



REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 6-8, 2024, MEETING

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Automatic qualification.** The committee recommends 31 conferences to receive automatic qualification privileges for the 2024 championship. (See Action Item 2-a.)
2. **Challenge review system requirements.** The committee recommends a minimum five-camera system for challenge review to host the first and second rounds. (See Action Item 2-b.)

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

a. Automatic qualification.

- (1) Recommendation. That the following 31 conferences receive automatic qualification privileges for the 2024 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, 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. 2024 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. Challenge review system.

- (1) Recommendation. Require institutions wishing to host the first and second rounds of the championship to have a minimum five camera challenge review system in place.
- (2) Effective date. 2025 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.
- (3) Rationale. The committee continues to work on the challenge review system and setting a high standard for hosts. Starting with the 2025 season the committee will require four cameras to cover all lines, and at least one net camera. Most of the current first- and second-round sites have this setup. This will enhance the review experience for both the teams and the officiating staff.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. The estimated budget will vary by institution depending on what system they currently use. The expenses will be absorbed by each institution.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. This is a positive impact on the student-athlete experience. The additional camera provides more video to help officials make the correct call for the championship.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. Review of 2023 championship.

- a. **Site review.** The committee reviewed the surveys from all rounds of the championship and identified some themes, particularly travel and the challenge review system (CSR), to focus on for 2024. The committee will work to enhance the CRS system requirements for hosting sites (see Action Item 2-b above). The conversation around travel will continue to be a priority for the committee as the championship gains momentum.

The committee also noted that teams wanting to host regionals for the 2024 championship will be required to own or have access to a Taraflex. The committee also will ask hosts to provide two exercise bikes and jump boxes for all teams to use during practice at every round.

Staff will also add to the calendar a preseason webinar with institutions interested in hosting preliminary-round competition for the 2024 championship. This will be a great way to address any new items for the championship this upcoming year and make sure everyone knows the expectations going into the season.

- b. **Operations review.** The committee continues to agree with the approach of allowing hosts some flexibility on the format for the team banquet/dinner. This year the event was held on a yacht with four separate team meal spaces and ended with a silent disco on the top deck. Teams really enjoyed the different take on the event.

Committee members noted that going forward they will work to make sure that all four teams are in four separate hotel properties. This property will be for the team and their band and cheer groups.

The committee also noted the commitment from the host and NCAA to enhance the signage, team welcomes, fan zone and student-athlete lounge to continue raising the level of this event for student-athletes and fans. This year's championship took everything to another level which led to record attendance and viewership.

The committee continues to discuss what opportunities might present themselves regarding dynamic warmup areas for the teams at the venue. This is reviewed with each host every year. Each venue differs in the ancillary space available. There is no guarantee to teams that there will be a court or net available before the designated warmup time.

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.

Tampa 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 been a great way for teams to relax on the practice day. This year's lounge vendors were all women and minority owned businesses, which added a new component. Staff will continue to work with future hosts to provide a similar lounge at future championships.

On the media side, overall things went well. The committee noted for ESPN that the first- and second-round sites were balanced with eight on Thursday and Friday and eight sites on Friday and Saturday. This allowed for more exposure of the championship across the ESPN platforms. This also enhanced the ESPN+ 5th Set coverage. This whip-around show was again very well received.

The committee reviewed the use of SportCourt and Taraflex and agreed that the transition used this year for hosts to play on their home court for regional competition went well. Again for 2024, prospective regional hosts must have a Taraflex court to be considered.

- c. **Selections/rankings.** The committee reviewed the inclusion of the KPI as a selection tool this year, which gave the group an additional data point to improve the process. The committee asked if the RPI could be updated more often during selection weekend. Staff will follow up with the statistics staff accordingly.

The committee would like to have more team comparison data populated in the working documents to review prior to the start of selection weekend. Staff will add this to their selection preparations.

The committee was in the second year of the ability to seed 50% of the bracket and believes this continues to be extremely beneficial for the championship and provides a competitive and more balanced bracket.

The committee discussed the Top 10 reveal and discussed the option of going to one reveal in the middle of October and reveal the top 16 teams. Staff will review this with ESPN and provide feedback to the committee on the best direction for the 2024 season.

2. **Playing rules.** Rachel Seewald, Director of Championships and Alliances, Playing Rules and Officiating, joined the meeting to provide an update on items discussed during the NCAA Women's Volleyball Rules Committee's recent meeting. This is a rules change year and the committee did recommend eight rules changes that will be going to the Playing Rules Oversight Committee for consideration.
3. **Challenge review system (CRS).** The committee continues to review the overall use of CRS. There are new systems that are coming online that may provide more technology to improve the process. Staff will work to see what options may be available for the 2024 championship. The committee also noted that to host early rounds of the 2025 NCAA championship hosts will need to have a minimum five camera system for replay. Four of those cameras will cover the lines and one net cam. Most of the current early round sites already meet this requirement. (See Action Item 2-b above.)
4. **Television.** The committee met via videoconference with staff from ESPN to review the championship. The 2023 championship was extremely successful for ESPN. Record viewership was recorded throughout the tournament, culminated by more than 1.7 million viewers watching the national championship on ABC.

