



REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION II CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 7, 2024, VIDEOCONFERENCE

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

a. Women's lacrosse championship date formula and bracket expansion.

(1) Recommendation. Approve funding for the date formula change listed below for the Division II Women's Lacrosse Championship (see Attachment A); further, approve additional funding to expand the championship bracket from 16 to 24 teams to cover the additional costs not included in the original projections approved as part of the triennial budget process.

1. Selection announcement: Sunday prior to first and second rounds;
2. First and second rounds (4 sites): Thursday and Saturday prior to quarterfinals;
3. Quarterfinals: Saturday prior to semifinals and finals; and
4. Semifinals and final: Fourth full weekend (Thursday-Saturday) of May.

(2) Effective date. 2025 NCAA Division II Women's Lacrosse Championship.

(3) Rationale. Currently, the championship format from the start of the first round to the conclusion of the national championship game is to be completed in 11 days. The Division II Women's Lacrosse Championship is currently the only lacrosse championship to be played over two weekends. The Division II Women's Lacrosse Committee sought feedback from the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports Prevention and Performance Subcommittee, which supported the concept of a three-weekend format as the additional time would promote mental and physical recovery and reduce injury risk for student-athletes. The subcommittee also supported making the change as soon as is feasible. The Division II Conference Commissioners Association also supported the proposed format change, as it will align with the date formula currently in place for Divisions I and III lacrosse.

Regarding the additional funding for the bracket expansion beginning in 2025, the women's lacrosse committee was notified that the anticipated cost of the expansion will be \$62,228 more than originally projected. This accounts for the necessary additional days of per diem for officials, committee/site representatives and teams.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. \$113,772 for the date formula change (this will be allocated in advance from funds devoted to the next budget triennium); and \$62,228 for the bracket expansion (this will come from unallocated dollars from the current triennium).
- (5) Student-athlete impact. A three-weekend format will positively impact the student-athlete experience by promoting mental and physical recovery and reducing the risk of injury between games. The additional funding for bracket expansion will ensure a fully funded experience for participating teams and student-athletes.

(Note: The women's lacrosse committee's proposed bracket assigns the top seed in each of the four regions to host the six-team first and second rounds. The Championships Committee discussed the potential option of the Nos. 1 and 2 seeds in each of the four regions hosting rather than only the No. 1 seed, which could increase attendance and alleviate the lodging requirements for a host securing hotels for five visiting teams. The committee asked for a financial analysis of the Nos. 1 and 2 seed host option to evaluate whether it would reduce costs or at least be cost neutral. If so, the committee believes that format would be in the best interests of the championship.)

b. Referral to the Division II Legislation Committee – potential Division II Women's Bowling Championship.

- (1) Recommendation. That the Division II Legislation Committee review sport-specific legislation that would need to be amended should a Division II Women's Bowling Championship be established.
- (2) Effective date. Immediate.
- (3) Rationale. Currently, women's bowling is conducted as a National Collegiate championship; however, sponsorship in Division II is nearing the 35-institution threshold to consider establishing a Division II-specific championship. Thirty-eight Division II institutions indicated they sponsored the sport in 2023-24. However, the research staff is not currently collecting the full breadth of sport sponsorship data to confirm compliance (individual participation information), which means the 35-institution threshold cannot be verified at this point.

However, the Championships Committee believes beginning the process to review whether a Division II championship should be established in women's bowling is merited, given the current sports sponsorship data is used for other processes, such as sports sponsorship as a membership requirement. As such, the Championships Committee believes it would be prudent for the Legislation Committee to begin its review.

The Championships Committee also noted this process would include a survey to determine the Division II bowling sponsorship's interest in establishing a Division II-specific championship rather than continuing to compete in a National Collegiate championship. Accordingly, the decision to formally pursue a Convention proposal to

establish a championship will be determined in the coming months, noting the June deadline for submitting proposals into the 2026 Convention cycle.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None for the exploratory period; TBD should a Division II championship be formally pursued.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Establishing a Division II-specific championship in women's bowling would provide far more access to an NCAA postseason experience for Division II sponsoring institutions than the current National Collegiate championship.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and review of agenda.** Championships Committee Chair Regan McAthie welcomed the group and previewed key agenda items.
2. **Review of previous reports.** The committee approved reports from its October 3 and 18 videoconferences and October 21 electronic vote, as presented.
3. **Sport reports.**
 - a. **Baseball.** The committee reviewed a proposal to host the Division II Baseball Championship finals for a 12-year term through the 2038 championship. After discussion, the committee approved the request, noting that a formal announcement will be forthcoming via a news release on ncaa.org.
 - b. **Women's lacrosse.** The committee reviewed and supported the Division II Women's Lacrosse Committee's recommendation to expand the Division II Women's Lacrosse Championship date formula to a three-week tournament beginning with the 2025 championship. The committee also supported additional funding to support the increased bracket, which was not included in the original projections approved as part of the triennial budget process. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-a above.) Additionally, the committee asked for a financial analysis to determine whether expanding the hosts to the Nos. 1 and 2 seeds in each region (rather than just the No. 1 seed) would be fiscally feasible and provide for a better participant experience.
 - c. **Women's bowling and men's volleyball sponsorship data.** The committee during its October 3 videoconference asked staff to provide Division II sponsorship data for women's bowling and men's volleyball, both of which currently are conducted as National Collegiate championship sports (Division III has its own men's volleyball championship). The committee asked for updates since these two sports are nearing the new 35-sponsorship threshold for establishing a Division II championship. Staff reported that men's volleyball is approaching the threshold but in 2023-24 did not yet have 35 institutions that met sports sponsorship requirements.

