



PRECHAMPIONSHIP 2025-26 MANUAL

NCAA General Administrative Guidelines

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September 2025

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Section 1 • Introduction

During the 2025-26 academic year, the Association will sponsor 92 national championships – 43 for men, 47 for women and two for both men and women. Of the men's championships, four are National Collegiate Championships, 13 are Division I championships, 12 are Division II championships and 14 are Division III championships. Of the women's championships, eight are National Collegiate Championships, 12 are Division I championships, 13 are Division II championships and 14 are Division III championships. The combined men's and women's championships are National Collegiate Championships.

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

Sections one through nine apply to policies applicable to all 92 championships, while the remaining sections are sport specific.

Section 1.1 Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 2 • Championship Core Statement

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

This is attained by:

Ensuring student-athletes' optimal experience.

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

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

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

Assuring effective management of the business aspects of the operation.

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

Section 3 • Conduct

Section 3.1 Certification of Eligibility/Availability

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

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

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

DISCOVERY OF INELIGIBILITY OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE AFTER SELECTION

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

Section 3.2 Drug Testing

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

Section 3.3 Honesty and Sportsmanship

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

Section 3•4 Misconduct/Failure to Adhere to Policies

MISCONDUCT

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

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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

Section 3•5 Sports Wagering Policy

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

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

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

STUDENT-ATHLETES

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

POSTSEASON

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

HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

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

Section 3•6 Student-Athlete Experience Survey

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

an email containing a link to the survey and will be asked to forward the survey to student-athletes. Additionally, this survey will be accessible via QR code found on the back of NCAA-issued championship credentials.

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

Section 4 • Elite Scholar-Athlete™ Award

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

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

Section 5 • Fan Travel

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

Section 6 • Health and Safety

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

Section 7 • Logo Policy

[Reference: Bylaws 12.5.4, 31.1.7 and 31.1.8 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Bylaw 17.1.10 in the NCAA Division II Manual and Bylaw 12.5.3 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

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

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

2. The student-athlete's institution's official uniform (including numbered racing bibs and warmups) and all other items of apparel (e.g., socks, head bands, T-shirts, wrist bands, visors or hats, swim caps and towels) shall bear only a single manufacturer's or distributor's normal label or trademark (regardless of the visibility of the label or trademark), not to exceed 2-1/4 square inches in area (rectangle, square, parallelogram) including any additional material (e.g., patch) surrounding the normal trademark or logo. The student-athlete's institution's official uniform and all other items of apparel shall not bear a design element similar to the manufacturer's trademark/logo that is in addition to another trademark/logo that is contrary to the size restriction.

Section 8 • Research

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

Section 9 • Travel Party

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

Section 10 • Division III

Section 10•1 Division III Philosophy

The Division III championships philosophy is to field the most competitive teams within a regular-season philosophy that emphasizes regional competition and minimizes missed class time; and to provide representation in NCAA championship competition by allocating berths to eligible conferences and at-large teams.

Section 10•2 Commencement Conflicts

[Reference: Bylaw 31.1.4.5 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

If an institution's commencement conflicts with participation in the championship, it shall inform the NCAA championship manager in writing one week before the selection date for the governing sport committee to consider an accommodation and a change to the championship schedule.

The following guidelines apply to commencement requests:

- Applies to team sports only.
- The governing sport committee, in consultation with participating institutions, may reschedule the game on the nearest possible date.
- Does not apply to predetermined finals sites.
- The governing sport committee shall make a good-faith effort to accommodate participating institutions in non-predetermined preliminary-round contests with multiple teams participating at the same site.

Section 10•3 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.

Section 10•4 Religious Conflicts

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

Institutional Policy. If a participating institution has a written policy against competition on a particular day for religious reasons, it shall inform the NCAA national office before May 1 of the preceding academic year to be excused from competing on that day. The notification shall be valid for a period of two years. The championship schedule shall be adjusted to accommodate that institution, and such adjustment shall not require its team or an individual competitor to compete before the time originally scheduled.

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

Division III Softball

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Section 1 • General Administration

Section 1•1 NCAA Tournament Operations Staff Contact Information

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CJ Sowards

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Section 1•2 National Committee

Current members of the committee are:

REGION I

Casie Runksmeier, chair
Deputy Athletic Director/SWA
Colby College

REGION II

Dani Bishop
Head Softball Coach
Brandeis University

REGION III

Sara Curran-Headley
Head Softball Coach
State University of New York at Oneonta

REGION IV

Terry Small
Commissioner
New Jersey Athletic Conference

REGION V

Jackie Klahold
Assistant Athletic Director/Head Softball Coach
Wilkes University

REGION VI

Hannah Qualls
Head Softball Coach
University of Mary Washington

REGION VII

Van Zanic
Director of Athletics/Head Softball Coach
Alma College

REGION VIII

Kim Camara-Harvey
Director of Athletics
Blackburn College

REGION IX

Jaime Mueller
Head Softball Coach
Wartburg College

REGION X

Traci Barrett
Head Softball Coach
Pacific Lutheran University

For additional information about the Division III Softball Championship, contact:

Casie Runksmeier, Committee Chair

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Colby College
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Vickie Van Kleeck

NCAA Softball Secretary-Rules Editor
540-819-4655 / ncaasbre@gmail.com

Section 1•3 Important Dates

Saturday, Jan. 10	Deadline for institutions to submit their complete schedules online.
Friday, April 3	Bid information for selection of regional and super regional sites available online at ncaa.org . Deadline to submit bids is Friday, May 2.
Tuesdays, April 21, April 28, May 5 and Monday, May 11	Published rankings.
Friday, May 1, 5 p.m. Eastern time	Deadline for submitting bid materials to serve as a host institution for a regional or super regional tournament.
Sunday, May 10	Selection of teams.
Monday, May 11, 11 a.m. Eastern time	Online selection show to announce teams and regional sites selected for the championship.
Tuesday, May 12, 11 a.m. Eastern time	Videoconferences with respective regional host and participating teams.
Thursday-Saturday, May 14-16	Regionals.
Monday, May 18, noon Eastern time	Videoconferences with respective super regional host and participating teams.
Thursday-Friday, May 21-22	Super regionals.
Saturday, May 23, noon Eastern time	Videoconference with eight teams advancing to the finals.
Thursday-Wednesday, May 28-June 3	Championship at Moyer Sports Park, Salem, Virginia; host – City of Salem and the Old Dominion Athletic Conference.
June 22-23	Committee annual meeting (Indianapolis, Indiana).

