line and a secure storage location for such sales at no charge to the NCAA merchandising agent. The NCAA guarantees that the merchandise will be displayed in a neat, professional manner.

In return, the NCAA merchandising agent will pay to the hotel a percentage of the net sales from the hotel location. Net sales are defined as gross sales minus sales tax and credit card fees. The percentage rate will be a predetermined, nonnegotiable rate included in the contract between the two parties, except as specified in the following sections.

Section 18 • Marketing

CONTACTS

The host institution should designate a marketing contact or marketing team for the championship. This person should be familiar with marketing strategies that have worked in the community where the championship will be held to sell tickets and drive attendance. It is the primary responsibility of the marketing contact to work closely with the NCAA championship marketing contact to create and implement the championship marketing plan. While many host institutions may have a marketing contact in the athletics department, this individual may also be from the local organizing committee, convention and visitor's bureau, sports commission or a combination thereof. Contact information for the designated marketing contact(s) should be submitted through the key contact portion of the Championships Bid Portal.

EXPECTATIONS

- Know the marketing budget. The NCAA championship tournament manager on your campus or the NCAA championship manager can communicate your marketing budget.
- Develop marketing goals. The primary focus should be driving ticket sales and attendance at the championship by developing inclusive promotion and awareness opportunities and utilizing diverse targeting strategies.
- Map out the time frame to market the championship.
- Determine how to best use the marketing materials provided by the NCAA.
- Establish grassroots initiatives to implement in your local and regional communities by creating and promoting messaging that resonates with people of all race, sex, class, national origin, creed, education background, religion, gender identity, disability, gender expression, geographical location, income, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation and which appeals to diverse communities.
- Explore opportunities with traditional media (print, radio and television) in your area.
- Track marketing efforts and analyze results post-championship to share with your NCAA marketing contact.

MARKETING PLAN

Host institutions/conferences shall establish a marketing plan in coordination with the NCAA Championships Marketing contact. The marketing should reflect the host's commitment to creating an environment where all guests feel welcome and see themselves represented throughout the championship experience. All marketing plans, marketing budgets and collateral must be approved by the NCAA Championships Marketing contact prior to implementation.

MARKETING COLLATERAL

NCAA Marketing Portal. The NCAA Marketing Portal is a comprehensive tool designed to help hosts create marketing products which will generate awareness, drive ticket sales and promote attendance at championship events. The [NCAA Marketing Portal](https://ncaachampspromotion.com) can be accessed at ncaachampspromotion.com.

Championship hosts should customize and download all necessary artwork to promote the championship from the website. Hosts should utilize imagery from the artwork provided, produce the items locally and obtain reimbursement for production costs, up to the reimbursable allocation provided for the championship round you are hosting.

Each NCAA Championships host marketing contact and tournament director will receive an email with the marketing website address, username and password. Please contact ncaachampspromotions@ncaa.org if you are unable to locate this information.

Customizable artwork templates and marketing resources available on the NCAA Marketing Portal include, but are not limited to:

- PRINT
 - Poster
 - Flyer
 - Print ad
 - Table tent
- DIGITAL
 - Email blast
 - Banner
 - Social media graphics
- OUTDOOR
 - Billboard
 - Banner
- RESOURCES
 - Marketing best practices
 - Social media guidelines
 - Special artwork requests

If you have artwork needs and/or sizing which may not be available on the NCAA Marketing Portal, you may submit a special request through the website. Any additional questions can be directed to ncaachampspromotions@ncaa.org.

All requests must be approved by the national office staff before you proceed. Artwork requests and approvals will be managed through the website. If you do not have a local print vendor, we have listed NCAA preferred vendors on the website.

Collateral should not be created outside of the NCAA Marketing Portal. The website ensures proper usage of NCAA logos and trademarks, as well as ensures consistent branding across each championship round and all 90 NCAA Championships.

NOTE: A limited number of Division I predetermined hosts will create all marketing collateral by coordinating directly with the NCAA Championship Marketing contact; they will not have access to the NCAA Marketing Portal.

Television/Video and Radio Ticket Spots. The marketing website allows hosts of select predetermined championship sites to download TV, video, and radio spots for immediate use. Questions regarding the availability of these spots for your championship event should be directed to your NCAA Championship Marketing contact.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Host institutions/conferences may use already established social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) as a place to promote the hosting of an NCAA championship. However, host institutions/conferences should use marketing messages and assets supplied from or approved by the NCAA (links, web banners, flyers, updates, etc.). If the championship does not have an official NCAA social media page, a host is NOT permitted to create a social media page. The NCAA will make efforts to promote this championship on the established pages, as necessary. Please refer to ncaa.org/socialmedia for a listing of official NCAA social media accounts.

APPLICABLE MARKETING BYLAWS

NCAA Division III Bylaws – Pertaining to NCAA Championship Promotions

12.5.1.1.1 – Promotions Involving NCAA Championships, Events, Activities or Programs. The NCAA [or a third party acting on behalf of the NCAA (e.g., host institution, conference, local organizing committee)] may use the name or picture of an enrolled student-athlete to generally promote NCAA championships or other NCAA events, activities or programs. (Adopted: 1/10/05)

12.5.1.10 – Promotion of NCAA and Conference Championships. The NCAA [or a third party acting on behalf of the NCAA (e.g., host institution, conference, local organizing committee)] may use the name or picture of a student-athlete to generally promote NCAA championships. A student-athlete's name or picture may appear in a poster that promotes a conference championship, provided the poster is produced by a member institution that hosts a portion of the championship or by the conference. (Adopted: 1/11/89, Revised: 1/10/05)

12.6.1.2 – To Intercollegiate Event. A professional sports organization may serve as a financial sponsor of intercollegiate competition event, provided the organization is not publicly identified as such. A professional sports organization may serve as a financial sponsor of an activity or promotion that is ancillary to the competition event and may be publicly identified as such. [D] (Adopted: 1/10/92, Revised: 1/10/05, 1/14/12)

13.4.1.2 – Conference or NCAA Championships. An institution or conference that is hosting any portion of a conference or NCAA championship may send printed materials promoting the championship event (e.g., ticket application or promotional brochures, flyers or posters) to high school or two-year college coaches or administrators, but not to specific prospective student-athletes, provided: (Adopted: 1/13/10)

- (a) The printed material includes only information relevant to the championship events;
- (b) The printed material is available to the general public, including all high schools in the local area; and
- (c) The printed material contains no information related to the institution's athletics program.

13.14.1.2.1 Exception – NCAA Championships. An institution or conference that is hosting any portion of an NCAA championship may purchase paid advertisements in a high school athletics program to generally promote the NCAA championship, provided: (Adopted: 1/15/14)

- (a) The advertisement includes only information relevant to the championship events;
- (b) The advertisement is available to the general public, including all high schools in the local area; and
- (c) The advertisement does not contain information related to the institution's athletics program or the conference's member institutions.

Section 19 • Media Services

The NCAA considers this hosting opportunity a partnership between the host school/conference, facility and the NCAA. The primary objective of everyone involved in the administration of the championship, shall be to provide a memorable championship experience for each participating student-athlete, coach, administrator and tournament attendee.

Note that health and safety protocols related to preparedness, response and protocols might have an effect on the media services detailed below, with any changes provided to all hosts in advance of each championship.

ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

Finals. At the finals, the Division III Softball Committee will serve as the selection committee. The host media coordinator should provide statistics to the committee members after each game. The championship all-tournament team will consist of the following: 12 players and one Most Outstanding Player (13 total). Following the championship, the NCAA awards supplier (MTM Recognition) will mail a plaque to each member of the all-tournament team for the finals site.

Regionals. At regionals, the selection committee will consist of the site representative and the host institution SID. The regional all-tournament team will consist of the following: nine players and one Most Outstanding Player (10 total).

Super Regionals. At super regionals, the selection committee will consist of the site representative and the host institution SID. A Most Outstanding Pitcher and Most Outstanding Player will be recognized (two total).

BROADCASTING/INTERNET

Please log on to ncaa.com/media for information regarding broadcast/internet rights.

CHAMPIONSHIP RECORDS

NCAA championship records are available in PDF format at ncaa.org – ncaa.org/championships/statistics/ncaa-records-books.

CREDENTIALS

All media credentials are authorized and issued by the host or NCAA media coordinator. The NCAA provides credentials for all final championship sites and selected preliminary rounds sites. Hosts should contact the NCAA media coordinator or championships administrator to confirm who will produce credentials for preliminary sites. **PDF templates are available for preliminary round credentials if desired. Please contact Jenn Rodgers (jrodgers@ncaa.org) for more information.** If you are producing your own credentials, the “Conditions Placed on Use of Credentials” should be placed on the back of all credentials. That text, located at ncaa.com/credentialterms, should also be visible at credential pickup.

