



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TENNIS COMMITTEE
JUNE 29-30, 2021, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

KEY ITEM.

1. **Automatic qualification.** The committee requests approval of all eligible conferences to receive automatic qualification. (See Action Item 2-a.)
2. **Automatic qualification and results deadline.** The committee requests approval for implementing a deadline for all matches, including both conference championships and regular-season matches taking place the Sunday before selections, to begin no later than 1 p.m. Eastern time. (See Action Item 2-b.)

ACTION ITEMS.

1. **Legislative items.**

- **None.**

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

a. **Automatic qualification.**

- (1) **Recommendation.** That the following conferences receive automatic bids for the 2022 NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Tennis Championships (31 conferences for the women's championships and 30 for the men's): American Athletic Conference; Atlantic Coast Conference; Atlantic Sun Conference; Atlantic 10 Conference; Big East Conference; Big Sky Conference; Big South Conference; Big Ten Conference; Big 12 Conference; Big West Conference; Colonial Athletic Association; Conference USA; Horizon League; The Ivy League; Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference; Mid-American Conference; Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference; Missouri Valley Conference (women's only); Mountain West Conference; Northeast Conference; Ohio Valley Conference; Pac-12 Conference; Patriot League; Southeastern Conference; Southern Conference; Southland Conference; Southwestern Athletic Conference; The Summit League; Sun Belt Conference; West Coast Conference; and Western Athletic Conference.
- (2) **Effective date.** 2021-22 academic year.
- (3) **Rationale.** All eligible conferences are being recommended. The committee noted that the Horizon League will enter the second year of its grace period for the 2021-22 season with only five conference members for men's tennis, while the Southland Conference will enter its first year of the grace period in 2021-22 with only five conference members for men's tennis. The Western Athletic Conference has added

the requisite number of members in men's and women's tennis to exit the grace period after one year.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

b. Automatic qualification and results deadline.

- (1) Recommendation. That all matches, including both conference championships and regular-season matches taking place the Sunday before the selection announcement, begin no later than 1 p.m. Eastern time.
- (2) Effective date. 2021-22 academic year.
- (3) Rationale. Before the super-regional round was added in 2019, all regular-season matches were completed Sunday evening before the selection process started Monday, for a Tuesday announcement. When the super-regional round was added, the committee began the selection process Sunday for a Monday announcement, but did not move the deadline for automatic qualification and results up a day to correspond with the shift. There still are conference championships and regular-season matches taking place Sunday. After two years of experience with the current format, the committee believes a Sunday 1 p.m. Eastern time start time would ensure all matches end at a reasonable time to provide the committee with complete data to begin selections. In 2021, one conference championship started at 3 p.m. and a regular-season match started at 6:30 p.m. Eastern time. Both matches had a significant impact on the rankings, causing the committee to have to start over the selection process and substantially delaying team selections. The vast majority of matches currently begin before 1 p.m. Eastern time, so this deadline would ensure all matches follow a common practice.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. This provides the committee with the requisite data to complete selections in a timely manner to ensure the correct teams and individuals are selected to the championships.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. Review agenda and meeting schedule.** The committee reviewed the agenda and schedule for the meeting.

2. **Report from previous meeting.** The committee approved the 2020 annual meeting report as written.
3. **Review of Division I Council/Competition Oversight Committee actions.** The committee reviewed actions the Division I Council and Competition Oversight Committee took at their videoconferences for the past year.
4. **Strategic plan.** The committee reviewed its strategic plan that guides its actions in the coming years. The committee will annually review and update the document.
5. **Review of 2021 championships.**
 - a. **Team and individual selection criteria and procedures.** The committee recognized the assistance the ITA staff provided in preparing for selections. Going forward, the committee asked to receive the data the month leading up to selections, along with regular meetings to review that data to aid in their preparation for selections.
 - (1) **Review worksheet/weighting of categories.** The committee reviewed the selection criteria and recommended to form a subcommittee to review the current criteria and investigate additional metrics or adjustments to current criteria. The subcommittee will create a survey to solicit membership feedback.
 - (2) **Rating Percentage Index.** The committee affirmed its desire to continue to explore the RPI as an additional selection criterion but noted the 2020-21 season would not provide reliable data due to reduced cross-conference competition.
 - (3) **Pairings.** The committee reviewed feedback from the membership regarding current bracketing policies along with the recent Competition Oversight Committee affirmation of the current bracketing policies.
 - b. **Selection show.** The committee emphasized its goal of continuing to improve the selection show. The committee also reviewed a membership request to announce the host sites Sunday evening in order to provide hosts more time to prepare. The committee will continue to study this recommendation but noted continued Sunday matches may delay the selection process, thus, making this request unfeasible.
 - c. **Preliminary-round and finals site evaluations and review.** The committee reviewed participant, host and site representative feedback from the preliminary-round and finals sites. The committee noted the challenges of hosting with the COVID-19 protocols and testing and commended all hosts for their flexibility and efforts to provide a memorable championship experience for the student-athletes. Much of the feedback was related to