CHAMPIONSHIP DATE FORMULA

Regionals (16)	One week before the super regionals (Thursday-Saturday)
Super Regionals (8)	One week before the finals (Thursday-Friday)
Finals	The week after Memorial Day Weekend (Thursday-Wednesday)

FUTURE DATES

Year	Regionals	Super Regionals	Championship / Site
2027	May 20-22	May 27-28	June 3-9 / Millikin University
2028	May 18-20	May 25-26	June 1-7 / East Texas Baptist University

Sites for regionals and super regionals are determined by the Division III Softball Committee. Finals sites are recommended by the Division III Softball Committee, with final approval from the Division III Championships Committee. (See [Appendix A](#) for brackets.)

Section 1•4 Division III Commencement Conflict Policy

If an institution's commencement conflicts with participation in the championship, it shall inform the NCAA championship manager in writing one week before the selection date for the governing sports committee to accommodate a request to alter the championship schedule.

The following guidelines apply to commencement requests:

- Applies to team sports only.
- The governing sports committee, in consultation with participating institutions, would reschedule the game on the nearest possible date if a participating school has a conflict.
- Does not apply to predetermined finals sites.

The governing sports committee shall make a good-faith effort to accommodate participating institutions in nonpredetermined preliminary-round contests with multiple teams participating at the same site.

Section 1•5 Division III Philosophy

The Division III championships philosophy is to field the most competitive teams possible while minimizing missed class time; to emphasize regional competition in regular-season scheduling; and to provide representation in NCAA championship competition by allocating berths to eligible conferences, independent institutions and a limited number of at-large teams, realizing that this may be done at the expense of leaving out some championship-caliber teams.

Section 1•6 Equipment

BALLS

The Rawlings NC12L is the official softball for the championship. Rawlings Sporting Goods Company, Inc. will supply softballs for all championship rounds; no other softball shall be used.

BATS

Coaches are responsible for legally equipping their team, including providing only undamaged bats that appear on the current NCAA-Approved Softball Bat List, as posted on refquest.com.

Bats will be confirmed as legal and barrel compression testing (BCT) will be performed by the NCAA bat testing manager (most often the NCAA site representative) on each competition day for each team. In addition, umpires shall verify the appropriateness of each team's bats prior to each game.

BAT TESTING

BCT will be conducted by the bat testing manager on competition days. The bat testing manager must be supplied by the host institution. The bat testing manager may be the NCAA site representative, if that individual chooses to perform those duties. However, the host must be prepared to supply a bat testing manager if the site representative chooses not to perform those duties. Bat testing will occur on competition days (not practice days) during all NCAA postseason rounds according to the protocol listed in Rule 5.2 of the current NCAA Softball Rules Book.

In addition to presenting their bats, coaches shall provide an annotated copy of the current NCAA-Approved Softball Bat List and complete the NCAA-provided BCT log sheet during testing.

The host institution shall provide the BCT fixture and a secure location for BCT. Additionally, bats that fail BCT must be secured before shipping them for further evaluation as designed by the NCAA Softball Rules Committee. The completed log sheets should be emailed to Dee Abrahamson (NCAA Softball Equipment Consultant - abrahamson@niu.edu) and the unused stickers can be retained by the host.

The bat testing manager shall match each bat to the appropriate model on the provided annotated NCAA-Approved Softball List and complete the summary on its first page. In addition, the bat testing manager will appropriately sticker bats that pass BCT, secure those that fail, and maintain possession of the team's log sheet.

The NCAA shall provide each site with the required log sheets, distinctive stickers for each round of testing, and detailed instructions. Please reference the appendixes for more information on BCT.

Section 1•7 Rules

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

The NCAA softball rules shall be followed, including the rules and changes/modifications below:

DIVISION III SOFTBALL

1. The complex must be enclosed so that admission can be charged.
2. The backstop must be at least 25 feet (maximum 30 feet) from home plate. When the backstop is wood, cement or brick, padding is required from dugout to dugout beginning not 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.
3. 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.

Institutional fields with a 6-foot or taller fence shall be a minimum of 190 feet in left and right fields and 220 feet in center field. Institutional fields with a 4-foot fence shall be a minimum of 210 feet in left and right fields and 230 feet in center field. It is highly recommended that municipal fields meet these same requirements.

For all new construction, it is required that the fence be six feet or higher and be a minimum of 200 feet in left and right fields and 220 feet in center field.

If a temporary home-run fence is used, it must be secured so as not to collapse on and displace the foul pole and to prevent balls from rolling under.

4. The international tiebreaker will not be used in championship play.

Section 1•8 Uniforms

Each competing team selected for the NCAA championship must bring two sets of uniforms of different colors. The home team shall select its desired uniform color, and the visiting team must wear a contrasting color jersey from the home team. Determination of uniform jersey colors must be approved by the NCAA site representative. When teams play back-to-back games against different opponents, they must be prepared to change 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. The site representative will advise on this process as needed. Noncompliance with this policy may result in misconduct as outlined in this manual. On the field, including the practice areas and the bench and dugout, each team is limited to eligible players in uniform and coaches, athletic trainers and managers, all of whom shall be in appropriate team colors and within the allotted bench size.

LOGOS

[Refer to General Administrative Guidelines, Section 7.](#)

Section 2 • Determination of Championship Participation

Section 2.1 Championship Format

The championship provides for a field of 64 teams. Four teams each will compete at 16 regional sites in a double-elimination tournament. The 16 teams advancing from regionals will compete in a two-team, best-of-three tournament at eight super regional sites.

The eight teams advancing from super regionals will compete at the finals site in a double-elimination tournament. The final two teams will compete in a best-of-three series to determine the national champion.

Regionals. The procedures outlined below shall be used in the conduct of all regional tournaments.

Regionals will begin Thursday after selections. Every attempt should be made to complete regional competition by the Saturday before super regionals. 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; or (2) completing competition would require a team to play three games in one day. (A team may be required to complete a halted game and play up to two additional games on the same day.) A team may be required to play three games in one day on the rain date (Sunday) to complete competition. If exceptions (e.g., weather) preclude the completion of competition by the end of Sunday, the advancing team will be determined based on the inclement weather formula in this section.

