



PRECHAMPIONSHIP 2025-26 MANUAL

NCAA General Administrative Guidelines

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THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 6222

Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222

317-917-6222

ncaa.org

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Section 1 • Introduction

During the 2025-26 academic year, the Association will sponsor 92 national championships – 43 for men, 47 for women and two for both men and women. Of the men's championships, four are National Collegiate Championships, 13 are Division I championships, 12 are Division II championships and 14 are Division III championships. Of the women's championships, eight are National Collegiate Championships, 12 are Division I championships, 13 are Division II championships and 14 are Division III championships. The combined men's and women's championships are National Collegiate Championships.

The Prechampionship Manual will serve as a resource for institutions to prepare for the championship. This manual is divided into three sections: General Administrative Guidelines, Sport-Specific Information and Appendixes.

Sections one through nine apply to policies applicable to all 92 championships, while the remaining sections are sport specific.

Section 1.1 Definitions

Prechampionship Manual. Resource for institutions to prepare for the championship.

Administrative Meeting. Prechampionship meeting for coaches and/or administrators.

Appendixes. Any supplemental documents to be provided and distributed through the various resources.

Championship Manager. The NCAA staff member(s) responsible for the operational oversight of the championship.

Games Committee. The committee assigned to supervise the conduct of each championship session at a specific site. For finals sites, the games committee is typically the NCAA national committee.

NCAA National Committee. The sport committee with direct oversight responsibilities for the championship.

Non-predetermined Sites. Those sites that are selected to host at the time of the participant/team selections announcement.

Playing Rules. The rules under which the competition will be conducted.

Predetermined Sites. Those sites that are selected to host before the participant/team selections announcement.

Preliminary Rounds. The rounds of the championship before the final or championship round.

Regional Alignment. The geographic location of institutions or regional advisory committees.

Schedule of Events. Official event schedule – includes all required activities (e.g., practices, banquets).

Selection Criteria. Policies and procedures in place to guide the team selection process.

Site Selection Criteria. Policies and procedures in place to guide the site selection process.

Squad Size. In any championship in which a squad limit has been established by the governing sport committee or by the bylaws, the number of eligible student-athletes in competitive uniform eligible to participate at the start of competition.

Tournament Physician. The physician designated by the host institution/conference to serve as the chief medical advisor for the championship event(s) to be hosted at the host venue.

Section 2 • Championship Core Statement

The championships and alliances staff strives to administer competition in a fair, safe, equitable and sportsmanlike manner so that the experience of the student-athlete is paramount.

This is attained by:

Ensuring student-athletes' optimal experience.

Executing championship events reflecting appropriate quality and values to/for stakeholders – student-athletes, coaches, administrators, member institutions, sport committees, fans, broadcast partners and corporate champions/partners.

Coordinating all aspects of the championship in an efficient, effective manner through common operating policies and practices, using internal and external resources.

Integrating championships with broadcast and corporate relationships in a manner that maintains the integrity of the championship.

Assuring effective management of the business aspects of the operation.

Enhancing the assets of the NCAA and their value by collaborating with internal and external expertise to achieve heightened exposure (e.g., community programs, fan events, banquets, anniversaries).

Section 3 • Conduct

Section 3.1 Certification of Eligibility/Availability

[Reference: Certification of Eligibility/Availability in Bylaws 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20.2.4, 31.2.1.7.1, 31.2.1.7.1.2 and 31.2.2 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Bylaws 7.3.1.5 and 18.2.1 in the NCAA Division II Manual and Division II Championships Committee Policy and Bylaws 31.2.1.5, 31.2.1.5.2, and 31.2.2 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

Only student-athletes eligible under Bylaws 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 may compete in NCAA championships. Member institutions are required to certify the eligibility of their student-athletes before the beginning of each academic year and to withhold ineligible student-athletes from all intercollegiate competition.

Member institutions are reminded to notify the NCAA national office before the selection date for each championship of any student-athlete who may have participated in regular-season competition but subsequently is determined to be ineligible or unavailable for NCAA championship competition.

