



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
AUGUST 15, 2023, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

- **None.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. Opening remarks and review of schedule and agenda.** Division III Championships Committee chair Chuck Mitrano welcomed the group and introduced new members Renee Bostic, director of athletics at State University of New York at New Paltz; Chad Eisele, director of athletics and head golf coach at Hampden-Sydney College; Shannon Howley, associate director of athletics at Montclair State University; and Sara Shoffner, associate dean of faculty and faculty athletics representative at Huntingdon College. The new members reflect legislation adopted at the 2023 NCAA Convention amending the composition of select Division III committees, including the Championships Committee, which expanded from nine to 12 members.
- 2. Recent Championships Committee reports.** The committee approved the report from its June 20-21 in-person meeting as presented.
- 3. Division III Nominating Committee report.** The Championships Committee approved the following sport committee appointments as recommended by the Nominating Committee:
 - a. NCAA Division III Men's Ice Hockey Committee** (immediate vacancy replacing Doug Schueller): **Graham Johnson**, head men's ice hockey coach, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference.
 - b. NCAA Division III Women's Soccer Committee** (Region II): **Stephanie Smyrl**, director of athletics, Emerson College, New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference.
 - c. NCAA Division III Women's Tennis Committee** (immediate vacancy replacing Justin Roe): **Tom Linhart**, head men's and women's tennis coach, Rochester Institute of Technology, Liberty League.
 - d. NCAA Division III Women's Volleyball Committee** (Region VIII): **Melanee Wagener**, director of athletics, Mount St. Joseph University, Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference.
 - e. NCAA Division III Wrestling Committee** (immediate vacancy replacing Josh Malave): **Ron Beaschler**, assistant director of athletics and head wrestling coach, Ohio Northern University, Ohio Athletic Conference.
 - f. NCAA Men's and Women's Fencing Committee** (Northeast Region): **Robert Charlton**, head fencing coach and assistant professor, Wellesley College, New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference.

4. **AQ waiver request.** The committee reviewed and approved a request from the State University of New York Athletic Conference (SUNYAC) to allow the Northeast Women's Hockey League, a single-sport conference that is dissolving, to transition into the multisport SUNYAC and maintain its automatic qualification. The Championships Committee agreed that the request meets the standards of the waiver guideline the committee adopted in 2019, which states that a single-sport conference may transition into a multisport conference and maintain its automatic qualification so long as it satisfies all conditions of a multisport conference, and so long as each member of the single-sport conference joins the multisport conference to maintain the automatic qualification. (Note: Renee Bostic from the State University of New York at New Paltz, a member of the SUNYAC, abstained during the committee's vote.)

In addition, the committee agreed to authorize staff to adjudicate subsequent waiver requests of this nature. (In other words, if a request satisfies the waiver guideline, staff has the authority to approve. If the request does not satisfy all components of the guideline, it will be submitted for the Championships Committee to review.)

5. **Sport committee reports.**

- a. **Women's ice hockey.**

- **Predetermined site pilot.** The committee approved the women's ice hockey committee's request to conduct a four-year pilot during which two championship finals (2025 and 2027) would be held at predetermined sites and the remaining two (2024 and 2026) would be held at the campus of the highest eligible seed as is currently done. The Championships Committee considered the request initially during its June meeting but asked the sport committee to obtain additional membership feedback to address any lingering concerns and to ensure broad-based support for the recommendation.

The women's ice hockey committee reviewed survey results on the topic and discussed the issue in depth with coaches and administrators who have participated in the nonpredetermined site format. The committee also met with the men's ice hockey committee to discuss the matter further, since the men's committee currently uses a format that rotates between predetermined and nonpredetermined sites.

After discussing this additional outreach and research at length, the women's ice hockey committee reaffirmed its support for the pilot approach as proposed, noting that it will provide the best evaluation upon which to make an informed decision once the pilot concludes. The committee also noted that there will be no additional budget impact with the pilot, as any additional funds required can be absorbed into the current budget.

The Championships Committee appreciated the additional information and commended the women's ice hockey committee for its diligence in responding to the Championships Committee's request. The Championships Committee based its approval not only on the additional feedback provided but also in the interests of

gender equity as it relates to championship experience and quality of facility given that the men's ice hockey committee conducts its championship at a predetermined site every other year.

In finalizing its decision, the Championships Committee did agree to ask the women's ice hockey committee to consider whether it would help to structure the pilot so that predetermined sites would be conducted in consecutive years (and not necessarily at the same site in those years) rather than in alternate years in order to gain a better and perhaps more immediate perspective on whether the predetermined site approach would be an enhancement for the Division III women's ice hockey membership.

b. Softball.

- **2024 championship site.** The committee approved the softball committee's request to move the 2024 Division III Softball Championship to the campus of East Texas Baptist University. The change became necessary when the softball committee was informed that renovations to Moyer Park in Salem, Virginia, which had originally been selected as the site for the 2024 championship, would not be completed in time to host. East Texas Baptist had submitted a bid for the 2024 championship during the previous site selection cycle and also successfully hosted the 2023 championship and received high praise from the competing teams, which compelled the softball committee to recommend East Texas Baptist as the replacement site.
6. **Sport committee process for membership feedback.** The committee reviewed and offered comment on a draft feedback instrument for sport committees to use when they are considering proposals to modify the championship date formula in ways that either change the selection/AQ submission date or extend the length of the tournament (or both). The Championships Committee during its June meeting noted the need for more sufficient membership input on the front end of the process to support such modifications. Accordingly, the Championships Committee discussed the draft feedback instrument at length and asked staff to present a revision for further review during the September meeting.
 7. **Winter championships recaps.** The committee reviewed recaps from sport managers regarding the spring sport championships and discussed the identified issues. The committee asked that the issues cited in women's golf and women's tennis be discussed further during the committee's September meeting. The committee also discussed the merits of asking site representatives to complete the same or similar forms and asked staff to discuss internally whether a standardized form for site representatives could/should be created.
 8. **Future meeting/videoconference dates.**
 - a. September 11-12 (in-person meeting, Indianapolis).
 - b. October 24, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
 - c. November 21, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).

- d. December 12, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- e. February 5-6, 2024 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).

Committee Chair: Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8
Staff Liaisons: Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances
Jeff Myers, Academic and Membership Affairs

NCAA Division III Championships Committee August 15, 2023, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Renee Bostic, State University of New York at New Paltz.	
Chad Eisele, Hampden-Sydney College.	
Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8.	
Maureen Harty, College Conference of Illinois & Wisconsin.	
Shannon Howley, Montclair State University.	
Adaobi Nebuwa, Colby College.	
John Neese, Hardin-Simmons University.	
Sara Shoffner, Huntingdon College.	
Karen Tessmer, Worcester State University.	
Leonard Trevino, Chatham University.	
Jason Verdugo, Hamline University.	
Absentees:	
Holly Sheilley, Transylvania University.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.	
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:	
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances.	
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Margaret Gaines, Caleb Kolby, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers and Bill Regan.	