Games 1 and 2 will be played on the first day; Games 3, 4 and 5 will be played on the second day; and Game 6 (and Game 7, if necessary) will be played on the third day. The procedure below will be observed. Games follow in chronological order. No exceptions to game order will be permitted.

Day 1: Game 1	No. 1 seed vs. No. 4 seed
Game 2	No. 2 seed vs. No. 3 seed
Day 2: Game 3	Winner Game 1 vs. Winner Game 2
Game 4	Loser Game 1 vs. Loser Game 2
Game 5	Winner Game 4 vs. Loser Game 3
Day 3: Game 6	Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 5
Game 7	Winner Game 6 vs. Loser Game 6 (if necessary)

Super Regionals. Super regionals will be conducted for a two-day period beginning Thursday after regionals. Game 1 will be played on the first day; Game 2 (and Game 3, if necessary) will be played on the second day (Friday). Every attempt should be made to complete super regional competition by the Friday before the NCAA Division III Softball Championship. 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; or (2) completing competition would require a team to play three games in one day. (A team may be required to complete a halted game and play up to two additional games on the same day. Teams may be required to play three games in one day on the rain date to complete competition.) If exceptions (e.g., weather) preclude the completion of competition by Saturday, the advancing team will be determined based on the inclement weather formula in this section.

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

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Regionals	Thursday-Saturday, May 14-16
Super Regionals	Thursday-Friday, May 21-22
Championship	Thursday-Wednesday, May 28-June 3

STARTING TIMES

Starting times for regional and super regional games are included on the brackets in [Appendix A](#). Prospective host institutions may request alternate starting times for regional and super regional games in their bid materials for approval by the NCAA Division III Softball Committee. Game times should be scheduled a minimum of two hours apart and must follow the championship format below.

Regional and super regional start times:

- Thursday games shall be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 8:30 p.m.
- Friday games shall be scheduled between 10 a.m. and 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday games shall be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 8:30 p.m.

The committee shall determine game times for the finals.

LENGTH AND SCHEDULE OF GAMES

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 from the point of interruption. Every attempt should be made to complete regional competition by Saturday and super regional competition by Friday. 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, it would be necessary to begin a game after 11 p.m.
- (3) Completing competition would require a team to play three games in one day. (A team may be required to complete a halted game and play up to two additional games on the same day. On a rain date, a team may be required to play three games in one day.)

If competition must be extended to the additional day, it must be completed without starting a game after 11 p.m. that day. (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 inclement weather advancement formula to determine the advancing team.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

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

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

0 games played	Higher seed
1 game played	Winner of Game 1
2 games played	If each team has one loss, the higher seed

SQUAD SIZE

Each team is limited to 20 eligible players to compete and an official travel party of 25. The dugout limit is 30, plus one or two medical professionals for a total of up to 32. Each team will submit a credential list and will be provided credentials for anyone on the list, up to 32 individuals. Any individuals not included on the credential list must purchase a ticket for admission to the venue. A participating institution's sports information director can receive a separate media credential and is not included in the allotment of participant credentials, if preferred. All student-athletes within the dugout limit (32) may be in uniform, but only the 20 listed on the roster are eligible to compete in that game. If an institution has additional personnel traveling (i.e., AD, SWA, Chancellor/President) that needs a credential, please utilize the administrator credential link (finals site only) or reach out to the site representative (regionals and super regionals) for approval for additional credentials that do not provide dugout access and only allow admittance into the facility.

Teams will submit a 20-player roster for each game (i.e., regionals, super regionals and the finals). Once the game begins, no changes may be made to a team roster for any reason. Coaches may include different individuals for each game in each round. However, the number of eligible players per game shall not exceed 20.

The number of people allowed in the dugout shall not exceed 32, or 33 if the host provides a bat handler. A bat handler must be at least 10 years of age. An institution that is advised it is in violation of this regulation and does not promptly conform to it shall automatically forfeit the competition. There shall be no inordinate delay of the contest to allow a competing institution to conform to the rule.

There will be no exceptions regarding this section.

TRAVEL PARTY

[Reference: Per Diem and Transportation in the Division III General Section.]

Transportation expenses and per diem will be provided for an official travel party of 25.

Section 2•2 Results

REGIONAL RANKINGS

While regional advisory committee members will not be ranking teams in their region, regional NPI rankings will be published. The top teams from each region will be taken from the NPI database and published by region in descending order. For example, to establish Region I rankings, the Region I teams will be extracted from the NPI list in the order they appear to fill the established number of ranked teams (i.e., maximum of seven per region).

Regional rankings will be published on ncaa.com the last three weeks of the regular season (April 22, April 29 and May 6) and in conjunction with selections (May 11). Score-reporting deadlines will begin several weeks before the published rankings. All regions will rank no more than seven institutions.

SCORE REPORTING

Schools will submit all schedule and results information to the NCAA statistics site (web1.ncaa.org/stats/StatsSrv/login), and this information will be transferred to the NCAA Power Index for use by the Softball Committee. Specific instructions and reporting deadlines will be communicated to sports information directors in a preseason memorandum distributed by the media coordination and statistics staff. For questions regarding the score-reporting process, please contact Marcus Thatcher (mthatcher@ncaa.org or 317-917-6949).

Section 2•3 Selections Information

[Reference: Bylaws 31.01.2, 31.01.3 and 31.3 in the NCAA Manual.]

At-large teams will be selected using the NCAA Power Index (NPI), the system that houses the division's statistical data and objectively applies the selection criteria to the data based on the sport committee's established weighted criteria. The Division III Softball NPI is a combination of the following: winning percentage; strength of schedule; and a quality win bonus. Teams will be selected not later than Monday, May 11.

NPI will determine the at-large teams selected to the championship after the Automatic Qualifiers (AQ) are designated.

