



REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 7-9, 2023, MEETING

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Automatic qualification.** The committee recommends 32 conferences to receive automatic qualification privileges for the 2023 championship. (See Action Item 2-a.)
2. **Band and cheerleaders.** The committee recommends that transportation and per diem be covered for the bands and cheerleaders to the finals site. (See Action Item 2-b.)
3. **KPI.** The committee recommends that for the 2023 championship, the KPI be approved as an additional selection criterion. (See Action Item 2-c.)

ACTION ITEMS.

1. **Legislative items.**

- None.

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

a. **Automatic qualification.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the following 32 conferences receive automatic qualification privileges for the 2023 championship: America East Conference, 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 Conference, Conference USA, Horizon League, The Ivy League, Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference, Mid-American Conference, Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference, Missouri Valley Conference, Mountain West Conference, Northeast Conference, Ohio Valley Conference, Pac-12 Conference, Patriot League, Southeastern Conference, Southern Conference, Southland Conference, Southwestern Athletic Conference, Sun Belt Conference, The Summit League, West Coast Conference and Western Athletic Conference.
- (2) Effective date. 2023 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.
- (3) Rationale. All eligible conferences are being recommended for automatic qualification.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**b. Band and cheerleaders at the final site.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the NCAA pay for travel and per diem for the band and cheerleaders of the four competing teams to the finals site.
- (2) Effective date. 2023 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.
- (3) Rationale. The committee continues to look for ways to enhance the atmosphere and experience for student-athletes and fans at the finals site of the championship and believes covering the cost for institutions to bring their bands and cheerleaders will help accomplish this goal. In addition, the committee noted gender equity as a consideration to provide this opportunity would to enhance the women's volleyball championship.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. The estimated budget impact is \$668,000. This includes per diem (\$108,000) and transportation (\$560,000) for a total of 45 band, cheer and mascots for four teams.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. This is a positive impact on the student-athlete experience. The additional support from their bands and cheerleaders will add to the championship atmosphere.

**c. Selection criteria - KPI.**

- (1) Recommendation. That the KPI be added to the selection criteria.
- (2) Effective date. 2023 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.
- (3) Rationale. The committee requested the ability last spring to run the KPI during the 2022 season to review as a potential additional selection criterion. After a review of the KPI, the committee determined its addition would be beneficial to the selection process.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. This will have an impact on the selection process overall, as the additional data point will give the committee another piece to determine which team should be selected to the tournament.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

**1. Review of 2022 championship.**

- a. **Site review.** The committee was pleased with the championship experience that was provided throughout the tournament this year. The committee continues to encourage hosts to expand the student-athlete experience elements at all rounds. The staff will work with potential hosts on ideas that can easily be implemented. Committee members also noted from the evaluations that a call with potential host tournament directors midseason would be beneficial.

The committee would also like to work with first/second-round hosts to ensure that site manuals are available and ready to go for participants by early morning the Monday after selections.

- b. **Operations review.** The approach of providing four individual team dinners that was implemented at the 2021 championship was again used in 2022. Staff will work with future hosts to establish what would work best in their city.

All four teams were in the same hotel property for this year. While the location was highly desirable, being directly across from the arena, all four teams in one property posed some challenges. Staff will work with future sites to try and have no more than two teams in a property.

The committee discussed what opportunities might present themselves regarding dynamic warmup areas for the teams at the venue. Each venue differs in the ancillary space. There is no guarantee to teams that there will be a court or net available before the designated warmup time. Staff will work with hosts to identify areas in the venue where teams could participate in a dynamic warmup.

The committee noted that for future championships, it would be ideal to have a coaches area for each team that is outside the locker room.

Red carpet welcomes were again conducted on championship night. They were a great experience for the student-athletes and the committee continues to support the inclusion of this event.

The University of Nebraska, Lincoln continued the student lounge opportunity that had been provided by previous hosts. Each host has put its own spin on it and this has truly be a great way for teams to relax on the practice day. Staff will continue to work with future hosts to provide a similar lounge at future championships.

On the media coordination side, overall things went well. The committee would like to make sure that at all sites, student-athletes are asked questions in the press conference. There were a couple of sites where that did not occur this year. Educating the media coordinators on-site to make sure this occurs will be added into the host site calls.

The committee will also work with staff to review the process for selecting the all-tournament team, including how to populate the ballot the media uses to vote.

The committee reviewed the use of SportCourt and Taraflex. The use of SportCourt continues to be a discussion within the volleyball community. Starting with the 2023 championship, institutions that host preliminary rounds will play on the surface that they play on during the year. For the 2024 season, institutions interested in hosting regional round competition must acquire a Taraflex surface.