This was the third 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, the 5th set whip-around coverage continues to be extremely successful.

With the new television contract that will start with the 2024 championship, ESPN is excited about the enhanced exposure, as volleyball was one of the key properties in the new agreement. The committee discussed the request from ESPN to move regional competition to Thursday/Saturday and Friday/Sunday. This will guarantee that the regional finals will be aired on ESPN2. The committee will recommend this to the Competition Oversight Committee.

The new broadcast agreement also guarantees that the championship match will continue to be on ABC for the length of the contract.

The championship match day has not been confirmed at this time. ESPN will work with the NCAA to confirm if the championship match will remain on Sunday or move back to Saturday.

ESPN continues to work to find ways to grow and promote the sport. They are looking for ways to showcase the sport more during the regular season prior to the start of the football season. This past season they were continuously evaluating matches and what opportunities presented itself for network upgrades.

5. **Committee chair.** Danielle Josetti from Marquette University will serve as the committee chair for the 2024-25 year. Amy Crosbie from Utah State 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 the continued dedication to enhancing the exposure. They support the move to Sunday for the championship match but also continue to support whichever day provides the most exposure.

The group discussed adding a day off at the first and second rounds, though members also acknowledged other priorities as well. Among them is the bracket expansion recommended by the Division I Transformation Committee. This will continue to be a discussion item for the committee.

The committee also discussed the governance structure and whether volleyball should have its own oversight committee. Staff will continue to work with the governance staff to understand what the future structure may look like for this option.

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 select coaches, NCAA staff and the committee chair and vice chair was extremely beneficial and that this should continue. This may be a virtual meeting this summer due to the location of USAV Junior Nationals.

There is continued conversation on the technology around video replay and what options may be available for the future, including potential enhancements DVSPORT could add to their current system.

7. **Future championship items.** The committee discussed the current bench size, travel party and roster size for the championship. For the 2024 championship the committee is going to allow all rostered student-athletes in uniform to warm up. Sixteen student-athletes will remain as the number of athletes eligible to play for the match.

The committee also noted that staff will add an administrator signoff on the travel party form. This will ensure that the correct people are on that form for each team. Staff will also follow up internally on adding separate pass lists by day for each team's access to the venue. The committee asked staff to compare what other sports currently are doing, and if there is a system in another sport that may benefit volleyball.

The committee continues to address and clarify the male practice player/manager role at the championship. Male practice players cannot participate in the tournament. Managers can't be in the practice doing consecutive actions, but as a manager they are allowed to be a part of the practice.

8. **Joint committee meeting.** The National Collegiate Men's and Division I Women's volleyball Committees met to discuss both championship events and exchanged ideas about social media, championship dates and officiating. These two groups will continue to meet annually to share ideas.
9. **2025 annual meeting dates.** The committee will meet February 4-6.
10. **Regional Advisory Committee update.** Staff will work with the conference offices to fill regional advisory committee vacancies for the 2024 season.

Committee Chair: Holly Strauss-Obrien, Loyola University, Chicago
Staff Liaison(s): Kristin W. Fasbender, Championships and Alliances
Jay Jay Rackley, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Committee February 6-8, 2024, Meeting	
Attendees:	
Joeleen Akin, Georgia Tech.	
Marquita Armstead, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.	
Christian Bray, Harvard.	
Amy Crosbie, Utah State University.	
Danielle Josetti, Marquette University.	
Stacy Kosciak, Bowling Green University.	
Chris Plonsky, University of Texas.	
Cari Rosiek, Coastal Carolina University.	
Jennifer Saxon, University of Mississippi.	
Holly Strauss-O'Brien, Loyola University, Chicago.	
Absentees:	
None.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Kirsten Bernthal Booth, Creighton University, AVCA.	
Jaime Gordon, AVCA.	
Laurie Mancini, ESPN.	

Dan Margulis, ESPN.
Marie Zidek, DePaul University, AVCA.
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:
Kristin W. Fasbender, Championships and Alliances.
Jay Jay Rackley, Championships and Alliances.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Mary Eiland, Championships and Alliances.
Theresa Ekkelar, Championships and Alliances.
Megan Hall, Championships and Alliances.
Julie Kimmons, Championships and Alliances.
Rachel Seewald, Championships and Alliances.
Natalie Steger, Championships and Alliances.
Deja West, Championships and Alliances.