ALLOCATION OF BERTHS

The 64-team field will consist of two selection pools: AQs and at-large berths. AQ berths will be allocated to automatic qualifying conferences. The criteria for receiving automatic qualification are outlined in Bylaw 31.3.4 of the NCAA Division III Manual. At-large berths will be reserved for all remaining institutions not receiving an AQ. The 42 conferences receiving automatic qualification for the tournament are:

MULTI-REGION CONFERENCE

University Athletic Association

REGION VI

Collegiate Conference of the South
Old Dominion Athletic Conference
Southern Athletic Association
USA South Athletic Conference

REGION I

Great Northeast Athletic Conference
New England Small College Athletic Conference
North Atlantic Conference

REGION VII

Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference
Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association
North Coast Athletic Conference
Ohio Athletic Conference
Presidents' Athletic Conference

REGION II

Conference of New England
Little East Conference
Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference
New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference

REGION VIII

College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin
Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference
Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference
St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

REGION III

Empire 8
Liberty League
Skyline Conference
State University of New York Athletic Conference

REGION IX

American Rivers Conference
Midwest Conference
Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
Upper Midwest Athletic Conference

REGION IV

City University of New York Athletic Conference
Middle Atlantic Conference
New Jersey Athletic Conference
United East

REGION X

American Southwest Conference
Northwest Conference
Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference

REGION V

Atlantic East Conference
Centennial Conference
Landmark Conference
Middle Atlantic Conference - Commonwealth

DIVISION III SITE-SELECTION CRITERIA

The Division III Championships Committee prioritized the site-selection criteria in the following order for Division III championships:

1. Protection of top four ranked teams in the bracket.
2. Quality and availability of the facility and other necessary accommodations.
3. Geographical location (including such factors as rotation of sites, weather conditions, accessibility and transportation costs).
4. Attendance history and revenue potential, which shall be considered necessary to assure fiscal responsibility.

COUNTABLE COMPETITION

For NCAA team-championship selection purposes, competition is countable only when the teams played are varsity intercollegiate teams of four-year, degree-granting institutions that conduct a majority of their competition in that team sport against varsity intercollegiate teams (see NCAA Constitution 3.2.4.4) of United States four-year, degree-granting institutions. Competition against service teams, professional teams, semiprofessional teams, amateur teams, two-year colleges and club teams shall be excluded.

IN-REGION COMPETITION

To be considered during the selection process either as an automatic berth or at-large selection, an institution must play at least 70% of its scheduled competition against Division III in-region opponents, unless a waiver was approved by the Division III Championships Committee.

In-region competition is defined as:

1. Contests against Division III opponents within an institution's defined sport region.
2. Contests against Division III opponents within an institution's geographical region. (Constitution 4.13.1.1)
3. Contests against Division III institutions within a 500-mile radius. The NCAA Travel Expense System (TES) (web1.ncaa.org/TES/exec/TES/exec/miles) will be used to confirm the distance from campus to campus.
4. Contests against conference opponents.
5. Contests against institutions in any year of the provisional or reclassifying process into Division III (within the same geographical region).

Bylaw 31.3.2.3 Exception. For sports with a spring NCAA championship, an institution may exempt out-of-region contests conducted during one institutional vacation period (e.g., spring break). (Adopted:4/15/14, effective 8/1/14.)

Section 2•4 Selection Criteria

[Reference: Bylaw 31.3.4.2 – Selection Criteria.]

NCAA POWER INDEX

Selection as an at-large participant in the Division III Softball Championship will be made using the NCAA Power Index (NPI). The NPI is a system that houses the division's statistical data and objectively applies the selection criteria to the data based on the Division III Softball Committee's established weighted criteria. For Division III softball, the NPI is a combination of winning percentage, strength of schedule and a quality win bonus. The NPI for Division III softball does not use a home/away multiplier or an extra innings win/loss component. The weight of winning percentage versus strength of schedule is often referred to as one of the dials that a sport committee can adjust, placing any subjectivity within the criteria themselves. The Division III Softball committee set the dials to 25 (win/loss)/75 (strength of schedule). The other dial the Division III Softball Committee chose to apply is a quality win bonus (QWB). Please see Appendix C for further details about the NPI components and how it is calculated.

PAIRINGS

[Reference: Bylaw 31.3.5.1 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

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 the minimum bid specification requirements was placed 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.

Section 2•5 Site Selection

PROSPECTIVE HOSTS

Any institution interested in hosting a regional or super regional of the NCAA Division III Softball Championship must submit a proposed budget, respond to sport-specific questions (if applicable) and ensure that the institution's key contacts and facility information are complete and current in the Championships Bid and Profile System. To submit a bid, individuals must first locate the desired championship in the Championships Available for Bidding section and select Start Bid. The highest-ranked teams will be given consideration as regional and super regional sites, assuming they meet the requirements of Bylaw 31.1.3.2.1 and the seed protection pilot criteria are met. The highest ranked team with an acceptable bid by the bid deadline will be given priority consideration as the super regional host. Additionally, if neither super regional institution submitted a bid to host by the bid deadline, the highest ranked team in the super regional match up will be given the opportunity to host first, and if that institution cannot host, the opposing team will be selected as the host.

CHAMPIONSHIPS BID AND PROFILE SYSTEM

The Championships Bid and Profile System can be accessed at championships.ncaa.org. The deadline to submit all bid materials for hosting a regional or super regional round for this championship is 5 p.m. Eastern time Friday, May 1.

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

- Lodging for site representatives.
- Lodging for umpires.
- State and city taxes/fees.
- Ticket and facility fees.

Per diem, mileage and baggage fees for site representatives will be paid by the NCAA, not the host institution. Umpires will be reimbursed via the RefQuest system for their game fees, per diem, mileage and baggage fees.

FACILITY PROFILE

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

KEY CONTACTS

Institutions interested in hosting a preliminary round of the 2026 NCAA Division III Softball Championship must submit a key contacts form via the Championships Bid and Profile System by 5 p.m. Eastern time Friday, May 1.

SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN

Based on a review of current and future championships competition venues, discussions with safety and security experts, and its own expertise and knowledge, the NCAA established a Safety and Security Advisory Group (SSAG) to develop a compilation of best practices for NCAA championships. We urge each competition venue to take these best practices into account when developing its safety and security program. A safety and security plan for the venue must be submitted with all bids, in addition to the NCAA Championships Safety and Security Team contact information form, which is in Appendix A of the [Best Practices document](#).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact Corey Bray (cbray@ncaa.org; 317-917-6076) or email championshipbid@ncaa.org with bid process questions.