- c. **Selections/rankings.** The committee reviewed the process and tools used during selections for the 2022 championship. KPI creator Kevin Pagua once again joined the committee to discuss the KPI metric that the committee ran in the background during the season this year. The committee is recommending that the KPI be added to the selection criteria starting with the 2023 season. (See Action Item 2-c.)

The committee added a second Top 10 reveal this season and continues to support doing two reveals for the 2023 season. Staff will work with ESPN on the ideal timing of these reveals based on the television schedule.

2. **Playing rules.** Rachel Seewald, Director of Championships and Alliances, Playing Rules and Officiating, joined the meeting to provide an update on items that were discussed during the NCAA Women's Volleyball Rules Committee's recent meeting, noting that 2023 is not a rules change year in the cycle.
3. **Challenge review system.** The rules committee noted that the average length of the challenges are 1 minute and 30 seconds. The committee will continue to monitor this each season.
4. **Television.** The committee met via videoconference with staff from ESPN to review the championship. The 2023 championship was extremely successful for ESPN. The viewership of the 2023 championship was almost double the early rounds from the 2022 championship.

This was the second year that all first- and second-round matches were streamed on ESPN+. Host sites continue to do a great job in the production at these sites. Along with the ESPN+ match coverage, ESPN introduced a studio show called the 5<sup>th</sup> Set. This whip-around coverage show provided increased exposure for the early rounds. ESPN programming will continue to look for additional linear windows in the early rounds.

From the production side, the addition of a Supra Cam and some new angles at the finals site provided an enhanced viewing experience for the fans. It was a completely new crew of talent for the championship and the committee was extremely pleased with the coverage.

For future championships, the committee will work with ESPN on what may be ideal early round match times. This will help guide prospective hosts as they submit bids.

5. **Committee chair.** Holly Strauss-O'Brien from Loyola University Chicago will serve as the committee chair for the 2023-24 year. Danielle Josetti from Marquette University will serve as vice chair.
6. **AVCA presentation.** Representatives from the American Volleyball Coaches Association joined the committee to discuss the recent championship. The group commended the committee for implementing the new seeding process that allowed for seeding 50 percent of the bracket. The feedback from the coaching community was that the selections and bracket were excellent this year.

Both the committee and the AVCA appreciate the working relationship between these groups over the years, as it has resulted in a true partnership. The collaboration between the AVCA leadership and the committee continues to help move the sport forward. The group agreed that the meeting during the summer with selected coaches, NCAA staff and the committee chair and vice chair was extremely beneficial and that this should continue this summer at USAV Junior Nationals in Chicago. Staff will work with the AVCA to finalize plans.

The committee also continues to support the AVCA position on summer access for volleyball student-athletes. This proposal was tabled last summer in anticipation of the Transformation Committee recommendations.

7. **Future championship items.** The committee continues to look for ways to enhance and grow this event. The 2023 championship leads into an Olympic year. Staff will explore potential opportunities in this regard. The committee also discussed potential opportunities to showcase the men's volleyball game at the women's championship. These ideas will continue to be vetted over the next year.
8. **Joint committee meeting.** The National Collegiate Men's and DI Women's volleyball committees met to discuss both championship events and exchanged ideas about social media and enhanced signage opportunities. These two groups will continue to meet annually to share ideas.
9. **2024 annual meeting dates.** The committee will meet February 6-8.
10. **Committee update.** Staff will work with the conference offices to fill regional advisory committee vacancies for the 2023 season.

*Committee Chair:* Pauline Thiros, Idaho State University  
*Staff Liaison(s):* Kristin W. Fasbender, Championships and Alliances  
Jay Jay Rackley, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Committee February 7-9, 2023, Meetings	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Amy Crosbie, Utah State University.	
Karen Baebler, University of Washington.	
Angie Boyd Keck, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.	
Danielle Josetti, Marquette University.	
Stacy Kosciak, Bowling Green University.	
Kirsten McGowen, Missouri Valley Conference.	
Chris Plonsky, University of Texas, Austin.	
Cari Rosiek, Coastal Carolina University.	
Holly Strauss-O'Brien, Loyola University, Chicago.	
Pauline Thiros, Idaho State University.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
None.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
Kirsten Bernthal Booth, Creighton University, AVCA.	
Keegan Cook, University of Minnesota, AVCA.	
Kathy DeBoer, AVCA.	
Ericka Galbraith, ESPN.	
Dan Margulis, ESPN.	
Marie Zidek, DePaul University, AVCA.	
<b>NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:</b>	
Kristin W. Fasbender, Championships and Alliances.	
Jay Jay Rackley, Championships and Alliances.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Mary Eiland, Championships and Alliances.	
Megan Hall, Championships and Alliances.	
Julie Kimmons, Championships and Alliances.	
Connor Lancashire, Championships and Alliances.	
Rachel Seewald, Championships and Alliances.	
Deja West, Championships and Alliances.	