For women's bowling, while the precise number of Division II sponsoring institutions cannot be confirmed at this time because the research staff is not currently collecting the full breadth of sport sponsorship data to confirm compliance (individual participation

information), the Championships Committee supported beginning the process to review whether a Division II championship should be established given the likelihood that the sponsorship threshold either will be confirmed currently or will be reached soon. As such, the committee agreed to request that the Division II Legislation Committee review sport-specific legislation that would need to be amended should a championship be formally established. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-b above.)

4. Division II strategic planning process.

- a. **Think Tank update.** Staff updated the committee on the Division II Think Tank conducted in September that charged Division II leaders to discuss the challenges facing intercollegiate athletics and continue developing ideas and solutions where appropriate for Division II. The Think Tank included one representative from each Division II conference, five student-athletes from the Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and one independent member from the Division II Executive Board.

The Think Tank produced more than a dozen strategic priorities for the division to consider incorporating into the new six-year operating plan that will be launched in January 2026. Staff also updated the committee on conversations the NCAA Division II Strategic Planning and Finance Committee conducted during its meeting the day after the Think Tank concluded.

- b. **Budget overview and next steps.** As part of the strategic planning process, the division aims to ensure that the priorities identified can be adequately supported. Accordingly, staff provided the committee with an overview of the Division II budget, including the percentage of the budget devoted to championships as well as other Division II initiatives, and the various distributions and grants that annually benefit the membership.

Staff also updated the committee on its request to add exceptions to when budget requests may be considered outside of the triennial process (bracket expansion, technology and officiating). The Division II Strategic Planning and Finance Committee (SPFC) is expected to formally consider that request during its December videoconference. Pending SPFC support, the recommended additions would be considered by the Division II Management Council during its January meeting.

The SPFC also during its December videoconference will continue discussing how to allocate the revenue from the NCAA's new broadcast agreement with ESPN, as well as whether the current budget percentage allocation to championships should be modified. Championships Committee members emphasized the importance of championships and the membership's access to them as top priorities for the division and, as such, merit as much financial support as possible.

- c. **Membership survey questions.** Staff noted that the strategic planning process will be informed largely by responses to a comprehensive survey the membership will receive shortly after the 2025 NCAA Convention. The committee will discuss championship-specific questions to include in the survey during its December videoconference.

5. Regionalization review.

- a. Feedback from Division II stakeholders.** Staff updated the committee on feedback received from the Division II Conference Commissioners Association, the Division II Athletics Directors Association and the Division II Management Council regarding the committee's work to date on enhancing the division's current regionalization model as it applied to selections and bracketing.
- b. KPI and NPI data review.** Staff provided an analysis for all sports from the last three championships comparing KPI as well as two NPI calculations, default and the dials Division III sport committees have applied for the purposes of ranking and selections (Division III adopted the NPI for use this year). The committee agreed to discuss further during its December videoconference.

- 6. Sport and rules committee appointments.** The committee approved the recommendation from the Division II Nominating Committee to appoint Dan Friend, head men's volleyball coach at Lewis University, to fill an immediate vacancy on the NCAA Men's Volleyball Committee.

7. Future videoconferences.

- December 5, 2-4 p.m. Eastern time.
- January 9, 2025, 3-4:30 p.m. Eastern time.