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

[Reference: Bylaw 31.4 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

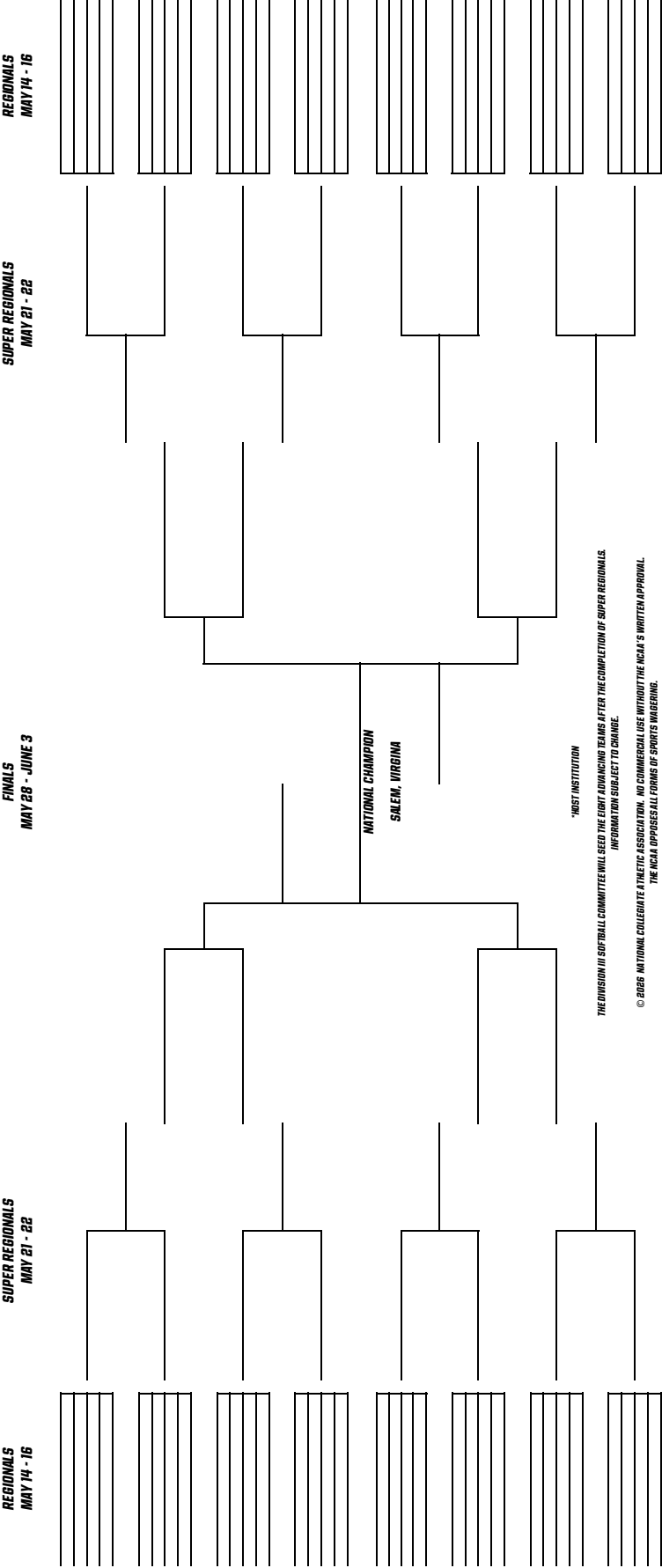
A final financial report from each championship site must be submitted via the Championships Bid and Host Profile portal under the budget tab not later than 60 days after the conclusion of competition.

Appendixes

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Appendix A • Bracket



Appendix B • Sport Sponsorship

2025-26 Division III Softball Regional Alignment

REGION I (33 Eligible Teams)

Great Northeast Athletic Conference (14)

1. Albertus Magnus College
2. Colby-Sawyer College
3. Dean College
4. Elms College
5. Emmanuel College (Massachusetts)
6. Lasell University
7. Mitchell College
8. New England College
9. Norwich University
10. Regis College (Massachusetts)
11. Rivier University
12. University of Saint Joseph (Connecticut)
13. Saint Joseph's College (Maine)
14. Simmons University

AQ – Conference Championship

New England Small College Athletic Conference (10)

1. Amherst College
2. Bates College
3. Bowdoin College
4. Colby College
5. Hamilton College
6. Middlebury College
7. Trinity College (Connecticut)
8. Tufts University
9. Wesleyan University (Connecticut)
10. Williams College

AQ – Conference Championship

North Atlantic Conference (9)

1. Husson University
2. Lesley University
3. University of Maine, Farmington
4. University of Maine, Presque Isle
5. State University of New York at Cobleskill
6. State University of New York at Delhi
7. Thomas College
8. Vermont State University-Lyndon
9. Vermont State University-Johnson

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION II (41 Eligible Teams)**Conference of New England (11)**

1. Curry College
2. Endicott College
3. Gordon College
4. University of Hartford
5. Johnson & Wales University (Providence)
6. University of New England
7. Nichols College
8. Roger Williams University
9. Suffolk University
10. Wentworth Institute of Technology
11. Western New England University

AQ – Conference Championship

Little East Conference (9)

1. Eastern Connecticut State University
2. Keene State College
3. University of Massachusetts Boston
4. University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth
5. Plymouth State University
6. Rhode Island College
7. University of Southern Maine
8. Vermont State University Castleton
9. Western Connecticut State University

AQ – Conference Championship

Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference (9)

1. Anna Maria College
2. Bridgewater State University
3. Fitchburg State University
4. Framingham State University
5. Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
6. Massachusetts Maritime Academy
7. Salem State University
8. Westfield State University
9. Worcester State University

AQ – Conference Championship

New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (11)

1. Babson College
2. Clark University (Massachusetts)
3. Emerson College
4. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
5. Salve Regina University
6. Smith College
7. Springfield College
8. U.S. Coast Guard Academy
9. Wellesley College
10. Wheaton College (Massachusetts)
11. Worcester Polytechnic Institute

AQ – Conference Championship

University Athletic Association (1) (*multi-region conference – II, IV, VI, VII, and VIII*)

1. Brandeis University

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION III (40 Eligible Teams)

Empire 8 (12)

1. Alfred University
2. Elmira College
3. Hartwick College
4. Houghton University
5. Keuka College
6. Nazareth University
7. Russell Sage College
8. St. John Fisher College
9. State University of New York Brockport
10. State University of New York Geneseo
11. State University of New York Polytechnic Institute
12. Utica University