DISCOVERY OF INELIGIBILITY OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE AFTER SELECTION

If an institution fails to report an ineligible student-athlete and the omission is not discovered until after the institution is selected to participate in the championship, necessitating the institution's withdrawal from the championship, that withdrawal shall be considered as one of the years of ineligibility, provided another institution participates in the championship in place of the disqualified institution. If the discovery of the ineligible student-athlete occurs so near the beginning of the championship that the governing sport committee does not have a reasonable period of time to replace the disqualified institution in the bracket, that fact shall be taken into consideration in determining the number of years the disqualified institution shall be ineligible to participate.

Section 3.2 Drug Testing

As part of preparation and planning to participate in championship events, member institutions are reminded and encouraged to review all applicable policy and legislative requirements pertaining to banned substances, drug testing and related eligibility requirements with their student-athletes. Student-athletes who compete in NCAA championships may be subjected to drug tests in accordance with legislation and may be determined to be ineligible as a result thereof. Only student-athletes who have consented in writing to such testing are initially eligible for these championships; and thereafter, student-athletes who are tested shall remain eligible only if they test negative.

Section 3.3 Honesty and Sportsmanship

Individuals employed by (or associated with) a member institution to administer, conduct or coach intercollegiate athletics and all participating student-athletes shall act with honesty and sportsmanship at all times so that intercollegiate athletics as a whole, their institutions and they, as individuals, shall represent the honor and dignity of fair play and the generally recognized high standards associated with wholesome competitive sports.

Section 3•4 Misconduct/Failure to Adhere to Policies

MISCONDUCT

Misconduct in an NCAA championship is any act of dishonesty, unsportsmanlike conduct, unprofessional behavior or breach of law, occurring from the time the championship field is announced through the end of the championship, that discredits the event or intercollegiate athletics. Each games committee shall hold an administrative meeting with the representatives of participating institutions to review and explain the policies related to misconduct.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A governing sport committee may assess a financial penalty against an institution for failure of any of its representatives to adhere to the policies and procedures governing the administration of the competition. This includes, but is not limited to, failure to comply with the procedures and deadlines for submitting scores, score sheets, schedules, rosters and entry/march-in forms for qualification and other materials necessary for the efficient administration of the competition. [Click here](#) to see the full misconduct/failure to adhere to policies and procedures online.

Section 3•5 Sports Wagering Policy

Sports wagering includes placing, accepting or soliciting a wager (on a staff member's or student-athlete's own behalf or on the behalf of others) of any type with any individual or organization on any intercollegiate, amateur or professional team or contest. Examples of sports wagering include, but are not limited to, the use of a bookmaker or parlay card; internet sports wagering; mobile betting; auctions in which bids are placed on teams, individuals or contests; and pools or fantasy leagues in which an entry fee is required and there is an opportunity to win a prize.

The current NCAA legislation against sports wagering prohibits NCAA student-athletes, member institutions' athletics staff and non-athletics staff with athletics responsibilities, and conference office staff from participating in sports wagering activities or providing information to individuals involved in or associated with any type of sports wagering activities concerning intercollegiate, amateur or professional athletics practice or competition in a sport in which the NCAA conducts championship competition, in bowl subdivision football and in emerging sports for women.

A wager is any agreement in which an individual or entity agrees to give up an item of value (e.g., cash, shirt, dinner) in exchange for the possibility of gaining another item of value.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

A student-athlete found in violation of the prohibition against knowingly participating in any sports wagering activities or providing information to individuals involved in or associated with any type of sports wagering activity that involves intercollegiate, amateur or professional athletics competition shall be ineligible for further intercollegiate competition, subject to appeal to the Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement for restoration of eligibility.

POSTSEASON

In championships in which a bracket format is used, student-athletes, coaches and administrators may not participate in bracket competitions where there is both a required entry fee and an opportunity to win a prize. Student-athletes and administrators may participate under current NCAA rules in bracket contests where there is no entry fee but a possibility of winning a prize. Some NCAA member schools, however, have chosen to ban student-athletes from participating in these types of bracket contests.

HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

It is permissible for NCAA championships to be conducted at locations in states that permit sports wagering.

Section 3•6 Student-Athlete Experience Survey

During the NCAA championships, the student-athlete experience is paramount. NCAA staff and hosts dedicate themselves to planning the best experiences for all involved. As part of our commitment to getting better, following the championship, participants will receive a survey to provide feedback on their experience and input on how championships can be improved for future NCAA student-athletes. Institutional administrators and coaches will receive

an email containing a link to the survey and will be asked to forward the survey to student-athletes. Additionally, this survey will be accessible via QR code found on the back of NCAA-issued championship credentials.

We also understand that sometimes certain circumstances or conditions occurring during the events may require real-time consideration. When this is the case, student-athletes may reach out to their site representative or NCAA national office staff on-site.

Section 4 • Elite Scholar-Athlete™ Award

The Elite Scholar-Athlete award was created to recognize the true essence of student-athletes by honoring individuals who have reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in their sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among their peers. The award is presented in every sport, every division, and goes to the student-athlete who has the highest cumulative grade-point average of all student-athletes competing at the finals site. One student-athlete per championship will receive the award, and the announcement of the winner will be made at the finals site.

Institutions that wish to nominate a student-athlete must do so through an online nomination process. For more information or to access the online form and submit a nomination, [click here](#).

Section 5 • Fan Travel

Through support from Marriott International as the Official Hotel Partner of the NCAA, NCAA championships are pleased to provide easy and affordable accommodations for family and fans to follow their favorite student-athlete(s) and team(s) as they participate in NCAA championships competition. Travel arrangements completed through Marriott and NCAA Travel help support NCAA student-athletes. Please direct your fans to ncaa.com/travel to search and book online hotel reservations.

Section 6 • Health and Safety

As part of preparation and planning to host and/or participate in championship events, member institutions are reminded and encouraged to review all applicable health and safety policy and legislative requirements and guidance including, among others, those relating to concussion management, catastrophic injury prevention, inclement weather and independent medical care. These requirements and related information can be found in applicable division manuals, sports playing rules and the materials located on the [Health, Safety & Performance website](#). In addition, a summary of some of the key health and safety considerations related to traveling to championship events can be found in the [NCAA's Guidance for Medical Care and Coverage for Student-Athletes at Away Events](#).

Section 7 • Logo Policy

[Reference: Bylaws 12.5.4, 31.1.7 and 31.1.8 in the NCAA Division I Manual, Bylaw 17.1.10 in the NCAA Division II Manual and Bylaw 12.5.3 in the NCAA Division III Manual.]

A student-athlete may use athletics equipment or wear athletics apparel that bears the trademark or logo of an athletics equipment or apparel manufacturer or distributor in athletics competition and pre- and postgame activities (e.g., celebrations on the court, pre- or postgame press conferences), provided the following criteria are met:

1. Athletics equipment (e.g., shoes, helmets, baseball bats and gloves, batting or golf gloves, hockey and lacrosse sticks, goggles and skis) shall bear only the manufacturer's normal label or trademark, as it is used on all such items for sale to the general public; and

2. The student-athlete's institution's official uniform (including numbered racing bibs and warmups) and all other items of apparel (e.g., socks, head bands, T-shirts, wrist bands, visors or hats, swim caps and towels) shall bear only a single manufacturer's or distributor's normal label or trademark (regardless of the visibility of the label or trademark), not to exceed 2-1/4 square inches in area (rectangle, square, parallelogram) including any additional material (e.g., patch) surrounding the normal trademark or logo. The student-athlete's institution's official uniform and all other items of apparel shall not bear a design element similar to the manufacturer's trademark/logo that is in addition to another trademark/logo that is contrary to the size restriction.