The following is a sample of the types of credentials that can be produced, if applicable:

- All Access – For event management-type people who need access to every area, including game surface.
- Event Management – For event management staff who does not need all access (based on space and demand, it may not be necessary to produce an event management and an all-access pass).
- Media – For members of the media to provide them access to press areas (press box, media room, interview room, locker rooms [postgame only]).
- Participant – For student-athletes, coaches, equipment managers (anyone in the official travel party).
- Photo – For still photographers and television camera operators (if the contest is not going to be televised) to allow them access to appropriate areas (playing surface, locker rooms [postgame only], press box and media room).
- SID – For sports information directors of the participating teams (may allow access to media areas and locker rooms as needed).
- Television Network – If the game is going to be televised by ESPN, Turner Sports, etc., those entities should have their own credential to allow them to specific places such as the truck compound.

It is up to the tournament director to determine which areas may be accessed with each credential type.

CREDENTIAL QUALIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE

Final-Round Site – Approximately one month before the start of final site competition, the site media coordinator should send credential application information to media representatives who regularly cover intercollegiate athletics in their markets. The information should direct media to ncaa.com/media, which includes credential application instructions, credential criteria and links to the NCAA media policies. The site media coordinator will approve or deny all credential requests in the online credentialing system (Sport Systems). Credential system training sessions will be conducted. The system will notify via email all media members who apply for credentials whether their request has been approved or denied. If a media member is granted a credential, the site media coordinator is responsible for sending that member of the media information regarding game times, press conference schedules, credential pickup times and location, parking and any other pertinent information.

Preliminary-Round Site – Preliminary-round/site media coordinators should send a credential request form to members of the local media to determine who will be covering the event.

****** Working credentials will not be mailed. The media coordinator should issue credentials individually at an appropriate site at the venue or at the designated headquarters hotel. A government-issued photo ID is required to pick up credentials. Credentials are nontransferable and will only be issued to the person whose name appears on the credential. Credential pickup for others is not allowed.

CREDENTIAL BOARDS

The NCAA will provide credential boards to all final sites. These are to advise security personnel at the competition venue which credentials are allowed into specific areas of the venue. For credentials that are not allowed into a specific area, use a black marker to cross out the credentials not permitted.

FINAL RESULTS BOOKS AND STATISTICS

The final results book for team championships should include, at a minimum, final statistics and results as well as a quote sheet from at least the two head coaches (inclusion of at least one student-athlete per team is preferred). For individual/team championships, the media coordinator should include quotes from at least any individual champion(s) as well as from the head coach of the team champion, if applicable. It is preferred to also include quotes from a student-athlete of the team champion and the head coach of the second-place team. The final book also may include a cover sheet, recap, postgame notes, and/or a play-by-play summary.

The host institution shall provide complete statistics of all NCAA championships competition.

FLIP CARDS

Flip cards should be provided to all media members for easy reference to participating team information, where applicable. The flip cards should include all players on the roster and a minimum of their uniform numbers along with the head coach and any assistants. The flip card should include team results as well as standard information regarding the game, such as date, location and opponent.

INTERNET POLICY

The NCAA website, ncaa.com, serves as the official online resource for NCAA championships.

The NCAA and its partners own the Internet rights to all of its 90 championship events. Rights include live statistics, video and audio streaming, electronic commerce, and postevent footage use. The NCAA and its partners own all game action, practice footage, press conferences, one-on-one interviews or any other content on the NCAA website.

Internet Live Statistics

The NCAA reserves the right to deny permission to produce live statistics for NCAA championship play. In the event the NCAA takes on the responsibility of producing a live statistical representation from an NCAA championship event, no other entity will be permitted to do so. Live statistics are considered a protected right as part of a bundled rights agreement, referenced above. For clarification purposes, a live statistical representation includes play-by-play, score updates, shot charts, updated box scores, photos with captions, etc.

In the event the NCAA does not produce live statistics for a specific championship, the host institution is given priority to produce exclusive live statistics. The host institution will be given the same exclusivities the NCAA would reserve for its rights holder in such an instance.

Once it is determined that neither the NCAA nor the host institution plan to exercise their exclusive rights, the ability to produce live statistics will be granted – on a nonexclusive basis – to each participating school. A “participating school” is defined as a school playing in the same event at a specific site.

In each case, no commercial advertising is permitted within the live statistics window, unless permission is specifically granted by the NCAA. Any questions pertaining to live statistics should be sent to Nate Flannery, NCAA director of digital and social media (nflannery@ncaa.org).

MEDIA GUIDES AND POSTSEASON GUIDES

The NCAA or host media coordinator should notify each school that qualifies for the championship how many media guides and/or postseason guides should be sent to the championship site and/or if media guides and postseason information should be uploaded to the NCAA box library. If wanting to provide a printed version, the media coordinator should provide an overnight address where the schools can send the information (e.g., their office, the facility) and a deadline as to when it should arrive. Consider security when selecting the location where these materials will be shipped.

MEDIA ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel. If necessary, the media coordinator should arrange for a block of rooms to be set aside for media, preferably at the headquarters hotel. Media members should be given a contact/link at the hotel whom they can call or link to make reservations; this can be listed on the credential application form along with the room rate and deadline for making reservations.

Meals. Media meals are not required at all championships. Disbursements should be guided by the budget which was originally submitted by the tournament manager and approved by the NCAA national office.

Parking. Media parking should be provided at all championship host sites. The media coordinator should determine if it would be more effective to use parking passes or a parking list. If passes are used, the host institution must generate them. Media shuttle systems may also be used provided any costs are approved in advance by the specific sport committee and NCAA championships manager..

Media Workroom. If possible, a media workroom should be designated at each site, where media members can be provided a workspace. The workroom should provide an adequate amount of media seating, electrical outlets, complimentary wireless internet access and a pool of high-speed internet lines, if possible. Each school’s media guides and/or postseason guides, along with any materials the host institution distributes (statistics, game notes, quotes, etc.), should be provided in this area.

NEWS FILM AND MINI-CAMS

Please visit ncaa.com/media for updated information related to television, video and ENG policies.

OFFICIATING QUESTIONS/POOL REPORTER

The host media coordinator shall appoint one member of the media to serve as the pool reporter at the competition site and must be approved in advance by the NCAA staff. In most cases, the media coordinator should designate the reporter from the Associated Press or the local newspaper as the pool reporter. The pool reporter should be clearly designated on the media seating chart and should be listed on the starting lineup sheets (if applicable) distributed prior to competition.

When a game includes a potential fighting situation that results in a technical foul and/or ejection of a participant, a rules interpretation is requested or there is a clock or timing issue, the pool reporter shall accompany the NCAA staff representatives to the officials’ locker room to receive an interpretation to enhance the media’s understanding of the activities that occurred. Interpretations are not given if the situation in question is a judgment call. Prior to entering the officials’ locker room, the pool reporter shall go to the interview room or media workroom to speak to other media members and compile a list of questions to ask the involved official.

The host media coordinator, who will prepare the statement, will distribute the information to the media after it is reviewed and approved by an NCAA staff representative. Any statement involving an official’s interpretation can be read by the news conference moderator in the interview room while the statement is being distributed.

If the involved official does not elect to speak to the pool reporter, the referee will decide whether the referee or the standby official will provide the interpretation on behalf of the officiating crew. The interpretation shall apply exclusively to the specific situation and will only be used to provide an interpretation of a rule.

PERSONNEL

Each media coordinator is responsible for organizing workers to assist in the media operations of the championship. It is important to remind volunteers that they may see very little of the championship competition because of their responsibilities and the NCAA will not pay any expenses. All volunteers should be a minimum of 16 years old or older. It is preferred that all media coordination volunteers have experience with media relations or championships.

The number of workers will depend upon the media demand for the games at the site. Communication with the participating SIDs and the media coordinator's knowledge of the area media will help with planning.

The following is a basic list of duties for volunteers (if applicable):

- Copy Machine Personnel – Photocopies materials (stats, notes, quotes, etc.).
- Credential Distribution – Pass out credentials to the media; check government-issued photo ID.
- External PA – Announcer for fans.
- Internal PA – Announcer for the media.
- Locker Room Attendant – Person to identify when the locker room is open and closed to the media.
- Mixed Zone Coordinator – Coordinates interviews in the mixed zone in events such as track and field and swimming and diving. Depending on the number of participants, this individual may need several assistants.
- Note Takers – Compiles worthy notes during and after the game or day.
- Photo Marshall – Makes sure photographers work in approved event coverage locations. Hands out photo armbands, if necessary.
- Press Conference Moderator – Introduces players and coach; directs questions from media.
- Quote Takers – Records postgame quotes from the press conferences/locker rooms. A minimum of one person should be designated to take quotes for each team. They should get quotes from the head coach and student-athletes.
- Results Disseminator – Transmits stats, notes, quotes, through appropriate delivery means (website, email, social media, etc.).
- Runner(s) – Distributes photocopied materials (stats, notes, quotes, etc.).
- Spotter – Helps the official scorer identify assists and any other assistance for official scorer.
- Stat Crew – Records the official stats. Note that when applicable, NCAA LiveStats software must be used at all NCAA championships.
- Team Escorts – People to escort the coaches and student-athletes to the postgame press conference.