AQ – Conference Championship

Liberty League (8)

1. Clarkson University
2. Ithaca College
3. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
4. University of Rochester
5. Rochester Institute of Technology
6. Skidmore College
7. St. Lawrence University
8. Union College (New York)

AQ – Conference Championship

Skyline Conference (10)

1. Farmingdale State College
2. Manhattanville University
3. Mount Saint Mary College (New York)
4. Purchase College, State University of New York
5. Sarah Lawrence College
6. St. Joseph's University (Brooklyn)
7. St. Joseph's University (Long Island)
8. State University of New York at Old Westbury
9. University of Mount Saint Vincent
10. Yeshiva University

AQ – Conference Championship

State University of New York Athletic Conference (10)

1. Buffalo State, State University of New York
2. Plattsburgh State University of New York
3. State University of New York at Canton
4. State University of New York at Cortland
5. The State University of New York at Fredonia
6. State University of New York at Morrisville
7. State University of New York at New Paltz
8. State University of New York at Oneonta
9. State University of New York at Oswego
10. State University of New York at Potsdam

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION IV (38 Eligible Teams, 1 Prov.)**City University of New York Athletic Conference (6)**

1. Baruch College
2. Brooklyn College
3. Hunter College
4. John Jay College of Criminal Justice
5. Lehman College
6. York College (New York)

AQ – Conference Championship

Middle Atlantic Conference - Freedom (8)

1. Arcadia University
2. Delaware Valley College
3. DeSales University
4. Fairleigh Dickinson University, Florham
5. King's College (Pennsylvania)
6. Lebanon Valley College
7. Misericordia University
8. Stevens Institute of Technology

AQ – Conference Championship

Independent (1)

1. Rosemont College

New Jersey Athletic Conference (10)

1. Kean University
2. Montclair State University
3. The College of New Jersey
4. New Jersey City University
5. Ramapo College
6. Rowan University
7. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Camden
8. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark
9. Stockton University
10. William Paterson University of New Jersey

AQ – Conference Championship

United East (12, 1 Prov.)

1. Cairn University
2. Cedar Crest College
3. Gallaudet University
4. Keystone College
5. Lancaster Bible College
6. Notre Dame of Maryland University
7. Penn State Berks College
8. #Penn State Brandywine* (active 2027-28)
9. Penn State Harrisburg
10. Penn State University, Abington
11. Pennsylvania College of Technology
12. University of Valley Forge
13. Wilson College

AQ – Conference Championship

University Athletic Association (1) (*multi-region conference – II, IV, VI, VII, and VIII*)

1. New York University

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION V (34 Eligible Teams)

Atlantic East Conference (7)

1. Centenary University (New Jersey)
2. Gwynedd Mercy University
3. Immaculata University
4. Marymount University (Virginia)
5. Marywood University
6. Neumann University
7. Saint Elizabeth University

AQ – Conference Championship

Centennial Conference (9)

1. Dickinson College
2. Franklin & Marshall College
3. Gettysburg College
4. Haverford College
5. McDaniel College
6. Muhlenberg College
7. Swarthmore College
8. Ursinus College
9. Washington College (Maryland)

AQ – Conference Championship

Coast-to-Coast (1) (*multi-region conference – V, VI, and VIII*)

1. Salisbury University

Landmark Conference (9)

1. Catholic University
2. Drew University
3. Elizabethtown College
4. Juniata College
5. Lycoming College
6. Moravian College
7. University of Scranton
8. Susquehanna University
9. Wilkes University

AQ – Conference Championship

**Middle Atlantic Conference -
Commonwealth (8)**

1. Albright College
2. Alvernia University
3. Eastern University
4. Hood College
5. Messiah University
6. Stevenson University
7. Widener University
8. York College (Pennsylvania)

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION VI (40 Eligible Teams, 1 Prov.)**Coast-to-Coast (2, 1 Prov.) (multi-region conference – V, VI and VIII)**

1. Christopher Newport University
2. #Johnson & Wales University Charlotte*
3. University of Mary Washington

Collegiate Conference of the South (9)

1. Agnes Scott College
2. Asbury University
3. Belhaven University
4. Covenant College
5. Huntingdon College
6. LaGrange College
7. Maryville College (Tennessee)
8. Piedmont University
9. Wesleyan College (Georgia)

AQ – Conference Championship

Old Dominion Athletic Conference (11)

1. Averett University
2. Bridgewater College (Virginia)
3. Eastern Mennonite University
4. Guilford College
5. University of Lynchburg
6. Randolph College
7. Randolph-Macon College
8. Roanoke College
9. Shenandoah University
10. Sweet Briar College
11. Virginia Wesleyan University

AQ – Conference Championship

Southern Athletic Association (7)

1. Berry College
2. Centre College
3. Millsaps College
4. Rhodes College
5. University of the South
6. Southwestern University (Texas)
7. Trinity University (Texas)

AQ – Conference Championship

USA South Athletic Conference (10)

1. Brevard College
2. Greensboro College
3. Mary Baldwin University
4. Meredith College
5. Methodist University
6. North Carolina Wesleyan University
7. Pfeiffer University
8. Salem College (North Carolina)
9. Southern Virginia University
10. William Peace University

AQ – Conference Championship

University Athletic Association (1) (multi-region conference – II, IV, VI, VII, and VIII)

1. Emory University

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION VII (48 Eligible Teams, 1 Prov.)

Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference (8, 1 Prov.)