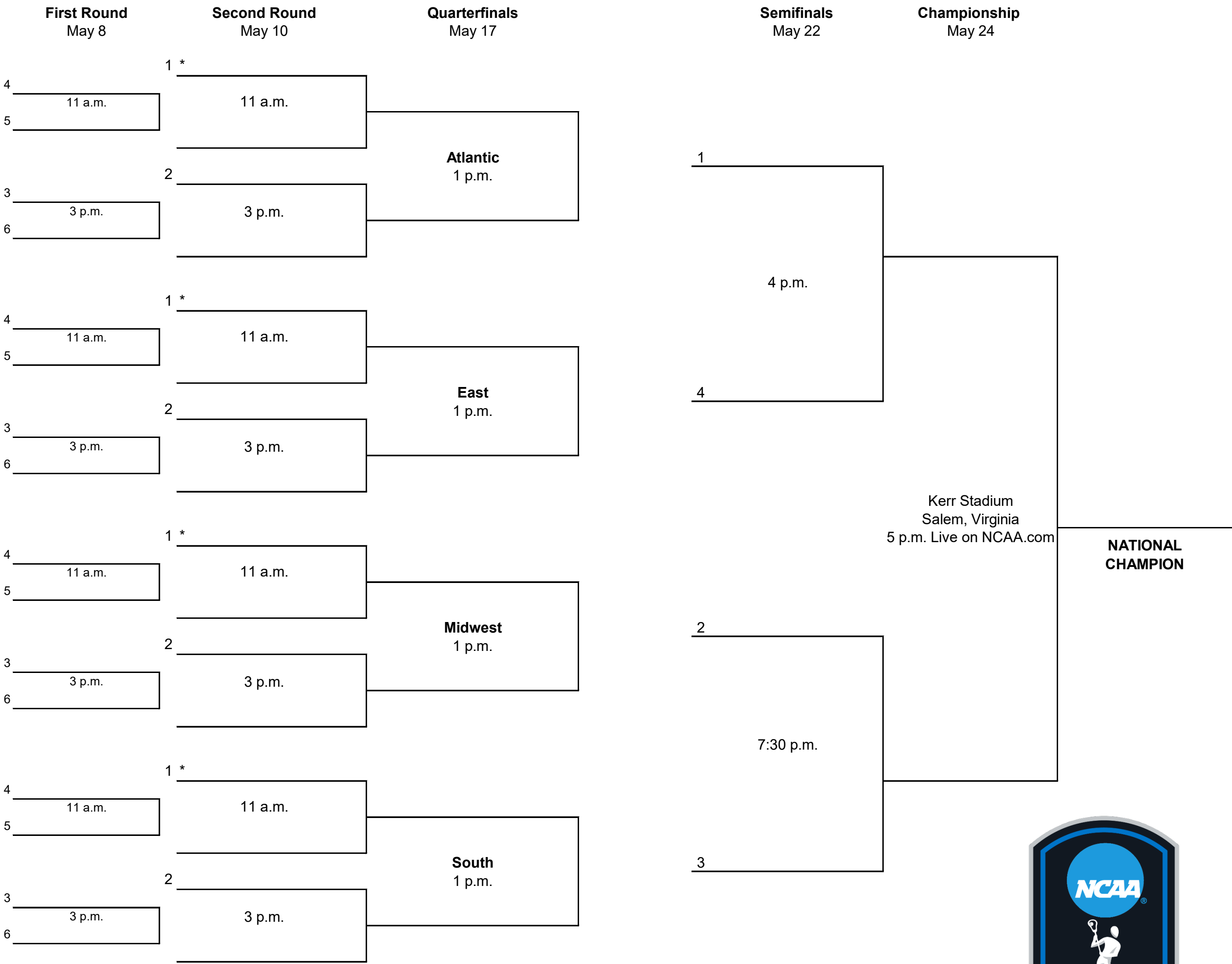
Committee Chair: Regan McAthie, Concordia University, St. Paul
Staff Liaison(s): Karen Kirsch, Championships and Alliances
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances
Chelsea Hooks, Academic and Membership Affairs

Division II Championships Committee November 7, 2024, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Terry Beattie, West Chester University of Pennsylvania.	
Marcus Clarke, Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association.	
Chris Colvin, Conference Carolinas.	
Neil Duval, Saint Anselm College.	
JJ Hayes, Palm Beach Atlantic University.	
Regan McAthie, Concordia University, St. Paul.	
Courtney Medwin, West Chester University of Pennsylvania.	
Sandee Mott, Texas Woman's University.	
Roberta Page, Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania (Management Council chair).	
Christina Paone, Walsh University.	
Gary Pine, Azusa Pacific University.	

Jay Poerner, Lone Star Conference.
Stan Wagnon, University of Central Oklahoma.
Absentees:
Erin Lind, Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (Management Council vice chair).
Cade Smith, University of Alabama in Huntsville.
Guests in Attendance:
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
Karen Kirsch, Championships and Alliances.
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances.
Chelsea Hooks, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Eric Breece, Terri Steeb Gronau, Leslie Havens, Maritza Jones, Ryan Jones, Ryan Rea, Angela Red, CJ Sowards and Lynda Tealer.



2025 NCAA Division II Women's Lacrosse Championship



All times are local time.
*Host Institution
Information subject to change.
**The Division II Women's Lacrosse Committee will seed the final four teams following completion of the quarterfinal round games.

