



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA WOMEN'S WATER POLO COMMITTEE  
MAY 12-13, 2019, MEETING**

**KEY ITEMS.**

- **Automatic qualification not accepted.** USA Water Polo has announced its intention to host a Division III collegiate championship for men's and women's water polo during the 2019-20 academic year. The committee recommended that the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SCIAC) receive an automatic qualification into the NCAA championship, but the SCIAC has announced its intention to participate in the USA Water Polo event, if it comes to fruition. The committee recommends that if a conference declines to accept its automatic qualification bid to the NCAA championship the spot would be filled by an additional at-large team to maintain the integrity of the bracket.

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

- **None.**

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

- **Automatic qualification.**
  - a. Recommendation. That the following seven conferences receive automatic qualification for the 2020 National Collegiate Women's Water Polo Championship: Big West Conference, Collegiate Water Polo Association, Golden Coast Conference, Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference, Mountain Pacific Sports Federation, Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and Western Water Polo Association.
  - b. Effective date. September 1, 2019.
  - c. Rationale. All eligible conferences are being recommended.
  - d. Estimated budget impact. None.
  - e. Student-athlete impact. None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

- 1. Welcome and announcements.** The chair welcomed the committee members and thanked them for their time.

2. **2018 committee meeting report.** The committee approved the 2018 annual meeting report as written.

3. **Review of 2019 championship.** The committee reviewed the 2019 championship and made the following recommendations:

a. Selection process and criteria. The committee reviewed the women's water polo selection criteria and made no recommendation for change.

b. Opening-round games. The committee noted the positive feedback received from teams about the opening-round games being hosted at the site of the championship. The committee strongly supports that future opening round games be held at the championship site, if selection policies allow.

c. Practices.

1) **Championship.** The committee reviewed the practice schedule and agreed on the following practice times for the 2020 championship.

a) Wednesday – 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. – One-hour open practice. Due to travel schedules, the committee recommended each participating team should contact the tournament manager (host institutions) to schedule practice time for Wednesday.

b) Thursday – One-hour closed practice.

1. #8/9 seed – 8-9 a.m.

2. #1 seed – 9:05-10:05 a.m.

3. #5 seed – 10:10-11:10 a.m.

4. #4 seed – 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

5. #7/10 seed – 12:20-1:20 p.m.

6. #2 seed – 1:25-2:25 p.m.

7. #6 seed – 2:30-3:30 p.m.

8. #3 seed – 3:35-4:35 p.m.

c) Friday – 30-minute shared open practice.

1. #4 and #8/9 – 8-8:30 a.m.

2. #1 and #5 – 8:35-9:05 a.m.

3. #3 and #7/10 – 9:10-9:40 a.m.

4. #2 and #6 – 9:45-10:15 a.m.

d) Saturday – 30-minute open practice.

1. Winner of Game 1 – 9-9:30 a.m.

2. Winner of Game 2 – 9:35-10:05 a.m.

3. Winner of Game 3 – 10:10-10:40 a.m.

4. Winner of Game 4 – 10:45-11:15 a.m.

*(NOTE: If the team hotels are in close proximity to the competition venue the committee may push the practice times all one hour later.)*

e) Sunday – 30-minute open practice.

1. Winner of Game 5 – 9-9:30 a.m.

2. Winner of Game 6 – 9:35-10:05 a.m.

*(NOTE: If the team hotels are in close proximity to the competition venue the committee may push the practice times all one hour later.)*

f) All practice times (Thursday-Sunday) are set and will not be changed. Teams choosing not to use their allotted practice time must contact their committee liaison or the NCAA administrator.

2) **Opening rounds.** Participating teams shall have the opportunity for a 90-minute closed practice at the competition venue. Participating teams should schedule their practice time directly with the opening-round tournament manager.

If the opening round takes place at the site of the national championship, the host institutions should be permitted to practice on Wednesday for longer than an hour, if they so choose.

d. Award ceremonies. The committee discussed the award presentations for the semifinals and final and wants to recognize participants appropriately. The committee recommended continuing to be prepared to present the non-advancing (semifinals) or runner-up (final) team award on deck, if the team remains in the bench area following the handshake line. If the non-advancing or runner-up team does not remain on the deck, the committee liaison to those teams will present the individual participant awards to the team administrator in the locker room.