NEWS CONFERENCES

The media coordinator, or a member of the coordinator's staff, shall attend all press conferences, including any conducted before the start of championship play. A media coordinator can decide to have a prechampionship news conference if the number of media or interest in the championship warrants it. If a formal press conference will be held, the media coordinator should produce name (table) tents to place on the dais/riser to identify coaches and student-athletes.

ALL STUDENT-ATHLETES AND COACHES MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS. With permission from the NCAA, exceptions may be made to the policy.

The open locker room policy applies to all formal press conferences and to any interview requests for coaches and/or student-athletes not involved in the press conferences. Failure to do so may result in a misconduct finding, as determined by the respective sport committee.

NOTE: If a student-athlete is selected for drug testing, all media obligations must be fulfilled before going to the drug-testing center.

1. **Individual Championships with no Postevent News Conference.** Student-athletes are allowed a maximum of a 10-minute cooling-off period following an event before meeting with the media. If ready before 10 minutes, the student-athlete can participate in interviews sooner. However, student-athletes are not allowed to leave the competition area before conducting media interviews. Interviews will be conducted in the mixed zone or interview room. A student-athlete who is competing in more than one event on a given day may ask the media coordinator to delay the interview period until after the student-athlete's final event of the day. The only exception to this is if a record is set, and then the student-athlete should be made available to the media shortly after that event. If time prohibits this, the media coordinator should get a quote from the student-athlete and distribute it to the media.
2. **Individual Championships with a Formal News Conference.** Student-athletes are allowed a maximum of a 10-minute cooling-off period following an event before meeting with the media. If ready before 10 minutes, the student-athlete can participate in interviews sooner. In individual championships, typically only the winner(s) needs to report to the press conference. If media requests warrant having the runner-up participate in the news conference, that person should answer questions before the champion.
3. **Team Championships with a Formal News Conference.** The losing team shall have a 10-minute cooling-off period before reporting to the interview room. The cooling-off period starts once the head coach and all of the student-athletes have reached the locker room area. The winning team will report to the interview room immediately following the completion of the losing team's press conference. For some championships, the governing sport committee determined that the winning or visiting team should go first to the press conferences, before the losing team. Please refer to championship manual for the sport.

It is mandatory for the head coach and at least one student-athlete to report to the press conference following the cooling-off period. However, media coordinators should request a minimum of two student-athletes. A coach can shorten the cooling-off period but cannot extend it.

As soon as one media member enters a locker room, it will be open to all media members. Locker rooms are open to the media for a minimum of 30 minutes, provided media are present the entire time.

The head coach must complete all NCAA championship media obligations before honoring any in-season radio or television contracts. Coaches or student-athletes may only conduct interviews with rights-holding television or radio networks (including ESPN or NCAA Radio Network, but not school radio stations) before the press conference following the conclusion of a game. These interviews are permitted during a period totaling no more than four minutes for all interviews, immediately after the game. The media coordinator or designee has the responsibility to terminate the four-minute interview period, NOT the network/station that has purchased rights. Assistant coaches are not obligated to the entire media staffing the championship and may grant postgame radio interviews at any time after the conclusion of the game.

Moderator Duties

1. The moderator should give pertinent game statistics (e.g., leading rushers, passers, tacklers, game records) to media while they wait for the first team to arrive. Statistics should be distributed to the media, coaches and student-athletes as soon as they arrive.
2. Media coordination representatives should obtain the names of the student-athletes who will be attending the press conference and give them to the host or NCAA media coordinator, who then will provide them to the moderator so that they can be announced in advance.
3. The moderator should open the press conference by asking the head coach for his/her opening statement.
4. After the coach's comments, the moderator should invite questions from media.

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5. If necessary, the moderator should direct a question to student-athletes to get them involved, if the media do not do so.
6. Limit the losing team to 10 minutes and the winning team to 20 minutes.
7. The moderator should keep the flow of the press conference moving. If there is a gap of time between questions, limit questions to one more and then thank the head coach and student-athlete(s).

Press Conference Setup. Each host media coordinator should designate an interview room or area at the facility, and an individual to coordinate the activities in it. The interview area should have a public address system and an elevated head table.

Media coordinators should use an audio mixer (mix down unit) in the interview area to permit individuals using microphones to attach their equipment to it, eliminating the presence of audio equipment and/or operators in front of, or adjacent to, the speakers at the dais.

The following is a checklist of suggested minimum requirements for the interview room:

- Seating for a minimum number of media or VIPs (check with the previous host for an approximate number).
- Risers or an area with an unobstructed view for television cameras.
- Table for a minimum of 4-6 interviewees.
- Sufficient electrical outlets.
- Sufficient lighting for dais and workspaces.
- Mult box.
- Wireless microphones.

For selected NCAA championships, press conference backdrops, interview room table tents and microphone flags will be sent to the institution by the NCAA. Quotes shall be distributed to the media immediately following each press conference.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Commercial use of any still photographs is prohibited unless permission is obtained from the NCAA. Specific areas will be designated for photographers, and these areas will be limited by priority and space.

PHOTOGRAPHY AREA POLICIES

The media coordinator shall be prepared to designate “photographer positions,” should media requests warrant it. “Prime” positions should be given to NCAA Photos and/or Getty Photos, or otherwise rotated among members of the media. All special requests (i.e., placing a remote camera on the backboard) must be approved by NCAA staff or site representatives.

PROGRAMS

Championships will feature either a printed or digital game program, which the NCAA and LEARFIELD Publishing has the exclusive right to post/distribute at the competition venue during the championship. No competing publications, whether sold or free of charge, are permitted at NCAA events where printed programs are available. Any publications delivered to the venue are the property of LEARFIELD before, during and after the event.

LEARFIELD will be responsible for all program production, including editorial content, layout and design, advertising and printing. Championship media contact should provide LEARFIELD with text and photos for editorial pages about host institution/venue/city, if requested by LEARFIELD. Any pages promoting the host institution/venue/city will not be display advertisements. Those interested in purchasing advertising space for sponsors, etc., should contact Clerrinda Queen (clerrinda.queen@learfield.com).

LEARFIELD encourages the host institution/venue to distribute supplemental handouts (i.e., updated statistics and notes), provided any such materials:

- Are only distributed with the purchase of a program.
- Do not include information available in the program.
- Do not include advertisements.

The host should not include expenses for such supplements in the championship budget and/or financial report. All supplemental content is subject to NCAA and LEARFIELD approval.

RADIO/INTERNET AUDIO COVERAGE

Radio broadcast rights and made for internet audio at any NCAA championship may take place only through advance written request and permission of the NCAA media services group. (Refer to ncaa.com/media.)

All stations broadcasting any round of an NCAA championship shall be required to fill out the NCAA Championship Radio/Internet Streaming form online. To access the form, log onto ncaa.com/content/audio-policies-0.

SCOUT VIDEO COORDINATOR

A scout video coordinator is permitted to film the game from an upper video position. A credential also may be issued to a team videographer. The scout video coordinator will receive a media credential and may only film the game of the team represented by the video coordinator. Representatives of participating institutions may record the network telecast of any game at the site, using a video distribution outlet in the video distribution area. The institution must provide its own recording equipment.

SEAT ASSIGNMENTS

Media coordinators should provide preferred seat locations for media agencies that regularly staff games played by the participating and host institutions.

SECURITY

Security personnel should be instructed to protect the working media areas and interview area, especially before and after each game, and to limit access in all restricted areas to individuals wearing credentials.

STATISTICS REPORTING TO THE NCAA

The host sports information director, media coordinator or designee is responsible for reporting official championship results to the Association's website, ncaa.com, with the NCAA providing delivery information. At the conclusion of each championship contest or session (preliminary rounds and finals), please forward information that specifies the division, sport, round, date and official results, and provide a brief game/event summary. On the final day, the email should include the all-tournament and Most Outstanding Player selections.

Institutions should send all information as follows:

- Email the information to NCAA-Editorial@warnermedia.com. Specify the division, sport, round and region in the subject area.
- Paste the text (official results, including date of competition, round, etc.) directly into the message box.
- Attach HTML box score, if available.

TEAM VIDEOGRAPHER

Institutions are permitted to videotape championships competition by their teams or their individual student-athletes for archival, coaching or instructional purposes. Each institution is permitted to use one camera and may videotape only that portion of the competition in which it participates. The videotapes may not be used for any commercial purposes. An institutional representative shall contact the event coordinator at the host site to arrange for camera space at that site. No manned video cameras may be in the dugout, including social media. You may have unattended cameras in the dugout. For the latest information and policies regarding team content, go to the "Team Content Policy" link at ncaa.com/media-center/broadcast-services.

INTERNET

Complimentary wireless internet access must be available at all championship rounds for media use. The host institution may NOT assess an additional “hookup fee” to any media agency. Any wireless charges should be charged to the host or reflected in the proposed budget.