Section 8 • Research

In order to avoid inappropriate and unnecessary participant distraction and disruption of championship events, it is expected any data collection or other research efforts conducted at or during championship events will be coordinated through the national office, with notice and a description of any research proposal to be submitted to the NCAA research staff at least six weeks before the championships event begins.

Section 9 • Travel Party

Please refer to the NCAA travel policies for all information regarding transportation and per diem expenses. NCAA Travel policies are updated annually and can be found online [here](#). Please reference Appendix A of the travel policies for reimbursable travel party numbers. The travel policies supersede all other documents.

Section 10 • Religious Conflicts

[Reference: Bylaws 31.1.4.1 and 31.1.4.2 in the NCAA Division I Manual.]

Institutional Policy. If a participating institution has a written policy against competition on a particular day for religious reasons, it shall inform the NCAA national office on or before Sept. 1 of each academic year in order for it or one of its student-athletes to be excused from competing on that day. The championship schedule shall be adjusted to accommodate that institution. *(Adopted: 4/22/98, Revised: 8/11/98, 10/28/99, 5/2/13)*

Individual Championships. In individual championships, an athlete must compete according to the institution's policy regarding Sunday competition (if the institution has no policy against Sunday competition, the student-athlete shall compete on Sunday if required by the schedule).

Section 11 • Team Replacement Policy

Division I developed a team replacement policy considering the possibility of unforeseen circumstances impacting championship fields. The policy will be implemented in accordance with the terms set forth in the policy document available [here](#) when, despite best efforts, a team within the championship field is impeded or hindered from participating in the championship for reasons beyond its control.

National Collegiate Women's Water Polo

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Section 1 • General Administration

Section 1.1 NCAA Tournament Operations Staff Contact Information

Karen Kirsch

Director, Championships and Alliances

P.O. Box 6222

Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222

317-917-6765 / kkirsch@ncaa.org

Markell Staton

Assistant Coordinator, Championships and Alliances

P.O. Box 6222

Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222

317-917-6502 / mstaton@ncaa.org

Section 1.2 National Committee

The list of current committee members may be accessed [here](#).

For additional information about the National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship, contact:

Karen Kirsch

Director, Championships and Alliances

317-917-6765 / kkirsch@ncaa.org

Ted Minnis, chair

Head Women's Water Polo Coach

University of Harvard

617-496-1875 / minnis@fas.harvard.edu

Section 1.3 Important Dates

Friday, Jan. 9	All institutions must enter their full schedules into the NCAA online score-reporting system (web1.ncaa.org/champsel_new/exec/login).
Sunday, Feb. 22	Beginning this day and every Sunday until the conclusion of the water polo season, institutions must report scores to the NCAA online score-reporting system by 10 p.m. local time.
Tuesday, March 10	Initial nominations of officials from the conference commissioners are due to the NCAA championship administrator.
Friday, April 10	Institutions must notify the national office if any student-athletes are ineligible or unavailable for NCAA championship competition.
Sunday, April 12	Final evaluations/rankings of officials by conference commissioners are due to the NCAA championship administrator. Deadline to submit opening-round game bids, 5 p.m. Eastern time.
Monday, April 13	Selection call, 4 p.m. Eastern time.
Wednesday, April 15	Videoconference with the national committee, participating teams and the host institution at 2 p.m. Eastern time.
Saturday, April 18	Opening-round game (may be played Wednesday, April 22, at the championship site or a site determined by the NCAA).
Thursday, April 23	Championship banquet, 7 p.m. local time.
Friday, April 24	Officials meeting, 10 a.m. local time.
Friday-Sunday, April 24-26	Championship; University of California, San Diego, host.

CHAMPIONSHIP DATES

2026 Finals, April 24-26

Canyonview Aquatic Center, San Diego, California; University of California, San Diego.

DATE FORMULA

The National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship will be conducted the last full weekend in April (Friday-Sunday).

FUTURE DATES

2027 Finals, April 23-25

Avery Aquatic Center, Stanford, California; Stanford University, host.

