



REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III SOFTBALL COMMITTEE
JUNE 25-26, 2025, ANNUAL MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

- **Automatic qualification.**

(1) Recommendation. Approve the following 42 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2026 NCAA Division III Softball Championship: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference, American Rivers Conference, American Southwest Conference, Atlantic East Conference, Centennial Conference, City University of New York Athletic Conference, College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin, Collegiate Conference of the South, Conference of New England, Empire 8, Great Northeast Athletic Conference, Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference, Landmark Conference, Liberty League, Little East Conference, Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference, Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Association, Middle Atlantic Conference – Commonwealth, Middle Atlantic Conference – Freedom, Midwest Conference, Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, New England Small College Athletic Conference, New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference, New Jersey Athletic Conference, North Atlantic Conference, North Coast Athletic Conference, Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference, Northwest Conference, Ohio Athletic Conference, Old Dominion Athletic Conference, Presidents' Athletic Conference, Skyline Conference, Southern Athletic Association, Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference, St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, State University of New York Athletic Conference, United East Conference, University Athletic Association, Upper Midwest Athletic Conference, USA South Athletic Conference, and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

(2) Effective date. September 1, 2025.

(3) Rationale. Each conference meets the requirements of NCAA Bylaw 31.3.3 and completed the automatic qualification declaration form.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

- (5) Student-athlete impact. Continued opportunity for student-athletes to compete in the postseason.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Agenda and schedule review.** The committee reviewed the meeting agenda and schedule without making any changes.
2. **2023-24 annual report.** The committee reviewed and approved the report from the 2023-24 annual meeting.
3. **Division III governance.** The committee received an update on Division III governance topics.
4. **Division III championships committee.** The committee received an update on Division III Championships Committee topics.
5. **Softball umpire program.** The committee received an umpire program report from the national coordinator of softball umpires for Division III. The committee suggested that the link to the umpire evaluation and the umpire assignments be sent to participating coaches each evening after completion of that day's games during the regionals, super regionals and finals to encourage completion of the evaluation. The committee noted how well the video review process went at the finals site overall. The committee requested that the championship manager work with appropriate NCAA staff to determine the next steps for creating an appropriate written policy and procedure for how to handle allegations of misconduct by officials. The committee specifically noted that the policy and procedure should define the sport committee's role, or lack of a role, in the process.
6. **National Fastpitch Coaches Association update.** The committee received an update on National Fastpitch Coaches Association topics. The committee requested the NFCA's assistance in recruiting NCAA site representatives (e.g., by conducting a training session at the NFCA convention and sending the site representative application link to its membership).
7. **Bat testing.** The committee received an update on the bat testing program and noted as a positive change the increase in the number of bat testing stickers that will be provided to each site next year. The committee engaged in a discussion about the frequency of bat testing during a tournament or series.
8. **Championship travel.** The committee received an update on championship travel topics and engaged in a discussion on return travel timing after a team is eliminated from the championship.
9. **Rules.** The committee received an update on potential rule changes for future seasons.

- 10. Chair and vice chair elections.** The committee elected Casie Runksmeier as chair and Jamie Mueller as vice chair for the 2025-26 academic year.
- 11. Preliminary rounds.** The committee discussed topics related to hosting preliminary rounds (e.g., the quality of host facilities, issues with hosts not following policies and procedures, and highly ranked teams hosting when their bid does not meet all the bid specifications). The committee determined that preliminary round tournament directors may not engage in coaching activities during preliminary rounds and instructed the championship manager to add language to that effect in the appropriate manuals.
- 12. Finals.** The committee discussed topics related to the finals site activities. The committee suggested changes to the administrative meeting agenda and timing, and discussed potential student-athlete experience options in lieu of a banquet. The committee also discussed topics related to the team hotel(s), the game presentation and potential changes to committee member duties and attendance at the finals site.
- 13. Inclement weather policies.** The committee discussed the finals site inclement weather policy and instructed the championship manager to add permissive language to the policy regarding the ability to play championship series game(s) on the rest day due to impending weather and play two games on the first day of the championship series due to impending weather.
- 14. NPI.** The committee reviewed the first year of NPI implementation and noted suggestions for improvement in information reporting/formatting and functionality of the system. The committee also determined that the first release of NPI data should occur during the first week of April in 2026.
- 15. Team selection, bracketing and site selection process.** The committee discussed the timing of the AQ deadline. The committee requested that the NPI be reported next to the team's name in the bracketing system.
- 16. 2025-26 committee calendar.** The committee reviewed the committee calendar for 2025-26 and made no changes.
- 17. Manuals review.** The committee developed a plan for reviewing all the manuals prior to publication for 2025-26.
- 18. Future finals sites.** The committee requested that the championship manager confirm Millikin University's continued interest in hosting the 2027 finals after the university selects the next athletics director. The committee also discussed potential challenges to address during the planning of the 2026 finals in Salem, VA.

- 19. Misconduct hearings.** The committee conducted two misconduct hearings related to alleged behavior by members of two participating institutions during the 2025 Division III Softball Championship.
- 20. Regional advisory committee.** The committee discussed the function of RACs during the first year of NPI implementation. RACs are no longer necessary to rank teams. RACs are also not necessary to check the accuracy of NPI data as that function can be performed by the national committee members. Finally, RAC members are not serving as site representatives at a high enough rate to justify the continued existence of RACs. The committee will continue to monitor the function of RACs in the second year of NPI implementation and will make a recommendation to the Division III Championships Committee regarding their recommended function or continued existence.
- 21. Other business.** The committee briefly discussed the bench size limit and the home team determination formula. The committee requested further discussion on those topics at a future meeting. The committee also requested that the topics of the finals bracket structure and all-tournament team be added to a future meeting. The committee requested that the championship manager work with national office staff to provide preliminary round participant survey results to each site.

Committee Chair: Jessica Hollen, Linfield University, Northwest Conference
Staff Liaison(s): Corey Bray, Championships and Alliances

Division III Softball Committee June 25-26, 2025, Annual Meeting	
Attendees:	
Kim Camara-Harvey, Blackburn College.	
Jessica Hollen, Linfield University.	
Donna Koczajowski, U.S. Coast Guard Academy.	
Wesley Landrum, Alvernia University.	
Jamie Mueller, Wartburg College.	
Hannah Qualls, University of Mary Washington.	
Casie Runksmeier, Colby College.	
Terry Small, New Jersey Athletic Conference.	
Courtney Wormuth, State University of New York at Cortland.	
Van Zanic, Geneva College.	
Absentees:	
None.	

Guests in Attendance:
Glenda Bates, Dave Hines, Leslie Huntington, Dee Abrahamson, Vickie Van Kleek, Ryan Erwin, Janae Shirley, K.C. Culler, Monte Sherrill, and Alexis Walter.
NCAA Staff Liaison (or Staff Support if subcommittee) in Attendance:
Corey Bray
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Ali Spungen, Grace Hadlich, Melissa Piening and Laura Peterson-Mlynski.