TELEVISION

If an NCAA championship is to be televised, the media coordinator will be notified by the NCAA championships manager, media coordinator or member of the broadcast staff. This person will relay any needs specific to television, such as power, press row space, etc., to the host media coordinator. Information about NCAA broadcasts can be found online at ncaa.com/media.

LIVE STREAMING

For final sites of all nontelevised championships, ncaa.com will provide live streaming of the contest. For all other nontelevised rounds, the NCAA encourages all hosting institutions to provide a live stream of the event.

Apply for NCAA internet streaming rights online at ncaa.com/rights-request. Questions about Internet streaming can be directed to Nate Flannery (317-917-6523; nflannery@ncaa.org).

NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS MICROSITE GUIDELINES

NCAA Championship hosts and LOCs are welcome to build a city specific microsite to house local information regarding things-to-do, travel tips, restaurants, volunteer info, etc. The primary purpose of the microsite should welcome fans and enhance their experience in preparation for traveling to the host city. The following information should help with the creation of a local microsite.

NOTE: The URL for the microsite should not be promoted and will be linked directly through ncaa.com. It should be clean of all corporate marks. Additionally, the information provided on the localized site should not duplicate any information available on ncaa.com.

DINING, SHOPPING AND ATTRACTIONS

The following topics are permissible to house within your microsite:

- Local fan gathering and entertainment locations.
- Shopping and dining.
- Special attractions.

LOCAL NEWS

The microsite can contain story modules to promote local press releases or additional information pertaining to hosting the event. This should not include information about the competition.

VENUE AND TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

City transportation and host venue details should be included within the microsite; the following are topic suggestions for this section:

- Venue address.
- Venue parking map and details, Google map.
- Venue security information.
- Public transportation options.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

The microsite can contain additional details to recruit and register volunteers. A general overview, schedule and registration information are commonly found details within this section.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Hotel, car rental and other travel accommodations should link to: ncaa.com/travel

SELECTIONS, PRELIMINARY ROUNDS AND BROADCAST SCHEDULE

All information regarding the details of selections, all preliminary rounds and broadcast schedules should be linked to ncaa.com with the use of the ncaa.com logo.

EMAIL SIGN UP

Fans who would like to receive more information can sign up to receive newsletters from the NCAA. The following link should be included for email sign up: ncaa.com/newsletter-signup

LOGO USAGE

For championship logos, please submit a request to access the NCAA Digital Library at ncaa-logo.pd.dmh.veritone.com/user/login;requireLogin=true.

COPYRIGHTS, LICENSING, TRADEMARKS AND CORPORATE MARKS

The following are guidelines for use of NCAA trademarks and the process for requesting licensing for photos:

- The host cannot promote or click thru to any URL other than ncaa.com.
- Host corporate partner marks or any commercial advertising are prohibited from being displayed on the microsite.
- The NCAA primary logo must be displayed more prominently than any other logo and must precede or be placed above any other identification marks. If the microsite is built within an existing site's framework, exceptions will be made at the NCAA's discretion.
- Photos from previous years' championships can be accessed by submitting a request form here: ncaaphotos.photoshelter.com/contact
- The microsite must adhere to fair and equitable treatment for ALL participating student-athletes and schools.
- Trademark script must be included on the homepage of the site. This text can be in a mouse print format at the bottom of the page as follows: *NCAA is a trademark of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.*

A complete list of NCAA trademarks and trademark protection can be found by [clicking here](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA

All social media icons should link to the appropriate NCAA-hosted platforms for the championship. The official list of NCAA social media pages and hashtags may be found at ncaa.com/social.

MOBILE VERSION

The NCAA championship information pages will be mobile friendly. For the microsite to convert to mobile devices, pages will need to be created for use on a mobile site.

LOCAL CONTRIBUTOR RECOGNITION

The local organizing committee/host institution is able to recognize their local contributors under the following guidelines:

- In text form only.
- The NCAA's logos need to be removed from that specific page.
- The link to this page is not in main or sidebar navigation (bottom navigation only).
- This page is entitled "Local Contributors."
- Include text at the bottom of the page indicating the local contributors are not sponsors of the NCAA and all of the CC/PS are listed within that text.

MICROSITE EXAMPLES

If you would like to review an approved championship microsite, please reference one of the following pages:

- Oklahoma City Women's College World Series Microsite: <https://www.visitokc.com/wcws/>

PHOTOGRAPHY

NCAA Photos (also known as Clarkson-Creative/Clarkson) will be on site for the final day of competition, unless otherwise specified. Hosts institutions are not required to have a photographer when Clarkson is not on site. An additional photographer may be hired by NCAA staff to shoot additional days and ancillary events, if the staff so chooses. For those instances, it is necessary to have the hired photographer(s) complete the photography services agreement.

All photographers will agree to the NCAA Championship Photography Terms and Conditions upon requesting a credential. Photo sales on site are strictly prohibited.

Images for use by NCAA member institutions are available at a special rate and are bound by the following rights:

"For official NCAA member institution athletic department website and publications only. Other reproduction, distribution, and/or display print production is prohibited unless specified in writing."

For internal member institution use, please contact Clarkson-Creative at info@ncaaphotos.com with the name of the image(s) you would like to purchase, and an online transaction will be set up to download the image(s). All images should be credited, where it appears, to: ©Photographer's Name/NCAAPhotos. For all other uses, please contact Andy Krause (Andrew.Krause@gettyimages.com).

Any other entity, with the exception of the NCAA membership, seeking a championship event photo must license it through Getty Images. To license an NCAA championship event photo, please visit on.ncaa.com/NCAAonGetty.

For additional questions regarding championship photography, please contact Nate Flannery (nflannery@ncaa.org; 317-917-6222).

NCAA SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR CHAMPIONSHIP HOSTS

The official NCAA social media pages and official hashtags can be found here: on.ncaa.com/sociallinks

Host Promotion of Championships

A lot of hosts already have an established presence in social media. Examples are a school, local organizing committee, sports corporation, venue or city pages/accounts. These pages/accounts are all good places to promote the hosting of an NCAA championship through the use of marketing messages and products supplied by the NCAA (links, web banners, flyers, etc.). The NCAA also promotes the championships (and the host involvement) on the appropriate NCAA social media pages/accounts. If the championship does not have an official NCAA page on a social media site, a host is still not permitted to create a page for it. The NCAA will make efforts to promote this championship on the other established pages/accounts, as necessary. Collaboration is encouraged through the use of cross-posting on Facebook or collabs on Instagram (@ linking within text to drive fans to each other's pages) and mentions on X (Twitter) and Instagram (@ links to show coordination in posts). In addition to collaboration, idea-sharing is also encouraged and can be coordinated with the NCAA digital team through the championship's marketing contact.

A host should not create a social media account or page (Facebook page, X (Twitter) feed, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok account, etc.) solely devoted to promoting an NCAA championship. These pages become outdated, distract fans from established pages and fracture the NCAA message.

Please send direct questions, ideas, or news to Lynnea Phillips, lphillips@ncaa.org.

Section 20 • Merchandise/Licensing

ADMINISTRATION

The NCAA licensing department has oversight for the event merchandising program at all rounds and sites of NCAA championships. All licensing and merchandising questions should be directed to David Clendenin (317-917-6496; dclendenin@ncaa.org).

AVAILABILITY

An online ordering system will be available to participating institutions interested in ordering Event 1, Inc., merchandise in advance of the championship. Orders will be shipped by Event 1 directly to the participating institution's campus.

GENERAL POLICIES

The NCAA retains the exclusive right to sell souvenir products at all rounds and sites of the 90 championships; host institutions/conferences and sponsoring agencies for all NCAA championships are required to sell items provided by the official NCAA event souvenir merchandiser. The official NCAA event souvenir merchandiser is Event 1.

Event 1, Inc. will enter into an agreement with the official vendor of the host institution/conference or sponsoring agency and will supply merchandise and inventory reconciliation forms to the official vendor. The official vendor of the host institution/conference or sponsoring agency at the site of the championship(s) is responsible for complete retail vending accountability, including full responsibility for inventory. When the requirements listed below are met, the host institution/conference will receive a 20% commission fee for providing these services. The 20% commission fee will be from net sales, which is defined as gross sales minus taxes and credit card fees. The following is a list of the requirements that must be met to qualify for the 20% commission fee:

- a. Receive and count in all merchandise upon arrival from Event 1, Inc., as well as receiving all reorders required to meet customers' demand. Reorders could arrive any day of the week and could be as early as 8 a.m. on Saturday or Sunday.
- b. Locked and supervised storage adequate to accommodate all championship merchandise.
- c. Immediate notification (within 24 hours of receipt) to Event 1, Inc. of any discrepancies in initial inventory counts. No notification will represent host or vendor acceptance of initial inventory provided by Event 1, Inc.
- d. Total management, control and accountability of the merchandise. If goods are lost, stolen or damaged, those goods are the responsibility of the host institution/conference or vendor.
- e. At the conclusion of the event, everything sent must be returned to Event 1 within two days of the conclusion of the event.
- f. An appropriate number of selling locations and sellers throughout the facility to meet the demands of the projected crowds.
- g. Selling locations that are well displayed and fully stocked prior to the public's access to them.
- h. Strict adherence to the merchandising and display standards as outlined below:
 - Merchandise made available for sale at all times during the event.
 - Each item neatly displayed with correct prices clearly marked.
 - Merchandise should be neatly folded at all times.
 - Neatly dressed personnel that are customer oriented.
 - Skirted tables for display and checkout.
 - Display boards and grids to properly display product at all selling locations.
 - Selling locations located in high traffic and easily located locations.
 - Vendor shall be responsible for hanging any display or signage material provided by concessionaire.