2028 Finals, April 28-30

Greensboro Aquatic Center, Greensboro, North Carolina;
Guilford College and Greensboro Aquatic Center, hosts.

Section 1•4 Eligibility for National Collegiate Championships

[Reference: Bylaw 20.8 in the NCAA Manual.]

An active member institution in good standing, regardless of division, is eligible for the National Collegiate Championships if a division championship in the respective sport is not offered in its division. Such an institution normally is required to meet only the institutional individual eligibility requirements of its division that govern the sport in question.

Section 1•5 Equipment

The Kap 7 ball is the official ball of the 2026 National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship. One ball will be given to each participating team at the finals site. Remaining balls become the property of the host institution.

Section 1•6 Rules

Per NCAA Bylaw 17.30, member institutions shall conduct all of their intercollegiate competition in accordance with the playing rules of the Association in all sports for which the NCAA develops playing rules. For those sports in which the Association follows rules developed by other governing bodies and modified by the governing sports committee, the adopted playing rules shall be used. The governing sports committee will not consider any results for selection purposes not played in accordance with the NCAA rules books.

The official NCAA Water Polo Rules shall be followed. Questions regarding the interpretation of rules should be addressed to the secretary-rules editor.

David Alberstein
559-901-8159 / albersteind@gmail.com

The officiating coordinator for men's and women's water polo will work closely with the secretary-rules editor, rules and sport committees, and the officiating and coaching membership. This individual will assist the sport committees in official assignments for the championship, assist conference assignors in leading clinics throughout the regular seasons, conduct evaluations of officials throughout the year and assist in the creation of a rules test and supplemental educational materials for officials and coaches on the current rules and areas of emphasis for the year.

Steve Redding
National Coordinator of Officials
ncaah2opolo@gmail.com

Section 1•7 Uniforms

Each team shall supply light and dark water polo caps, complete with protective ear guards as specified in the NCAA Water Polo Rules. The higher-seeded team in the bracket will wear dark caps.

LOGOS

[Refer to General Administrative Guidelines, Section 7.](#)

Section 2 • Determination of Championship Participation

Section 2•1 Championship Format

The 2026 National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship will be a ten-team, single-elimination tournament. Automatic qualifiers will be awarded to seven (7) conferences and three teams will be selected at large without geographical restrictions.

Teams shall be selected by the Women's Water Polo Committee on April 13. The teams selected to participate will be posted online at [ncaa.com](https://www.ncaa.com).

Six (6) teams will qualify directly to the championship; the remaining four (4) teams will compete for the last championship berth via an opening-round game, with the winner earning the remaining berth in the eight-team championship bracket. The opening-round matchup(s) will be determined by the NCAA Women's Water Polo Committee during the selection process.

NOTE: For 2026 the SCIAC has withdrawn their AQ. This championship will be an eight-team, single-elimination tournament with one opening round game. Seven teams will qualify directly to the championship; the remaining two teams will compete for the last berth via one opening round game.

OPENING-ROUND GAMES

The following parameters will be applied for the opening-round games:

- Based on rankings, geographic proximity and missed class time, the committee will determine the pairing(s) of the teams that will participate in the opening-round game(s), and which teams will serve as the host(s).
- The opening-round game(s) may be contested Saturday, April 18, or Wednesday, April 22. The location(s) will be determined by the committee.
- A 90-minute closed practice time will be reserved for each team the day before competition.
- Host institution(s) will receive reimbursement, including, but not limited to, score-table personnel fees, security, ticketing operations and venue staffing costs.
- Visiting team(s) will receive per diem for the travel/practice day before the opening-round game, the day of the opening-round game and the travel day after the opening-round game. The NCAA will pay for travel expenses as long as arrangements are made through the official NCAA travel provider, Short's Travel Management. The host should assist the visiting team in procuring hotel rooms.
- A site representative will be appointed by the NCAA Women's Water Polo Committee to oversee the conduct of each opening-round game. The site representative will meet with the coach, administrator and athletic trainer of both teams the day before competition.
- Officials for the opening-round game(s) will be recommended by the national coordinator of officials and approved by the Women's Water Polo Committee. Teams will be notified of the game officials by 8 p.m. Eastern time the day before competition.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Saturday, April 18 or
Wednesday, April 22**

Opening-round games (may be played Wednesday, April 22, at the championship site or a site determined by the NCAA).