COVID-19 restrictions, and the committee hopes these will not be an issue going forward. For the finals site, the committee noted areas of improvement with the scoreboards, hospitality and proximity of the hotels. The committee noted the exceptional work of the USTA staff in hosting the event, adapting to protocol changes and the overall cleanliness of the facility.

- d. Finals web stream/television broadcast.** NCAA broadcast staff met with the committee to review viewership metrics from the TennisONE app and the Tennis Channel. The 2021 championships marked a first-time partnership with the TennisONE app and the second time the championships were broadcast on the Tennis Channel. The committee applauded both entities for providing exemplary championship coverage and noted that all matches were available via broadcast or streaming. The committee's priority is to continue to grow the streaming and broadcast coverage of the championships.
- e. Preliminary-rounds match times and order.** The committee reviewed the preliminary-round match times and order document and discussed the 9 a.m. match times currently available as an option for the dual-gender sites. The committee determined that in the future the 9 a.m. option would be available only to sites without lights. The committee noted the challenge to student-athletes, specifically those from different time zones, to be prepared to compete at 9 a.m. The committee also noted its strong preference to retain the current and historical policy of two days of practice before competition to provide the proper acclimation for visiting teams. The committee noted that it is willing to consider the option for a dual-gender site to compete matches simultaneously if there are 12 match courts of equal quality. Lastly, the committee noted feedback from hosts that would like to choose whether to play the first or second match. The committee determined it would maintain the current policy of the host competing in the second match to avoid gamesmanship and for attendance purposes.
- f. Officials.** The committee reviewed participant feedback regarding officiating during the championships and noted overall positive feedback. All feedback will be shared with the head referee.
- g. Hotels.** The committee reviewed feedback regarding the hotels at the preliminary-round and finals sites and noted overall positive feedback. When the championships return to Orlando, Florida, the committee noted it prefers to contract with hotels closer to the venue. With the addition of the super-regional round to the final site this year, those properties were unable to accommodate the additional dates and teams.
- h. Lineup challenge procedures and timeline.** The committee reviewed the lineup challenge procedures, form and timeline and recommended that some clarifying direction be provided to the coaches who submit lineup challenges. Additional language will be

added to the lineup challenge form that provides guidance on the format of results to be submitted as part of the challenge process. The committee also recommended a reminder be sent to all coaches or to the conferences about the lineup submission deadline before selection.

6. 2022 championships action plan.

- a. Automatic qualification.** The committee reviewed the applications for automatic qualification. (See Action Item 2-a.)
- b. Automatic qualification and results deadline.** The committee recommends requiring that all matches taking place the Sunday before selections start no later than 1 p.m. Eastern time. (See Action Item 2-b.)
- c. Deadline for regular-season schedule changes/additions.** The committee discussed a proposal to impose a deadline before selections for regular-season matches that are not part of a conference tournament or to impose a deadline for institutions to make changes to their regular-season competition schedule. The committee believes institutions with earlier conference tournaments have an advantage over those with later conference tournaments in that they are able to schedule additional matches, if available within their limit of competition dates, to improve their ITA ranking before the start of selections. The committee will discuss this further before making a recommendation.
- d. Manuals.** The committee directed NCAA staff to make the necessary updates for the pre-championships, committee operations, site representative, participant and host operations manuals.
- e. Banquet.** The banquets at the 2020-21 championships were canceled due to pandemic restrictions and budget cutbacks. The committee discussed the pros and cons of the student-athlete banquets and whether they should return, if permitted. The committee supported bringing back the banquets but emphasized a focus on a more casual atmosphere, interaction and higher quality food.
- f. Committee responsibilities.** The committee reviewed a sample committee responsibilities document from Division I field hockey and decided to form a subcommittee to create a similar document for the tennis committee to guide their duties and responsibilities while at the championships site. This will assist new members in understanding their role and lead to better continuity and improvements each year.
- g. 2021-22 committee calendar.** The committee reviewed a draft of the 2021-22 committee calendar. The 2022 annual meeting will take place June 21-22 in Indianapolis.

