



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
APRIL 27, 2020, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative items.

- **Cancellation of championship banquets and approval of virtual sport committee meetings.**

- (1) Recommendation. The committee recommended that for the 2020-21 academic year, banquets held at championships not be conducted, and that all sport committee annual meetings be held via digital platforms instead of in person.
- (2) Effective date. Immediate.
- (3) Rationale. Per the SPFC's request, the committee reviewed potential budget cuts to meet the division's mandated reserve policy (50% of the annual revenue) through the current CBS/Turner contract (2023-24). Championships Committee members considered these two options as well as potential championships reductions that could come from the division's "supplemental spend" (i.e., those items that are not part of the base budget; refer to Informational Item No. 6). (Note: These adjustments are occurring in all three divisions.)
- (4) Estimated budget impact. Projected total savings of \$440,000 in cancelled banquets and virtual sport committee annual meetings.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. The Championships Committee and sport committees will work with staff to explore different ways to recognize award winners (e.g., Elite 90 recipients) typically honored at the championships banquets.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. Opening remarks.** Championships Committee chair Kiki Jacobs welcomed the group to the videoconference and noted the importance of this committee's work given the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 situation.
- 2. COVID-19 updates.** Committee members reported on factors impacting operations at their own campuses and acknowledged the challenges ahead for the entire division. Staff also

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provided updates related to national office operations and areas in which cost savings could be realized. Given the uncertainties moving forward, the committee believes it is best to continue working strategically with the intent of conducting championships in 2020-21 as planned but to be nimble enough to react to a fluid and unpredictable environment.

3. **Approval of recent reports.** The committee approved the report from its March 23 teleconference as presented.
4. **Division III Management Council update.** Heather Benning, who also serves on the Management Council, reviewed recent actions, including approval of permitting only institutions in year three of the provisional or reclassifying process to count toward the automatic qualification waiting period (per the Championships Committee's recommendation), and approving noncontroversial legislation to adjust sport committee rosters to coincide with the new regional alignment the Championships Committee endorsed.
5. **Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee report.**
 - (1) **Budget review.** The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee noted the cancellation of the 2020 Division I Men's Basketball Championship will result in all three divisions experiencing approximately a 70% revenue loss, which equates to \$22 million in revenue for Division III for 2020-21. The SPFC asked the Championships Committee and staff to provide input regarding the division's future forecast and proposed budget cuts to meet the division's mandated reserve policy (50% of the annual revenue) through the current CBS/Turner contract (2023-24). (See Informational Item 6.)
 - (2) **Bracket expansion in field hockey and men's lacrosse.** The SPFC tabled a recommendation from the Championships Committee to expand the field hockey bracket by two teams (from 24 to 26) and the men's lacrosse bracket by two teams (from 36 to 38), more because of the timing of the requests rather than opposition to them. With bracket sizes needing to be set prior to the new academic year, and because of COVID-19 and the uncertainty of the budget, SPFC asked the Championships Committee to revisit these requests. Given the uncertainties surrounding sport sponsorship and institutional budgets, Championships Committee members agreed to table requesting expansion for both sports until the next budget cycle beginning in 2021-22, noting that the requests would be prioritized at that time.
6. **COVID-19 impact on budget prioritization.** Per the SPFC's request, the committee reviewed potential budget cuts to meet the division's mandated reserve policy (50% of the annual revenue) through the current CBS/Turner contract (2023-24). In addition to the recommended cancelation of championships banquets and the approval of virtual sport committee annual meetings, Championships Committee members considered the following potential championships reductions that could come from the division's "supplemental spend" (i.e., those items that are not part of the base budget):

- (1) **Ground transportation.** The committee recommended not reimbursing local ground transportation in team sports and individual/team sports.
 - (2) **Preliminary-round conference matchups.** The committee recommended suspending a pilot program (currently in year one of two) that separates conference opponents in the first round of a championship.
 - (3) **Travel party size.** Committee members were hesitant to pull back on the recently adopted increases and as such did not recommend cuts in this area for now.
7. **COVID-19 impact on spring-sport AQs.** The committee discussed how the COVID-19 situation affects conferences serving part of a two-year waiting period or grace period and affirmed the following statements that will be included in the academic and membership affairs Q&A document pertaining to COVID-19-related issues as well as being sent to Division III conference commissioners.
- **Waiting period statement:** The 2020 spring semester may be counted toward a conference's two-year waiting period so long as the conference can demonstrate it would have had seven institutions that would have satisfied automatic-qualification requirements, including meeting sport-sponsorship minimums, and but for COVID-19 would have competed.
 - **Grace period statement:** So long as a conference can demonstrate it would have met the criteria for a grace period year during the 2019-20 academic year, the 2019-20 academic year will count as a grace period year. An institution or conference may submit a waiver requesting an extension of the grace period to the Division III Championships Committee. (Note that the Championships Committee will review waiver requests on a case-by-case basis and determine if mitigation presented warrants an approval.)
8. **Review of regional rankings and selection criteria.** The committee reviewed current policies and procedures regarding regional rankings and selection criteria and asked staff to develop specific questions for sport committees to consider (e.g., whether a set fixed number or a fixed percentage should be used for regional rankings; RPI vs. PairWise, etc.).
9. **Baseball and softball survey.** The committee reviewed and authorized a survey from the Division III Baseball Committee and the Division III Softball Committee to head coaches, directors of athletics, senior woman administrators and conference commissioners regarding potential championship date formula changes in those two sports that could be implemented no earlier than the 2023 championships.
10. **Joint Men's and Women's Soccer Committees report.** The committee reviewed a request to change the date formula for the men's and women's soccer championships beginning with the 2021 championships (or possibly the 2022 championships given the COVID-19 situation) and given the shortness of time agreed to take action on the matter during its next videoconference. In the meantime, staff encouraged committee members to forward questions to be addressed.

11. Future meetings. Staff noted that all governance meetings through August would be conducted via virtual platforms. The Championships Committee currently is scheduled to convene May 19 and June 22, but members acknowledged that the unusual circumstances may require meeting sooner and more frequently.

Committee Chair: Kiki Jacobs, Roger Williams University
Staff Liaisons: Liz Turner Suscha, Championships and Alliances
 Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances
 Julie Sargent, Academic and Membership Affairs

Division III Championships Committee April 27, 2020, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Robin Baker, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.	
Heather Benning, Midwest Conference.	
Jason Fein, Bates College.	
Kiki Jacobs, Roger Williams University.	
Brady Keller, Nebraska Wesleyan University.	
Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8.	
Michelle Morgan, John Carroll University.	
John Neese, Hardin-Simmons University.	
Penny Siqueiros, Wesleyan College (Georgia).	
Absentees:	
None.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.	
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:	
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances.	
Julie Sargent, Academic and Membership Affairs.	
Liz Turner Suscha, Championships and Alliances.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Kevin Alcox, Dan Dutcher, Jan Gentry, Laura Klee, John Kuzio, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers, JP Williams.	