1. Alfred State College
2. #Carlow University (active 2026-27)*
3. Hilbert College
4. La Roche University
5. Mount Aloysius College
6. Penn State University, Altoona
7. Pennsylvania State University Erie, the Behrend College
8. University of Pittsburgh, Bradford
9. University of Pittsburgh, Greensburg

AQ – Conference Championship

Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (9)

1. Adrian College
2. Albion College
3. Alma College
4. Calvin University
5. Hope College
6. Kalamazoo College
7. The University of Olivet
8. Saint Mary's College (Indiana)
9. Trine University

AQ – Conference Championship

North Coast Athletic Conference (8)

1. Denison University
2. DePauw University
3. John Carroll University
4. Kenyon College
5. Oberlin College
6. Ohio Wesleyan University
7. Wittenberg University
8. The College of Wooster

AQ – Conference Championship

Ohio Athletic Conference (9)

1. Baldwin Wallace University
2. Capital University
3. Heidelberg University
4. Marietta College
5. University of Mount Union
6. Muskingum University
7. Ohio Northern University
8. Otterbein University
9. Wilmington College (Ohio)

AQ – Conference Championship

Presidents' Athletic Conference (12)

1. Allegheny College
2. Bethany College (West Virginia)
3. Chatham University
4. Franciscan University of Steubenville
5. Geneva College
6. Grove City College
7. Hiram College
8. Saint Vincent College
9. Thiel College
10. Washington and Jefferson College
11. Waynesburg University
12. Westminster College (Pennsylvania)

AQ – Conference Championship

University Athletic Association (2) (*multi-region conference – II, IV, VI, VII, and VIII*)

1. Carnegie Mellon University
2. Case Western Reserve University

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION VIII (52 Eligible Teams)**College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (9)**

1. Augustana College (Illinois)
2. Carroll University (Wisconsin)
3. Carthage College
4. Elmhurst College
5. Illinois Wesleyan University
6. Millikin University
7. North Central College
8. North Park University
9. Wheaton College (Illinois)

AQ –Conference Championship

Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (10)

1. Anderson University (Indiana)
2. Berea College
3. Bluffton University
4. Earlham College
5. Franklin College
6. Hanover College
7. Manchester University
8. Mount St. Joseph University
9. Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
10. Transylvania University

AQ – Conference Championship

University Athletic Association (2) (*multi-region conference – II, IV, VI, VII, and VIII*)

1. University of Chicago
2. Washington University in St. Louis

AQ – Conference Championship

Independent (1)

1. Maranatha Baptist University

Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference (13)

1. Alverno College
2. Aurora University
3. Benedictine University (Illinois)
4. Concordia University Chicago
5. Concordia University Wisconsin
6. Dominican University (Illinois)
7. Edgewood University
8. Lakeland University
9. Marian University (Wisconsin)
10. Milwaukee School of Engineering
11. Rockford University
12. St. Norbert College
13. Wisconsin Lutheran College

AQ – Conference Championship

St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (9)

1. Blackburn College
2. Eureka College
3. Greenville University
4. Lyon College
5. Mississippi University for Women
6. Principia College
7. Spalding University
8. Webster University
9. Westminster College (Missouri)

AQ – Conference Championship

Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (8)

1. University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
2. University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
3. University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
4. University of Wisconsin-Platteville
5. University of Wisconsin-River Falls
6. University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
7. University of Wisconsin-Stout
8. University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION IX (38 Eligible Teams)

American Rivers Conference (9)

1. Buena Vista University
2. Central College (Iowa)
3. Coe College
4. University of Dubuque
5. Loras College
6. Luther College
7. Nebraska Wesleyan University
8. Simpson College
9. Wartburg College

AQ – Conference Championship

Midwest Conference (9)

1. Beloit College
2. Cornell College
3. Grinnell College
4. Illinois College
5. Knox College
6. Lake Forest College
7. Lawrence University
8. Monmouth College (Illinois)
9. Ripon College

AQ – Conference Championship

Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (12)

1. Augsburg College
2. Bethel University (Minnesota)
3. Carleton College
4. College of Saint Benedict
5. Concordia College, Moorhead
6. Gustavus Adolphus College
7. Hamline University
8. Macalester College
9. Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
10. St. Catherine University
11. St. Olaf College
12. The College of St. Scholastica

AQ – Conference Championship

Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (8)

1. Bethany Lutheran College
2. Crown College (Minnesota)
3. Martin Luther College
4. University of Minnesota, Morris
5. North Central University
6. Northland College
7. University of Northwestern-St. Paul
8. University of Wisconsin-Superior

AQ – Conference Championship

REGION X (31 Eligible Teams)**American Southwest Conference (4)**

1. East Texas Baptist University
2. Hardin-Simmons University
3. Howard Payne University
4. University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

AQ – Conference Championship

Northwest Conference (8)

1. George Fox University
2. Lewis & Clark College
3. Linfield University
4. Pacific Lutheran University
5. Pacific University (Oregon)
6. University of Puget Sound
7. Whitworth University
8. Willamette University

AQ – Conference Championship

Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (8)

1. California Lutheran University
2. Chapman University
3. Claremont McKenna-Harvey Mudd-Scripps Colleges
4. University of La Verne
5. Occidental College
6. Pomona-Pitzer Colleges
7. University of Redlands
8. Whittier College

AQ – Conference Championship

Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference (11)

1. Austin College
2. Centenary College (Louisiana)
3. Concordia University Texas
4. University of Dallas
5. Hendrix College
6. LeTourneau University
7. McMurry University
8. University of the Ozarks (Arkansas)
9. Schreiner University
10. University of St. Thomas (Texas)
11. Texas Lutheran University

AQ – Conference Championship

*Not eligible to compete in the 2025-26 Championship

#Provisional/Reclassifying

Appendix C • NCAA Power Index

The NCAA Power Index (NPI) for Division III softball will use the winning percentage/strength of schedule and the quality win bonus to determine each team's NPI. The home/away win/loss and the extra innings win/loss dials will not be used when calculating a Division III softball team's NPI. Below are the established weights for the dials.

Win%/SOS	Home/Away Wins/Loss	QWB	QWB Multiplier	Extra Innings	Minimum Wins
25 (Win %)/ 75 (SOS)	1.0/1.0	54	.5	100/0	12

It is important to note that strength of schedule (SOS) is calculated differently than how it used to be calculated in the old selection criteria. Opponent's, opponent's win percentage is no longer factored into any formula. Strength of schedule is simply an average of a team's opponent's NPI.

For example: Team A plays contests against teams with NPIs of 52, 58 and 70. SOS is calculated as $52 + 58 + 70 = 180$; $180 / 3 = 60$. SOS = 60.

It is also important to note that head-to-head competition results are not considered in this formula as a selection criterion. Every game result has the same impact.

A bonus is applied to a team's NPI for wins against quality teams. The quality win base (QWB) is 54.0. The QWB multiplier is 0.5. It represents the amount of bonus awarded for wins against teams with an NPI above the QWB base of 54. The multiplier can range between 0.00 to 1.00. The amount of bonus awarded is determined by the difference between opponent's NPI value and the QWB base value, multiplied by the QWB multiplier.