- 7. ITA updates.** ITA staff met with the committee to discuss the successes of college tennis during the pandemic, the formal strategic partnership with the USTA, officiating, technology and the ITA rankings. The committee thanked the ITA staff for their excellent work leading up to and during the selections.
- 8. USTA updates.** USTA staff met with the committee to review the goals of the USTA for college tennis, the formal strategic partnership with the ITA and the 2021 championships in Orlando. USTA staff provided the results from a survey conducted with the participants and noted an overall positive experience. The committee thanked the USTA staff for their excellent work in hosting the event and noted the many positives and a few areas for improvement noted in the participant surveys. The committee looks forward to returning to Orlando in 2023 for the joint championships with all three divisions and will work with the USTA staff on the schedule of events this coming year.
- 9. Individual championships.** USTA and ITA staff presented a joint proposal from their strategic partnership to move the singles and doubles championships from the spring to the fall with a December championship. The group reviewed the extensive process involved in developing the proposal, along with the goal to define the fall more clearly as the individual season and the spring as the team season. They noted the challenge for student-athletes competing in both the team and individual tournaments at the finals site, potentially competing for nine consecutive days. The USTA and ITA expressed interest in collaborating with the committee to advance the proposal. The committee discussed the proposal and decided to form a subcommittee to further study and collaborate with the USTA and ITA before making a formal recommendation to the Competition Oversight Committee.
- 10. Tennis committee composition.**

 - a. Rules subcommittee members.** The committee approved Cathy Rossi and D. Curtis Lawson as new Division I representatives on the tennis rules subcommittee. The committee thanked Jamie Mitchell and Marco Born for their service on the rules subcommittee.
 - b. Subcommittee chairs.** The committee selected Devon Hendricks, associate athletics director at the University of Texas at Austin, as the men's subcommittee chair. Glenn Layendecker, senior associate commissioner at the West Coast Conference, will continue as the women's subcommittee chair.
 - c. Overall committee chair.** The committee unanimously approved Mr. Layendecker as the overall committee chair.
- 11. Tennis playing rules and officiating.**

- a. **Rules subcommittee.** NCAA playing rules staff reviewed the progress of the tennis rules subcommittee's work along with the proposed rules changes for 2021-22 season. The subcommittee and the ITA will continue to collaborate on the rules process for college tennis. The committee is pleased with the subcommittee's role after its first 18 months.
- b. **Officiating update.** The committee met with the finals site head referee who provided a review of officiating throughout the championships including information on average match times at the finals site, chair umpire performance, positive feedback on the full integration of the court scheduler with the referees, feedback on the experience at the finals site, review of sportsmanship at the finals site and a discussion of the current assigning process for first- and second-round officials.

12. Other business. NCAA staff reviewed progress regarding the 2023 joint championships with all three divisions in Orlando. NCAA staff will continue to collaborate with the USTA on the schedule of events and report back to the committee in the fall.

Committee Chair: Jamie Mitchell, Colgate University; Patriot League
Staff Liaisons: John E. Bugner, Championships and Alliances
Michelle Perry, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Tennis Committee June 29-30, 2021, Videoconference
Attendees:
Jason Brough, University of Portland.
Devon Hendricks, University of Texas at Austin.
Sofia Hiort-Wright, Virginia Commonwealth University.
Glenn Layendecker, West Coast Conference.
D. Curtis Lawson, North Carolina Central University.
Gretchen Maloney, Idaho State University.
Jamie Mitchell, Colgate University.
Cristina Moros, University of South Florida.
Mike Penner, The Ohio State University.
Cathy Rossi, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
Sonya Varnell, The University of Southern Mississippi.
Absentee:
Marco Born, Lamar University.
Guests in Attendance:
Cory Brooks, ITA.
Tim Cass, USTA.
Elissa Hill, USTA.

Dave Mullins, ITA.
Tim Russell, ITA.
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:
John E. Bugner, Championships and Alliances.
Michelle Perry, Championships and Alliances.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Jay Fitzwater, Playing Rules and Officiating.
Kerstin Hunter, Championships and Alliances.
Kristen Jacob Smith, Championships and Alliances.