



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III SOFTBALL COMMITTEE  
JUNE 20-21, 2022, MEETING**

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Championship numbers review.** The committee reviewed the current championship numbers for bench size, squad size, and travel party, noting that formal recommendations were sent to the Division III Championships Committee earlier this year. Included in this review was the assessment of a day of rest at the finals site. (See Informational Item 1.)
2. **Date formula adjustments for 2023.** The committee affirmed the adjustment for the 2023 championship, which is one week later than the traditional dates. The championship dates are as follows: Regionals, May 19-21, 2023; Super Regionals, May 26-27, 2023; National Championship, June 1-6, 2023.

ACTION ITEMS.

1. **Legislative items.**

- None.

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

a. **Automatic qualification.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the following 43 conferences be approved for automatic qualification to the 2023 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, Coast-Coast-Conference, College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin, Colonial States Athletic Conference, Commonwealth Coast Conference, 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 Collegiate 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, Upper

Midwest Athletic Conference, USA South Athletic Conference, Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

(2) Effective date. September 1, 2022.

(3) Rationale. Each conference meets the requirements of NCAA Bylaw 31.3.3 and has completed the automatic-qualification declaration form. (Note: Pool allocations may be adjusted based on the 2022-23 sponsorship numbers.)

Anticipated Pool Allocations: Pool A- 43 Pool B- 2 Pool C- 17

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**b. Regional competition date modifications.**

(6) Recommendation. To adjust the regional competition dates to conduct all regional contests on the same days; Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

(7) Effective date. 2023 championship.

(8) Rationale. The current regional championship format provides the flexibility for hosts to select one of two regional schedules – Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Creating consistency across all eight regionals ensures competitive equity for those advancing to the finals site. This recommendation also accommodates institutions that are considered Sunday no-play institutions.

(9) Estimated budget impact. None.

(10) Student-athlete impact. None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

- 1. NCAA Division III Championships Committee actions.** The committee reviewed recent actions of the NCAA Division III Championships Committee, most notably, the latest discussions surrounding potential adjustments and review of bench size, squad size, travel party, and day of rest. The softball committee provided its recommendations regarding these areas earlier in the year and anticipates hearing the Championships Committee's determinations later this summer.

2. **NCAA Division III governance update.** NCAA governance staff provided updates on several topics, including: 1) overview of 2022 NCAA Convention outcomes; 2) update and impacts of the adoption of the new NCAA Constitution; 3) impacts and status of name, image and likeness.
3. **National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) update.** NFCA staff joined the committee to review and relay feedback from the coaching body related to the championship experience. The group discussed plans for announcing and honoring NFCA All-America award winners for 2023 and beyond. The committee and the NFCA liaisons confirmed their joint support and desire of continuing to have NCAA staff and committee members present information during the Division III coaches caucus at the annual NFCA convention, reporting on key topics such as the selection process and bracketing policies.
4. **Review of 2022 championship.** The committee reviewed the participant surveys from the 2022 championship, which was hosted by the Old Dominion Athletic Conference and the City of Salem, in Salem, Virginia. The committee commended the host for providing an excellent championship experience for student-athletes, teams, and fans. The committee also reviewed participant surveys from the regional and super regional sites, identifying strengths and areas of improvement for an enhanced championship experience during preliminary rounds.

The 2022 championship was the first year using instant replay at the finals site. The committee was exceptionally pleased with the implementation and execution on site. The current system is operated from a central hub location, using umpires from the central hub to make the final determination on the review. The committee affirmed its desire to continue using instant replay at the finals site in 2023, noting the additional planning required due to the championship dates being adjusted to a week later and overlapping with the Division I Softball Championship.

Following the championship, the committee reviewed two incidents that occurred at the final site and issued a private misconduct reprimand to an institution.

5. **Plan for 2023 championship.** East Texas Baptist University will host the NCAA Division III Softball Championship in 2023. The NCAA championship manager and the committee chair will visit the site in early fall to begin planning for the 2023 championship. The host is currently exploring venue options for a student-athlete reception, community engagement programming, and additional enhancement opportunities. In the coming months, the committee will reassess the current game time schedule for all contests during championship week to be best prepared for anticipated high temperatures in Texas in June.
6. **National and regional advisory committee rosters.** The committee reviewed the committee rosters and noted vacancies for 2022-23.
7. **Committee chair and vice chair.** The committee confirmed that Brad Duckworth, the director of athletics at University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and Rachel Turocsy, the head softball

coach at DeSales University, will serve as the committee chair and vice chair, respectively, for 2022-23.

8. **Umpire selection process.** The committee reviewed the umpire selection process for both preliminary rounds and finals site selections. The committee will continue to be heavily involved in making initial recommendations for umpire considerations for regionals and super regional assignments. The committee will plan to collaborate with conference assignors to make sufficient recommendations that are regionally based. Additionally, the group will continue to collaborate with the NCAA national coordinator of softball officials to evaluate the current process for designating and assigning throughout the post season.
9. **Softball playing rules update.** Vickie Van Kleeck, NCAA softball secretary-rules editor, joined the meeting to share information at the latest Softball Rules Committee meeting and sought committee feedback on video replay and potentially permitting use of the double first base.

The softball equipment consultant, Dee Abrahamson, provided a bat testing update and shared the results of post-championship bat testing. She looked to the committee for feedback on the execution of bat testing at regional, super-regional, and finals site locations.

10. **Future dates and sites.** The committee reviewed the dates for regionals, super regionals, and finals for the softball championship, specifically highlighting the updated adjustment to the date formula effective this upcoming 2023 championship season, which pushes the traditional championship dates back one week. The 2023 championship finals will take place June 1-6. The committee annual meeting will take place on site in Marshall, Texas the week of the championship.

*Committee Chair: Marie Curran-Headley, State University of New York at Cobleskill, North Atlantic Conference.*

*Staff Liaison(s): Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances.*

<b>Division III Softball Committee June 20-21, 2022 Meeting</b>	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Marie Curran-Headley, State University of New York at Cobleskill.	
Donna Koczajowski, U.S. Coast Guard Academy.	
Courtney Wormuth, State University of New York at Cortland.	
Rachel Turoscy, DeSales University.	
Wes Landrum, Alvernia University.	
Denny Griffin, Alma College.	
Rilee Dawson, The College of St. Scholastica.	
Jessica Hollen, George Fox University.	

<b>Absentees:</b>
Brad Duckworth, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.
Terlynn Olds, LaGrange College.
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>
Steve McCown, National Coordinator of Officials.
Dee Abrahamson, NCAA Equipment Consultant.
Vicki Van Kleeck, NCAA Softball Secretary-Rules Editor.
Dave Hines, National Fastpitch Coaches Association.
Renaë Hartl, National Fastpitch Coaches Association.
<b>NCAA Staff Liaison (or Staff Support if subcommittee) in Attendance:</b>
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances.
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>
Alison Spungen, Division III Governance.