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- Keeping selling areas clean and neat at all times.
 - Restocking of back-up inventory in a fast and efficient manner.
 - Transferring merchandise between the slower and higher volume stands to meet the demands of the consumers.
 - Providing electricity and either hard internet lines or dedicated secured Wi-Fi network connection to support the merchandise sales effort at no extra cost.
 - Calling Event 1, Inc. to request reorders should sales warrant.
- i. A complete inventory accounting of all merchandise sold with a final inventory count and merchandising report supplied to Event 1, Inc., no later than 24 hours after the conclusion of the event.
 - j. Total gross sales revenues and a final copy of the inventory report must be sent to Event 1, Inc., within two business days of the conclusion of the event.
 - k. The remaining inventory forwarded to Event 1, Inc., or the next event site as determined by Event 1, Inc., within two days of the conclusion.
 - l. Having met each of the above requirements, Event 1, Inc. will pay to the host institution/conference, sponsoring agency or its assigned vendor, a commission equal to 20% of sales net of taxes and credit card service fees. The host institution will keep commissions earned and the remaining money owed to Event 1 must be sent within seven days of the conclusion of the event.

The host institution/conference may not sell or allow for sale any merchandise that infringes upon the exclusive rights of Event 1, Inc.

Institutional Merchandise. A buy-out option can be made with Event 1/NCAA when the host institution/conference wants to sell merchandise that features the host mark or logo at the NCAA competition. This can only be done when the host institution/conference agrees to purchase the entire product that Event 1 provides. The host institution/conference will receive a 20% commission fee of net sales, gross sales minus credit card fees and taxes, on product supplied by Event 1. The host institution or official vendor will provide the NCAA 15% of sales (net of taxes and credit card service fees) of all non-NCAA championship merchandise. The quantity of NCAA merchandise available for sale shall not be less than a comparable shipment to a comparable site of the previous year's championship.

Reordering Process. The host institution/conference may contact Event 1 to place an order for additional merchandise during the event. The concessionaire must contact Event 1 no later than the conclusion of each day to evaluate inventory levels. The more time Event 1 has to react to the request, the better the chance a reorder can be processed and shipped in a timely manner. Event 1 cannot guarantee that additional merchandise will be available.

Event 1 will provide an event manual, which will include the contact information for the event coordinator assigned to the event as well as additional merchandising guidelines.

DIVERSE SUPPLIERS

The NCAA strongly encourages the participation, directly or indirectly, when possible, by diverse businesses in providing goods and services in support of NCAA championships and requests local organizing committees/hosts to explore opportunities for diverse businesses to provide any necessary goods and services for awarded championships. At the NCAA, diverse suppliers are defined as entities that are majority (at least 51%) owned, managed and controlled by ethnic minorities, women, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities or veterans. At a minimum, we encourage local organizing committees/hosts to ensure that at least 10% of the suppliers invited to participate in the championship are diverse suppliers.

Section 21 • Neutrality

Host institutions should keep in mind that an NCAA event is not a home event. Neutrality should be maintained at each regional and super regional site. For any questions about what a host institution is doing, or should be doing, please reach out directly to the NCAA championship manager.

Section 22 • Officials

The tournament director should notify all umpires of the following: (1) time and place of the umpires' meeting; (2) game schedule; and (3) location of and directions to the facility. The tournament director also should communicate with the umpires to determine who will need lodging, and then make the appropriate reservations and provide directions. Each umpire should be provided a championship packet that includes a copy of the umpire evaluation form which each head coach will complete after each game.

ASSIGNMENTS

Regionals and Super Regionals. The NCAA Softball Umpire Program will make the initial assignments for regionals and super regionals. After the first day of games, the site representative will review and discuss the coaches' evaluations of the umpires with the crew chief, and then the site representative and crew chief will confirm assignments for subsequent days. For any changes to the umpire rotation, contact the NCAA Softball Umpire Program representative and the NCAA championship manager before communicating to the on-site umpires.

Finals. The umpire-in-chief will make the initial assignments. After the first day of games, the Division III Softball Committee member assigned as the liaison to the umpires will review and discuss the coaches' evaluations of the umpires with the umpire-in-chief, and then the umpire-in-chief will confirm assignments for subsequent days.

FEES AND EXPENSES

Fees, per diem and mileage (if necessary) for all umpires for all rounds of competition will be paid online through RQ+. Umpires must register for RQ+ at refquest.com and provide their contact information.

HOTEL

Umpires shall not be housed in the same hotel as the participating teams. Lodging expenses (room and tax only) for referees should be direct billed to the host institution and reimbursed via the final financial report as a budgeted expense. Umpires are responsible for incidental expenses.

MEALS

Hosts should ensure that meals are provided to the umpires when their game assignments do not allow them to eat during scheduled meal times.

SELECTION

The NCAA Softball Umpire Program (SUP) recommends umpires for postseason assignment, and the Division III Softball Committee has final approval of all umpires selected.

TICKETS

Umpires should be provided a credential for admittance. In addition, each umpire is entitled to purchase two tickets to the competition (e.g., for family or friends). The host tournament director will administer this process.

UMPIRES' MEETING

Before the first game, the NCAA site representative and the crew chief at regionals and super regionals will conduct an umpires' meeting to review NCAA policies and procedures, review assignments and responsibilities and explain procedures for payment of game fees and reimbursement of expenses.

Section 23 • Participating Teams

ADMITTANCE TO FACILITY

Regionals and Super Regionals

Participating institutions must submit a credential list roster to the NCAA championship manager and the respective regional or super regional tournament director by 5 p.m. Eastern time on the Tuesday before competition.

Participant credentials will be provided to teams based on the credential list submitted by each institution.

BARREL COMPRESSION TESTING (BCT)

BCT will be conducted on competition days (not practice days) during all NCAA postseason rounds. Each site **MUST** provide a G4 SSL or WSU bat testing fixture, table, three (3) chairs, and the NCAA-provided notebook containing the appropriate distinctive stickers and testing log sheets. The bat testing areas should be close to the practice area, yet private, and sheltered from the weather (e.g., sun, wind, rain). If an indoor facility is close to the practice area, that is the preferred location for BCT. If not, a tent should be provided if an outdoor covered area is not available. Refer to [Appendix A](#) for additional details for bat testing requirements.

Following BCT, the host is responsible for securing any bats that fail BCT and sending them, along with the NCAA-provided notebook with the completed log sheets, to the person designated by the NCAA Softball Rules Committee.

Please see [Appendix A](#) for more information on BCT.

NOTE: It is the intent that the host of the finals have at least two fixtures available for BCT. They can either request an NCAA-provided one shipped with the logs and distinctive stickers to supplement theirs, or they can provide two fixtures.

A bat testing manager who may be the NCAA site representative, host institution staff supervised by the NCAA site representatives or the NCAA site representative designee, will perform bat testing at regional and super regional sites. The UIC or a representative of the hosts, with assistance from the Division III Softball Committee members, will perform bat testing at the finals site. These individuals may need assistance from the tournament director in shipping materials and disqualified bats once testing is complete.

PARTICIPANT MANUAL

Each host institution shall prepare a site-specific participant manual that includes key information (e.g., practice times, game schedules, hotel contacts, directions). Regional hosts shall email the participant manual to participating institutions so the teams have an opportunity to review the manual before the teleconference on Tuesday with the participating teams. For regionals, practice time assignments will be confirmed on the teleconference based on travel distance (i.e., the team that must travel the greatest distance will have first choice of practice times, and the host institution will have last choice of practice times, given that they do not have to travel). Teams that arrive in the locale the evening before the practice day will be considered local (i.e., deemed to have traveled zero miles) when assigning practice times and will select their practice times after teams that travel to the site on the practice day and before the host institution.

Super regional hosts shall email the participant manual to the team traveling to their respective site so that the team has an opportunity to review the manual before the teleconference on the Tuesday before super regional competition. For the finals site, the tournament director shall email a draft of the participant manual to the NCAA championship manager. Once the manual is approved, the NCAA championship manager will email the participant manual to each super regional tournament director, who will provide two printed copies (one for the head coach and one for the administrator) to the advancing team following the super regional championship game.