- e. Facility/host. The committee praised the staff and the facility at Stanford University for a wonderful championship experience. The committee noted a few suggested areas of improvement that NCAA staff should share with Stanford staff, as well as future hosts. The committee recommended including these items in the bid process.
  - f. Banquet. The committee noted that the championship banquet was well done and supports keeping the existing format. The committee will continue to discuss holding the administrative meeting following the banquet to allow the head coach to be with the team for the team photo opportunity. The committee reinforced that the banquet speaker should deliver a message that is not directed to their connection to the host, but their connection to women's water polo or team empowerment.
  - g. Dress code and participant conduct. The committee noted overall good behavior by coaches and student-athletes during the championship. The committee discussed coach dress code and noted concern regarding a less than professional look when coaches are wearing workout pants and tops to coach games.
  - h. Post-championship game celebration. The committee felt that an adequate in-pool celebration was appropriate, but the pool should be cleared to allow for a postgame handshake line and to start the presentation of awards in a timely manner.
  - i. Committee responsibilities. The committee asked that its responsibilities be more defined for each committee member.
  - j. Score reporting. NCAA staff updated the committee regarding the few isolated score reporting issues from the 2018-19 season.
4. **2020 championship update**. The committee reviewed the schedule, hotels and facility for the 2020 championship at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. A site visit will be conducted in early fall.
  5. **Rules subcommittee overview**. Brian Streeter, secretary-rules editor, updated the committee on the work of the rules subcommittee. The subcommittee will have its next in-person meeting following the 2020 Women's Water Polo Championship, which is a change from previous years.
  6. **National coordinator of officials (NCO) report**. The committee heard a report from Bob Corb, national coordinator of officials. The report highlighted the progress made over the last 10 years developing the national officiating program and the national evaluator group (NEG). Mr. Corb, who is retiring following the conclusion on the 2019 Women's Water Polo Championship, introduced the committee to his successor, Amber Drury.
  7. **Sport sponsorship**. The committee reviewed sport sponsorship and noted that 63 schools sponsored women's water polo in 2018-19.

8. **Automatic qualification.** The committee reviewed applications from the seven conferences requesting automatic qualification to the 2020 National Collegiate Women’s Water Polo Championship (see Action Item 2). The committee discussed concerns regarding the USA Water Polo proposal for a Division III championship and the intention of the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SCIAC) to participate in that event if it comes to fruition. The committee recommends that if a conference declines to accept its automatic qualification bid to the NCAA championship, that spot in the tournament field would be filled by an additional at-large team to maintain the integrity of the bracket for two opening-round games.
  
9. **Committee conference call.** The committee will have a follow-up conference call to further review the 2019 championship on Monday, July 22, at 2-4 p.m. Eastern time.
  
10. **Future meetings.** The committee would like to keep the annual meeting at the championship site going forward, given the cost savings associated with this practice. The committee will continue to have a follow-up call in July to review survey results and other metrics from the championship. The 2020 annual meeting will take place May 9-10 at the University of the Pacific during the national championship.

*Committee Chair: Natalie Benson, California State University, Fresno, Golden Coast Conference*

*Staff Liaisons: Ben Brownlee, Championships and Alliances*

<b>NCAA Women’s Water Polo Committee May 12-13, 2019 Meeting</b>
<b>Attendees:</b>
Natalie Benson, California State University, Fresno; Golden Coast Conference.
Maggie Martini, St. Francis College Brooklyn, Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference.
Adam Pack, Utica College, Collegiate Water Polo Association.
Julie Snodgrass, Azuza Pacific University, Golden Coast Conference.
Katherine Zedonis, University of California, Davis, Big West Conference.
Brian Streeter, Secretary-Rules Editor.
Bob Corb, National Coordinator of Officials.
Amber Drury, incoming National Coordinator of Officials.
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>
None.
<b>NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:</b>
Ben Brownlee, Championships and Alliances.