Wednesday, April 22

If the finals site host is **not** hosting opening round games, each team is allotted one hour of open practice and should contact the host to set up a time slot.

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE WOMEN'S WATER POLO

Thursday, April 23

Practice Times (Closed practices, each team allotted one hour, teams to be determined)

8-9 a.m.

9:10-10:10 a.m.

10:20-11:20 a.m.

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

12:40-1:40 p.m.

1:50-2:50 p.m.

3-4 p.m.

4:10-5:10 p.m.

7 p.m. Championship banquet

Friday, April 24

Practice Times (Open practices, 30 minutes shared time; teams to be determined)

8-8:30 a.m.

8:40-9:10 a.m.

9:20-9:50 a.m.

10-10:30 a.m.

Game Times

Noon Game 1

2 p.m. Game 2

4 p.m. Game 3

6 p.m. Game 4

Saturday, April 25

Practice Times (Open practices)

9-9:30 a.m. Winning team from Game 1

9:40-10:10 a.m. Winning team from Game 2

10:20-10:50 a.m. Winning team from Game 3

11-11:30 a.m. Winning team from Game 4

Game Times

2 p.m. Game 5: Winner Game 1 vs. Winner Game 2

4 p.m. Game 6: Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 4

Sunday, April 26

Practice Times (Open practices)

8-8:30 a.m. Winner Game 5

8:40-9:10 a.m. Winner Game 6

Game Time

TBD Championship Game: Winner Game 5 vs. Winner Game 6

Practice times subject to change per the games committee.

Times are according to local time zone.

TRAVEL PARTY

The official travel party for the National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship is 20 persons. Participating teams are limited to a maximum of 16 players in uniform. An institution that is advised it is in violation of this regulation and does not promptly conform to it automatically shall forfeit the competition. There shall be no inordinate delay of the competition to allow an institution to conform to the rule. The 16 players must be designated by submitting the official roster form. Player changes can be made up to 60 minutes before the start of the first game of the tournament. After that time, the roster cannot be changed for any reason during the duration of the championship. The roster must have the correct cap number and spelling of the names.

Section 2•2 Results

SCORE-REPORTING INFORMATION

All sponsoring institutions must report results via the online score-reporting system (web1.ncaa.org/champsel_new/exec/login). Complete initial schedules are due Friday, Jan. 9. Thereafter, reporting deadlines are every Sunday by 10 p.m. (local time), beginning Feb. 22 through April 13. Results submitted via the score-reporting system will be used to generate the Rating Percentage Index.

Failure to comply with this request may jeopardize an institution's chances of being selected for the 2026 National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship.

Section 2•3 Selection Information

COUNTABLE COMPETITION

For NCAA team championship selection purposes, competition is countable only when the teams played are varsity intercollegiate teams of four-year, degree-granting institutions that conduct a majority of their competition in that team sport against varsity intercollegiate teams (see Bylaw 20.2.4.6) of United States four-year, degree-granting institutions. Competition against service teams, professional teams, semiprofessional teams, amateur teams, two-year colleges, B teams, junior varsity teams and club teams shall be excluded.

AUTOMATIC QUALIFICATION

[Reference: Bylaws 31.3.4 and 31.3.5 in the NCAA Division I Manual.]

The following seven conferences were granted automatic qualification to the 2026 championship:

Big West Conference	Mountain Pacific Sports Federation
Collegiate Water Polo Association	Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference*
Golden Coast Conference	Western Water Polo Association
Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference	

NOTE: The Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference has declined its automatic qualification this season.