VIDEO CONFERENCES

Regionals

The NCAA site representative and tournament director for each regional site will conduct a teleconference with the teams assigned to their respective site. The call should be scheduled at 11 a.m. Eastern time the Tuesday after selections. (*NOTE: A host in the Pacific time zone may schedule this call later in the day.*) Following the online selection show, the NCAA staff will email each regional tournament director a memo for the 16 regional sites, as well as the contact information

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for the teams assigned to each respective site. The tournament director will be responsible for contacting the teams to provide the call-in information and agenda for the call. The tournament director should provide, before the call, lodging information and proposed practice times to assist in planning for the traveling institutions.

Super Regionals

The NCAA site representative and tournament director for each super regional site will conduct a teleconference with the teams assigned to their respective site. The call should be scheduled no later than 3 p.m. Eastern time the Monday after regionals conclude. *(NOTE: A host in the Pacific time zone may schedule this call later in the day.)* The championship manager or NCAA representative assigned to the site will provide the call-in number/link and access code to the tournament director. After the conclusion of regionals, NCAA staff will email each super regional tournament director the contact information for the team traveling to their site, and the tournament director will be responsible for contacting the team to provide the call-in information for the call.

Section 24 • Participation Gifts

MEMENTOS

Regionals and Super Regionals

Due to the financial burden on a host institution, to be consistent with NCAA policy, and to provide each student-athlete participating in NCAA regional and super regional competition the same experience, banquets and mementos will not be permitted at regional or super regional rounds

Participation awards are permissible (one per participant) if they meet the conditions outlined in Bylaws 16.1.4.2 and 16.1.4.3 and are provided by the NCAA selected student-athlete participation awards licensee. The NCAA championships and alliances group will be responsible for selecting the participation awards that will be provided. The NCAA championship administrator will work with the participating institutions regarding delivery of mementos.

Section 25 • Programs

This championship will feature a digital game program that can be viewed online or downloaded at no charge. This program will be available online generally no later than two days prior to the first day of the event.

All digital programs available can be found at ncaa.com/gameprograms.

CONTENT/EDITORIAL

LEARFIELD Responsibilities

Learfield is responsible for all program production, including editorial content, layout and design, advertising, and printing.

Host Responsibilities

The media contact should provide LEARFIELD with text and photos for editorial pages about host institution/venue/city, if requested by LEARFIELD.

Any pages promoting the host institution/venue/city will not display advertisements. Those interested in purchasing advertising space for sponsors, etc., should contact Clerrinda Queen (clerrinda.queen@learfield.com).

Promotion

The NCAA will provide a PDF including a QR code that links to the digital program, a URL where the digital program can be accessed and imagery of the NCAA's Corporate Champions and Partners. This PDF, or digital handout, is also shared with participating schools for their promotional use.

If you would like this information ahead of time, please contact your NCAA administrator.

Best Practices

- Below are a few best practices for promoting the championship digital program.
- Distribute the digital handout to fans.
- Create signage to direct fans to the digital program by using elements on the digital handout.
- Post the link on athletics and school-affiliated websites.
- Share the link on athletics and school-affiliated social media outlets.
- Share the link with student-athletes, faculty, alumni organizations and local media outlets, and any other group that may have interest.

Supplemental Handouts

At championships sites where a digital program is available, LEARFIELD allows the host institution/venue to distribute supplemental handouts (i.e., updated statistics and notes) provided any such materials:

- Do not include any advertisements, local sponsor logos, etc.
- Include the QR code and URL to the digital program.
- Include the NCAA Corporate Champions and Partners imagery.

Printed supplements may be distributed free or sold, with all proceeds retained by the host. The host should not include expenses for such supplements in the championship budget and/or financial report.

All supplemental content is subject to NCAA and LEARFIELD approval.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your NCAA championship manager or Chad Laytham (chad.laytham@learfield.com) at LEARFIELD.

Section 26 • Safety and Security

The NCAA is committed to supporting a safe and secure environment for championship events and is appreciative of the many federal, state, and local partners who aid in maintaining safe events for all athletes, coaches, fans, and staff.

The NCAA established a Safety and Security Advisory Group (SSAG) to develop best practices for all NCAA championships. The SSAG developed these best practices based on a review of current and future championships competition venues, discussions with safety and security experts, and their own experience and knowledge. All hosts and competition venues are strongly encouraged to refer to the Best Practices for Venue Safety and Security document when developing a safety and security program.

The suggestions outlined in the Best Practices for Venue Safety and Security document are based on practices that are employed by competition venues across the nation. The need and ability to implement them at each facility and event will vary. Properly trained and equipped personnel constitute the primary element of implementing a successful safety and security program.

Best practices for championships competition venue safety are intended for guidance purposes only; they are not a requirement under NCAA or other regulations or legislation. In addition, because of the wide variety of designs and sizes of competition venues; and composition and profile of events, not all best practices will be reasonable or applicable.

The best practices should not be viewed as a complete or primary source of information for developing or implementing the safety program for the competition venue hosting an NCAA championship. Rather, facility managers and local public safety personnel should consider the current national threat level, nature of specific threats and the full range of resources available when responding to changes in the threat condition levels.

Please submit your final safety and security plan with your bid materials. In addition, you will be prompted to provide information for the Critical Incident Response Team form when completing our bid via the NCAA Championships Bid Portal. Please be as specific as possible when providing emergency contacts and numbers.

Unless otherwise expressly authorized by applicable law, no firearms or weapons are permitted on the premises for NCAA championships and events, excluding authorized law enforcement officers. Failure to abide may subject the individual to ejection as well as other applicable discipline or action. The foregoing shall not limit the applicable equipment used in and for fencing and rifle competitions in accordance with NCAA rules, at the venues for such competitions.

WEATHER

To support and facilitate host institution management of weather and other environmental considerations and requirements, the NCAA will provide a complimentary lightning detection and weather monitoring system to each host institution on a complimentary basis for all rounds of competition for outdoor championships. It is important that the location address provided by the site representative and tournament director in the monitoring system is the actual physical location of where the event is taking place.

It is expected that the host institution will identify one or more tournament staff members who will have the responsibility for weather monitoring. The site representative, host tournament staff, and any other stakeholders should share relevant email and/or cell phone contact information to enable timely receipt of all weather updates. A severe weather plan should be created and available for reference. The tournament director should also consider contacting a local meteorologist or the nearest National Weather Service office to further facilitate weather and environmental monitoring as part of each event.

If the tournament director and/or site representative determines that weather conditions could alter the approved championship event schedule, they should promptly contact the NCAA championship manager with a summary and details of the anticipated weather/environmental issue and proposed alternative schedule prior to making or announcing any formal changes.

Section 27 • Ticketing

TICKET POLICIES/OPERATIONS

1. **Ticket Design/Printing.** If championship tickets must be printed, the NCAA will manage the design and printing of the tickets, assigning specific duties to the LOC/host and competition venue as needed. The NCAA will forward artwork of the proposed ticket design to the LOC/host and competition venue for review and input. The NCAA logo shall be the only logo used on the front or back of the tickets unless specifically authorized by the NCAA. The name of the host institution/conference may be printed on the front of the ticket(s) and/or on the cover of the ticket booklet. The NCAA will coordinate the printing of the tickets unless the NCAA directs the LOC/host or competition venue to coordinate the printing. The LOC/host shall incur all expenses associated with ticket printing, unless directed otherwise by the NCAA.
2. **Ticket Pricing.** With input and a recommendation from the LOC/host, the NCAA shall establish all ticket prices, including tickets for suites and standing room only. One hundred percent (100%) of the revenues from ticket sales shall be included in the championships receipts to help offset the NCAA guarantee (if applicable), championship expenses, and further revenue sharing opportunities. Revenue from the sale of championship tickets and championship-related event tickets will be exempt from sales, amusement, entertainment taxes and other surcharge obligations to the extent possible. The NCAA is a 501c(3) tax exempt organization. If a tax exemption is not applicable, then all applicable taxes and rates shall be disclosed in the sport-specific facility questionnaire and any increases in the tax rates from the time the bid was submitted shall be absorbed by the bid respondent or rebated back to the NCAA.

Please note any minimum and maximum ticket prices as set forth by the committee or needed to meet financial guarantees.

The NCAA does not allow complimentary tickets to its championships. However, the NCAA will permit the purchase of tickets to use for championship promotional efforts. All ticket promotions must be approved in advance by the NCAA.

3. **Control of Ticket Sales.** The NCAA shall control all ticket sales for the championship, assigning specific duties to the LOC/host and competition venue as needed. The LOC/host and competition venue shall cooperate fully with the NCAA's official ticketing vendors and/or ticketing partners (e.g., primary ticket sales system provider, official ticket and hospitality package provider, official ticket exchange). The NCAA shall not be responsible for securing an exemption to any exclusive contracts the LOC/host, competition venue or surrounding areas/facilities might have, nor will the NCAA be responsible for any buyout or other means necessary to secure such an exemption.