The formula for a bonus = (Opp. NPI - QWB Base) * Multiplier with the QWB set at 54.00 and the multiplier set at 0.500

Below are some examples that illustrate how the QWB is calculated:

Win over a team with an NPI of 55.00.

$55.00 - 54.00 = 1.00$; $1.00 * .500 = .500$ (.5 is the Quality Win Bonus).

Win over a team with an NPI of 58.00.

$58.00 - 54.00 = 4.00$; $4.00 * .500 = 2.00$ (2.00 is the Quality Win Bonus).

Win over a team with an NPI of 63.00.

$63.00 - 54.00 = 9.00$; $9.00 * .500 = 4.50$ (4.50 is the Quality Win Bonus).

Win over a team with an NPI of 80.00

$80.00 - 54.00 = 26.00$; $26.00 * .500 = 13.00$ (13 is the Quality win Bonus).

This number will constantly fluctuate until selection Sunday. The QWB might look drastically different from a team's win in mid-March to selection Sunday as the opponent's team's NPI number is constantly changing. This could be a positive or negative impact depending on the results of that specific opponent.

The Division III Softball Committees established 12 as the minimum number of wins that must be counted as part of the NPI formula, therefore establishing the number of wins that a team could potentially drop in figuring their NPI. A team is not required to reach the minimum wins to earn a spot in the championship as an AQ or as an open selection to the tournament. Within the NPI formula, any win that causes a team's NPI value to go down will be dropped from counting in determining that team's NPI once the minimum number of wins is reached. Similarly, all losses are counted in figuring a team's NPI and cannot be dropped, unless they would increase a team's NPI then it would be dropped. If a team keeps more than 12 wins, it is because more than 12 wins will help their overall NPI number. Any win above 12 that would negatively impact their score would be thrown out.

Appendix D • Bat Testing Information

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, and the envelope shipped to them from the NCAA with the appropriate stickers and an administrative bat log for each team.

Coaches, or a team representative, must bring their team's bats and their current, annotated NCAA Approved Softball Bat List (referred to hereafter as the "Bat List") for BCT to the designated location at the designated time on each game day.

Once the coach has their bats lined up in the order in which they appear on the Bat 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).

Bats that pass will be stickered and, when necessary, the team's Bat List will be amended to account for failures. Bats that fail must be marked with the team's name, secured from the team's possession by the tournament host and will be shipped for further analysis at the conclusion of the post season tier.

The bat testing manager must complete the information in the summary box on page one of the team's Bat List for use on the field of play by the umpires and coaches.

On the first testing day, the administrative bat log (provided in the sticker envelope from the host tournament director) must be completed by the bat testing manager or team representative to reflect all bat models tested and their respective pass/fail status.

Note-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, the completed administrative bat logs, unused stickers and the bat testing fixture must be returned to the host tournament director.

NCAA POSTSEASON BARREL COMPRESSION TESTING (BCT) DETAILS FOR COACHES

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 relevant NCAA Championship Committee will receive notification of a bat model that fails in the lab.

NCAA POSTSEASON BARREL COMPRESSION TESTING (BCT) DETAILS FOR SITE REPRESENTATIVES AND TOURNAMENT HOSTS

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. **NOTES: STICKERS ARE SPECIFIC TO EACH DAY, FRAGILE AND CANNOT BE REAPPLIED AND IF THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH STICKERS FOR ANY ONE DAY, APPLY HALF STICKERS.**
9. For bats that fail, apply the provided athletic tape with the team's name to 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 hosts 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 is Donna Martin - cell: 815-761-8626; email: dmartin1@niu.edu.

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

Key to responsibilities:

Tournament Host-black font;

Team Rep-green font;

Site Rep-red font;

Umpire-blue font.

Note- "bat list" refers to the current NCAA Approved Softball Bat List

1. In advance of testing-
Designate a secure location with table and chairs for barrel compression testing.
Provide site rep with a portable BCT fixture and the provided envelope with the stickers and bat logs from Ref Quest for the teams.
In conjunction with site rep, communicate testing plans, time and location to participating coaches.

2. Highlight and enter
The number of each model on the team's bat list.
Attend BCT at the predetermined time.
Arrange bats in the appropriate bat list order.
Following testing, retrieve team's bat list and bats that passed BCT.

2. The site rep should be the bat testing manager, or at a minimum, closely supervise a neutral party replacement.
Assemble and calibrate portable BCT fixture whenever it is assembled.
Match the model number on each bat to each team's bat list.
Return bats not on the bat list, those with illegible model numbers, or those with obvious damage to the team rep at this time.
Compress each bat until it passes or fails twice paying attention to back-stop style exception minimums as noted on the bat list.
Sticker or oversee sticker of bats that pass twice.
Disqualify bats that fail twice, identify them with the team's name prior to securing them with the tournament host, and appropriately amend the bat list.
Complete the appropriate section of the first page of bat list.
On the first day, complete (or have team rep complete) the provided bat log which then must be updated daily.

3. Secure failed bats from the site rep for shipment to Dee.

3. Present only stickered bats (preferably in order) and current bat list to umpires at the dugout for inspection prior to each game.

3. Verify the number of presented bats equals the number of bats in the game column of the relevant pages of the provided bat list AND equals or is less than the total listed by the site rep in the appropriate box of page one.
Amend the list to the number of stickered bats presented if needed.
Inspect the bats for appropriateness, remove those with damage and amend the bat list appropriately.
Secure damaged bats with the tournament host.

4. Obtain disqualified bats from the umpires on the field, securing them until the team's final departure from the site.

4. Retrieve damaged bats from the tournament host when departing the facility for the final time.

5. If any bats failed BCT, contact Dee following the final testing session to obtain a shipping label and ship them ASAP.

5. No later than the end of each day, complete the RefQuest electronic Noncompliant/Inappropriate Bat form for bats failing BCT.

5. Following the game, complete the RefQuest electronic Noncompliant/Inappropriate Bat form for disqualified bats due to damage.

7. Immediately following each tier, forward the teams' bat logs through an email or screenshots to Dee (Abrahamson@niu.edu).
Note-stickers need not be returned.

6. Following the final BCT for the tier, return the BCT fixture, unused stickers and completed log sheets to the tournament host.