AT-LARGE SELECTION

Three teams will be selected at large without geographical restrictions using the established selection criteria.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

The official travel party is 20 persons (including a maximum of 16 student-athletes in uniform). Please refer to the NCAA Travel policies for all information regarding transportation and per diem expenses. Travel policies are located online at ncaa.org/championships/travel/championships-travel-information.

Section 2•4 Selection Criteria

[Reference: Bylaws 31.01.2., 31.01.3 and 31.3 in the NCAA Manual.]

The following criteria shall be employed by the governing sports committee in selecting participants for NCAA championships competition [Bylaw 31.3.3; Criteria for Selection of Participants]:

- Won-lost record;
- Strength of schedule; and
- Eligibility and availability of student-athletes for NCAA championships.

In addition to Bylaw 31.3.3, the NCAA Women's Water Polo Committee defines the following primary criteria (not in priority order):

PRIMARY CRITERIA

- Head-to-head competition.
- Results versus common opponents.
- Rating Percentage Index (RPI).

If the evaluation of the primary criteria does not result in a decision, the following secondary criteria will be reviewed:

SECONDARY CRITERIA

- Late-season performance – defined as the last 10 games including conference championship tournaments (strength and results).
- Results versus teams already qualified and other teams under consideration.

As listed above, the Women's Water Polo Committee will use the Rating Percentage Index (RPI) as a primary criteria during the selection process. An institution's RPI ranking consists of three factors that are weighted as follows:

Factor I – Winning Percentage – 25%

Factor II – Opponents' average winning percentage – 50%

Factor III – Opponents' opponents' average winning percentage – 25%

Once the teams are selected, the NCAA Women's Water Polo Committee will seed the top four teams using the criteria listed above. Coaches' polls and/or any other outside polls or rankings are not used as a criterion by the Women's Water Polo Committee for selection purposes.

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2026 National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship

Canyonview Pool

La Jolla, CA

Hosted By University of California, San Diego

All games April 24-25 streamed live on NCAA.com. Championship game will air on ESPNU

Opening Round
April 22

First Round
April 24

Semifinals
April 25

Championship
April 26



All times are Eastern Time



All times are Eastern time.
Information subject to change.
For more details, visit NCAA.com.

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The NCAA opposes all forms of sports wagering.

Appendix B • Sport Sponsorship

Big West Conference (8)

California State University, Fullerton
California State University, Northridge
University of California, Davis
University of California, Irvine

University of California, San Diego
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Hawaii, Manoa
Long Beach State University

AQ – Conference Championship

Collegiate Water Polo Association (15)

Augustana College (Illinois)
Austin College
Brown University
Bucknell University
Carthage College
Connecticut College
Grove City College
Harvard University

Macalester College
University of Michigan
Pennsylvania State University Erie, the Behrend College
Princeton University
Saint Francis University (Pennsylvania)
Washington and Jefferson College
Wheaton College (MA)

AQ – Conference Championship

Golden Coast Conference (8)

Azusa Pacific University
California Baptist University
California State University, Fresno
Concordia University Irvine

Loyola Marymount University
University of the Pacific
San Diego State University
Santa Clara University

AQ – Conference Championship

Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (9)

Iona College
La Salle University
Long Island University
Marist College
Mount St. Mary's University

Siena College
Villanova University
Virginia Military Institute
Wagner College

AQ – Conference Championship

Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (7)

Arizona State University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Los Angeles
Indiana University, Bloomington

San Jose State University
University of Southern California
Stanford University

AQ – Conference Championship

Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (9)

California Institute of Technology
California Lutheran University
Chapman University
Claremont McKenna-Harvey Mudd-Scripps Colleges
University of La Verne

Occidental College
Pomona-Pitzer Colleges
University of Redlands
Whittier College

AQ – Conference Championship (declined AQ for 2026)

Western Water Polo Association (8)

Biola University
California State University, East Bay
California State University, Monterey Bay
Fresno Pacific University

Gannon University
McKendree University
Mercyhurst University
Salem University (WV)

AQ – Conference Championship