Admittance to the competition venue on game days will be by ticket or NCAA-issued credential only. Every individual, regardless of age, must have a game ticket for admission, unless specified by the NCAA or venue policy. Unless specifically granted an exception, the NCAA requires that the competition venue utilize a ticket scanning system at all public access points into the competition venue. The host venue system will be used for access control, box office walk-up sales and day of event issue resolution in the box office.

4. **Control of Venue Seating.** The NCAA shall control all seating assignments within the competition venue, including club seating, press boxes, hospitality clubs and restaurants.

The NCAA shall be responsible for determining the allocation and the location of all ticket allotments.

The LOC/host or competition venue may not resell allotted championship game tickets at any price, nor enter into a sponsorship agreement or hospitality/travel package agreement with any ticket broker, tour packager or other secondary ticket marketer to provide championship tickets in return for other considerations unless specifically authorized by the NCAA.

5. **Suites.**
 - a. The competition venue shall stipulate a quantity of private viewing suites available for the sole use of the NCAA or its designees at the time of the bid. All revenue from such suites will belong to the NCAA.
 - b. The NCAA will provide tickets, as necessary to the LOC/host and/or competition venue for those suite holders displaced to fulfill the NCAA suite seat requirements.

- c. Subject to NCAA approval, suites not made available to the NCAA or its designees shall remain under the control of the competition venue. The face value ticket revenue for such suite seats will belong to the NCAA.
- d. Suite holders will have the opportunity to purchase tickets for the suite to which they have purchased tenant rights. The venue's box office staff if assigned by the NCAA, shall solicit and confirm suite purchases by suite holders. At that time, suites not purchased by suite holders will be made available to the NCAA for additional use/sales opportunities in accordance with the agreed upon financial parameters.

6. LOC/Host Ticket Policies.

- a. **Allocation.** For all championships other than Division I men's basketball, the NCAA shall allocate to the LOC/host a maximum of 10% of the saleable competition venue seats. These tickets shall be used to accommodate LOC/host guests, including but not limited to local contributors.
- b. **Budget Relief.** At its sole option, the NCAA shall notify the LOC/host of certain budget relief that may be provided in exchange for a reduction in the LOC/host ticket allotment.
- c. **Ticket Allocation Limitation.** No more than 20 tickets shall be made available from the LOC/host or competition venue to any one entity without NCAA approval.
- d. **Assignment Information.** The LOC/host shall provide the NCAA with the names of those individuals assigned to each seat within the LOC/host's ticket allocation.

Subject to NCAA approval, the assignment of general public seats is the competition venue box office's responsibility, unless directed otherwise by the NCAA. The seat locations shall be designated by the NCAA. The competition venue must be in compliance with all applicable city, state or federal laws and regulations including those concerning access and seating for individuals with disabilities and their companions and assist with inquiries from ticket purchasers or holders in need of accessible seating or companion seating. Additionally, the box office shall assist with all lost, stolen or misdirected ticket issues. The competition venue shall be responsible for the labor necessary, as well as costs incurred, to process and distribute lost, stolen or misdirected tickets.

7. Competition Venue Responsibilities.

- a. **Seating Manifest.** The competition venue shall forward the NCAA a complete ticket manifest with a PDF or CAD drawing of the venue's configuration and cooperate fully with any NCAA ticketing partners.
- b. **Final Manifest.** Upon completion of the site survey and determination of "kill" seats, the competition venue shall provide to the NCAA a final seating manifest, reflecting all saleable seats, available suites and available hospitality/party suites.
- c. **General Public Assignments.** Subject to NCAA approval, the assignment of general public seats is the competition venue box office's responsibility, unless directed otherwise by the NCAA. The competition venue must comply with all applicable city, state or federal laws and regulations including those concerning access and seating for the disabled and assist with inquiries from ticket holders in need of disabled tickets. Additionally, the box office shall assist with all lost, stolen, or misdirected ticket issues. The competition venue shall be responsible for the labor necessary, as well as costs incurred, to process and distribute lost, stolen, or misdirected tickets.
- d. **Sales Reports.** The competition venue's box office shall be responsible for providing the NCAA with timely and accurate sales reports. Reports should be provided on a regular basis, as directed by the NCAA. The competition venue's box office shall cooperate fully with the NCAA's official ticketing vendors and/or ticketing partners in providing the reports.
- e. **Final Ticket Database.** Each host conference, institution and/or venue must provide ticket purchaser information to the NCAA upon request, as well as, at the conclusion of the competition. Collecting purchaser information is essential for marketing efforts and postevent purchaser surveys which allow the NCAA to improve the championships experience. All relevant purchaser information must be submitted in an Excel or CSV file. The information should include, but not be limited to: Last Name, First Name, Address, City, State, Zip Code, Email, Phone Number and purchase information such as Total Seats Purchased and Total Purchase Price.

2024-25 STANDARD TICKET BACK DISCLAIMER LANGUAGE

The NCAA's standard ticket back language is posted online at [ncaa.com/ticket-terms](https://www.ncaa.com/ticket-terms).

The ticket back language should be placed on the back of all ticket stubs, but if it cannot be done (e.g., no new ticket stock is produced), this language must at a minimum be posted at all ticket windows for patrons to see, be included as an insert with the ticket mailing, etc. Patrons must be put on notice regarding the restrictions.

Section 28 • Transportation

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

Teams eligible for air travel must arrange make arrangements through Short's Travel. Short's can be reached at 866-655-9215 or by email at ncaaalo@shortstravel.com.

Institutions that fly, and are eligible for NCAA paid transportation on-site, will be required to use Short's Travel (STM Driven) to book on-site ground transportation. Short's Travel (STM Driven) can be reached at 844-814-3939 or at ncaachamps@stmDriven.com.

The home team ground transportation will be arranged by the institution in accordance with NCAA safety standards. Institutions that are eligible to drive to the championship will book ground transportation independently in accordance with the NCAA safety standards and seek reimbursement through the NCAA Travel Expense System (TES).

Expense reimbursement for participation in championships will be filed through our online system. The TES can be found at travel.ncaa.org.

All NCAA Championship travel information can be found [here](#).

PARKING

The host institution is responsible for securing complimentary parking at team hotels for team buses and any courtesy vehicles provided, if possible. The competition venue shall provide a designated complimentary parking area for team buses and courtesy cars at the competition venue.

Section 29 • Volunteers

GOAL AND RECRUITMENT

A volunteer program for the championship should be implemented to accomplish the following goals:

- Provide an enthusiastic and warm welcome to participants and guests.
- Answer questions and provide information to visitors.
- Contribute to the general excitement surrounding the championship.
- Assist the LOC with championship operations.

Championship volunteer programs should represent the student-athletes and communities we serve, embrace diversity and be inclusive of individuals from all backgrounds and identities. The NCAA and the LOC shall encourage recruitment and participation of volunteers from a talent pool of individuals that reflect diversity across all aspects, including race, age, sex, class, national origin, creed, educational background, religion, gender identity, disability, gender expression, geographical location, income, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation and work experiences. The LOC/host institution should keep the NCAA's commitment to diversity top of mind as they assign volunteers to the various roles and responsibilities throughout the championship.

Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older and must sign a volunteer release waiver. Individuals with driving responsibilities MUST be 25 years of age or older.

Student-athletes or prospect-aged individuals MAY NOT be recruited in any way different than general public volunteers. The Local Organizing Committee (LOC) cannot make a specific volunteer presentation to student-athletes of the host institution/conference. Student-athletes and prospect-aged individuals may apply to volunteer in the same manner as individuals from the general public. Student-athletes and prospect-aged individuals must be selected by the same criteria as the general public applicants.

The NCAA may request additional volunteers from the LOC as necessary.

WAIVERS

Each volunteer must sign a waiver of liability before the start of the championship. If there is a written agreement governing volunteer service, a release component must be added if one does not already exist. After the championship, all waivers shall be collected and kept on file, in case requested.

APPAREL

The NCAA will coordinate ordering and production of the apparel through the NCAA volunteer apparel program. BDA Sports and Event 1 have been selected as the official NCAA volunteer apparel providers for all 2024-25 championships. The NCAA will offer its Corporate Champions/Partners the opportunity to help offset the cost. The champion/partner is permitted to place one logo on each apparel item, if a separate apparel item is provided for these volunteers.

The championship logo and the licensee's mark will be embroidered on the apparel. The licensee's logo may appear on the right chest or sleeve. The licensee's logo may be no larger than 2¼ inches square.

The LOC will distribute uniforms during the required volunteer training sessions to ensure each volunteer's commitment. When ordering uniforms, the LOC will ensure that apparel includes women's styles and sizes.

The games management staff, media coordination staff and host media operations staff should be included in the overall volunteer numbers and should receive volunteer apparel.

NOTE: Hosts shall work in collaboration with the championship administrator on the selection, ordering and distribution of volunteer apparel.

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Appendix A • Bat Testing

NCAA Softball Postseason On-Site Portable Barrel Compression Testing (BCT) General Information

- The host tournament director is responsible for providing the NCAA site representative with a secure location to bat test, their bat testing fixture, the stickers shipped from the NCAA and printing the administrative bat log for each team from the Ref Quest website.
- Coaches, or a team representative, must bring their team's bats and their current NCAA Approved Softball Bat List (referred to hereafter as the "Bat List") for BCT to the designated location at the appropriate time on each game day.
- Once the coach has their bats lined up in the order in which they appear on the list, the bat testing manager shall match the model number of each bat with the models highlighted on the team's Bat List and verify the correct number of each is listed in the appropriate column.
- The bat testing manager shall barrel compression test each bat, per the protocol, until there are two passes or two failures (whichever comes first), using 1550psi as the standard minimum or the specific, lower exception number listed for backstop style bats (as listed on the Bat List).
- Sticker bats that pass and, when necessary, amend the team's Bat List to account for failures. Bats that fail must be marked with the team's name, secured from the team's possession by the host and will be shipped for further analysis at the conclusion of the post season tier.
- Complete the information in the summary box (lavender) on page one of the team's Bat List for the team's use on the field of play.
- On the first testing day, ask the team representative to complete an administrative bat log (provided by the host tournament director) to reflect all bat models tested and their respective pass/fail status. The log may be used by the bat testing manager for each future testing day and eventually will be used by the NCAA Softball Rules Committee.
- After the initial testing day, the bat testing manager may use either the administrative bat log or the team's Bat List to perform the subsequent day testing but must copy the results from the testing document to the other document at the end of the daily testing.
- At the conclusion of testing for each tier, return the completed administrative bat logs, unused stickers and the bat testing fixture to the host tournament director.

Bat Testing Details for Coaches in The NCAA Postseason

Pre-Competition Barrel Compression Testing (BCT)

General Information

1. Pre-competition BCT will be conducted daily (competition days only) at all rounds and at all sites during the NCAA Softball Championship using the G4 SSL fixture.

2. Each team must have every bat that will be in a team area or on the field tested during the pre-competition testing. There is no limit to the number of bats a team may have tested, and bats may be added on any testing day.
3. Coaches, or a team representative, must bring a current NCAA Approved Softball Bat List (hereafter referred to as “Bat List”) with their bat models highlighted and quantities noted to the testing site and have that copy in their dugout during each game for use by umpires.
4. Bat models must be legible and exactly match those on the Bat List.
5. The bat testing manager will sticker each bat that passes BCT with an appropriate sticker for each day.
6. Bats that have not undergone BCT, and thus do not have the appropriate sticker, will not be permitted on the competition field or in team areas.

Testing Protocol

1. At each postseason site, at least one individual designated by the NCAA Championship Committee will conduct BCT as the bat testing manager (most likely the NCAA site representative) according to the protocol listed in Rule 5.2 of the 2024 and 2025 NCAA Softball Rules Book.
2. The bat testing appointments and location will be determined by the site representative/tournament director.
3. Each team must send a coach or team representative with its bats and its annotated Bat List to the testing. This representative shall assemble the bats in order as they appear on the current Bat List and take possession of the team’s annotated Bat List and stickered bats after testing by the bat testing manager.
4. The bat testing manager shall match each bat’s model number to the annotated Bat List and may request assistance from the team representative for reminders of BCT minimums for backstop style models and/or for applying the daily sticker for bats that pass.
5. BCT details: Each bat is tested, unclamped from the machine, rotated 90 degrees and then tested again until there are two passes or two failures (whichever comes first). Passing bats are stickered. Failing bats are secured by the tournament host and will be shipped to an NCAA designee for additional testing.
6. Following testing, the bat testing manager shall complete the summary box (lavender) on the first page of the team’s annotated Bat List for use by the game umpires.
7. On the first testing day, an administrative bat log (provided by the host tournament director) must be completed to reflect all bat models tested and their respective pass/fail status. The log or the team’s Bat List may be used by the bat testing manager for daily testing, but the two lists must match at the end of each testing period.
8. All bats surrendered to the bat testing manager will not be returned to the teams while on-site. Please note an exception exists for damaged (e.g., cracked, dented) bats which will be marked and may be returned to the team upon their request following the team’s final game of the round.

Post-Competition Bat Compliance Testing

General Information

1. As in the past, two (2) bats will be selected and secured from teams in each of the three division’s NCAA final games and from the six (6) WCWS teams failing to qualify for the final game for bat compliance testing.
2. Bats selected to be tested in the lab will be selected randomly, based on performance or based on what is currently in the NCAA bat database.

3. Selected bats will not be collected until the season has ended for the participating team.
4. Results on bats sent to the lab, whether taken post-competition as noted above or for failing BCT, will take approximately three (3) months to obtain.
5. Bats that pass lab testing will be returned; however, bats that fail in the lab will remain surrendered.
6. Affected institutions, the appropriate bat manufacturers, the NCAA Softball Rules Committee and the relevant NCAA Championship Committee will receive notification of a bat model that fails in the lab.

Bat Testing Details for NCAA Postseason Site Representatives and Host Tournament Directors

Materials provided by:

- Host tournament director - secure location with a table and three (3) chairs, BCT case (with BCT fixture, calibration ring, stop stick, athletic tape and Sharpie pen), NCAA provided stickers for the bat testing manager and printed administrative log sheets for each team.
- Each team - dispatch a coach or team representative for testing at the designated time with a current, annotated NCAA Approved Softball Bat List and all bats which will be in the dugout or on the field.
- NCAA softball equipment consultant - mail envelopes with stickers separated by day and provide electronic log sheets to the host tournament director.

BCT Process for Bat Testing Managers

1. Verify the fixture's proper calibration each time it is set up by placing the calibration ring in the fixture and testing it for the stiffness (psi) stamped on the ring.
2. Match the model number on each bat with the model number on the latest NCAA Approved Softball Bat List. **THE NUMBERS/LETTERS MUST BE LEGIBLE AND EXACTLY MATCH...NO EXCEPTIONS.** If it does not match, disqualify the bat by applying provided athletic tape with team name to barrel. Disqualified bats remain with the site representative or tournament director until their return is requested as the team departs. Record the disqualified bat(s) on the front page of the team's log sheet as illegal.
3. If listed, test the bat by placing it in the BCT fixture until the endcap touches the stop stick; place the calibration ring under the handle so the bat is level and square to the fixture for testing. With the lever hanging down, preload the gauge to 500psi by twisting the gauge then lift the lever. Mentally note the pass/fail result.
4. Bats are considered to pass when the BCT pressure gauge reads 1550psi or higher unless the bat being tested is noted on the NCAA Approved Softball Bat List as an exception having a lower minimum (noted by asterisks).
5. Release the pressure and rotate bat 90 degrees and retest. Mentally note the pass/fail result.
6. If both results are the same (pass/pass or fail/fail), that result is final.
7. If the results differ, inspect the bat for damage. If found, the bat is disqualified as noted in #2 above. If no damage is found, test the bat a third time to determine the final result.
8. For bats that pass, place the appropriate sticker on the taper of the bat nearest the grip, preferably on top of previous stickers. **STICKERS ARE SPECIFIC TO EACH DAY, FRAGILE AND CANNOT BE REAPPLIED AND IF YOU HAVE AN INSUFFICIENT NUMBER OF STICKERS FOR ANY ONE DAY, APPLY HALF STICKERS.**
9. For bats that fail, apply the provided athletic tape with the team's name to the barrel. Failed bats remain with the site representative or tournament director and will NOT be returned to the team but instead, sent for further analysis.
10. In all cases, direct the team representative to record the model and only the final test result for each bat presented for testing on the NCAA-provided administrative log

sheet.

11. Following testing, the bat testing manager is responsible for completing the lavender portion of the first page of each team's annotated NCAA Approved Softball Bat List for later use by the game umpires.
12. At the end of testing for the team, verify the numbers of stickered and disqualified (damaged, illegal and failed) bats match the team's Bat List and administrative log sheet. The site representative takes possession of disqualified bats as well as the administrative log sheet.
13. After the first testing day, the bat testing manager may use either the administrative bat log or the team's Bat List for subsequent testing. However, the lists must match at the end of daily testing.

The host tournament director is responsible for attaching the completed NCAA-provided administrative log sheets to an email and shipping any bats that failed BCT to the NCAA Softball Equipment Consultant no later than the next day (excluding Sundays). If the site will host the next round, shipping failed bats may be delayed until the next round testing is completed. **DO NOT DEVIATE FROM THIS PLAN WITHOUT FIRST TALKING TO DEE ABRAHAMSON, NCAA SOFTBALL EQUIPMENT CONSULTANT.**

Contact info for Dee Abrahamson:

Cell: 815-751-2648

Email: abrahamson@niu.edu

Shipping Address: 498 Quinlan Ave., DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Backup contact regarding BCT fixture or testing:

Donna Martin

Cell: 815-761-8626

Email: dmartin1@niu.edu

NCAA Softball On-Site Portable Barrel Compression Testing (BCT)-Post Season

