

**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 3, 2025, VIRTUAL MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None

2. Nonlegislative items.

- **Stipend increase for live streaming in football.**

- Recommendation. That the Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee approve increasing the streaming stipend provided to preliminary-round hosts of the Division III Football Championship from \$1,000 to \$2,000.
- Effective date. 2025 Division III Football Championship.
- Rationale. The Division III Championships Committee approved a recommendation from the Division III Football Committee to require hosts of first-, second-, third- and quarterfinal round games of the Division III Football Championship to provide a minimum of two cameras for streaming purposes. The approval was based on a survey of Division III football-sponsoring institutions indicating that a majority of respondents already employ two or more cameras during the regular season or for preliminary rounds in which they have previously participated. Further, most support requiring at least two cameras for preliminary-round games as standard practice moving forward, particularly since the preliminary rounds are being streamed on ESPN+. As a result of approving this recommendation, however, the Championships Committee believes it is prudent to increase the streaming stipend already provided to football host institutions from \$1,000 to \$2,000 to help offset the production costs associated with using a second camera.
- Estimated budget impact. \$37,000.
- Student-athlete impact. The increased stipend helps institutions meet streaming requirements that enhance the student-athlete experience during the championship.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Opening remarks and review of schedule and agenda.** The chair welcomed the group and acknowledged new members Arturo Casas, a baseball student-athlete at Manchester University and member of the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee; Russ Rogers, assistant vice president and director of athletics and recreation at Stevens Institute of Technology and member of the Division III Management Council; and Ashley Wagner, director of athletics and wellness at Notre Dame of Maryland University.
2. **Recent Championships Committee reports.** The committee approved reports from its December 19 videoconference and January 13 electronic vote as presented.
3. **Sport committee liaison assignments.** The committee reviewed assignments for 2025 and filled vacancies as necessary.
4. **Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee update.** The committee received an update on the SAAC's recent meeting at the NCAA Convention during which members elected a new chair and vice chair and approved representatives on committees within the governance structure. The SAAC also conducted a virtual town hall in November for student-athletes, coaches and administrators that featured Dr. Deena Casiero, the NCAA chief medical officer, and Kaya Mahy, a softball student-athlete at Muhlenberg College who shared her research on identity and life after sport.
5. **Division III Management Council update.** The committee received an update on the council's meeting at the 2025 NCAA Convention. The update noted the council's support of a partnership with Mental Health First Aid, an organization that will provide mental health training for Division III head coaches and athletic trainers. The council also supported developing a Coaches Connect Program designed to regularly engage Division III coaches in the decision-making process within Division III governance (a formal proposal will come back to the Championships Committee at its next meeting).
6. **Governance update.** Staff updated the committee on discussions within the Division III Management and Presidents Councils regarding the potential deregulation of sports betting legislation to allow betting on professional sports, and the continued emphasis on providing the membership with resources to support their efforts to address harm-reduction strategies to protect student-athletes, coaches and staff in the sports betting space.
7. **Academic and membership affairs update.**
 - a. **Convention legislation.** Staff reviewed legislative outcomes at the 2025 NCAA Convention, noting that all proposals were either ratified or adopted, including one that establishes a National Collegiate Women's Wrestling Championship beginning in winter 2026.

- b. **Waiver request.** The committee reviewed a request from the Little East Conference to receive automatic qualification in women's ice hockey for the 2026 Division III Women's Ice Hockey Championship, thus waiving the two-year waiting period required for conferences to receive an AQ. The committee tabled the request until further precedent information is gathered to enable a complete review of the request.

8. Championships topics.

- a. **Championships date formula review.** The committee revisited its November decision not to support a recommendation to adjust the date formula in men's and women's soccer by moving the championship one week later and noted that the Division III Management Council also provided feedback on that proposal. During its discussions, the council suggested that a resource be developed that includes the entirety of each playing season – the traditional segment, the nontraditional segment, and the championships segment. This resource will help inform decisions regarding future championship date formula change requests, as it will allow the Championships Committee to view the total impact on campus as it relates to concurrent sport seasons. The committee reviewed an initial draft of the plan and timeline to create and review the resource and provided feedback.
- b. **Championships ticketing review.** Regarding a previous request from the committee to explore ticketing policies across all Division III championships, staff noted that a review is currently underway for all NCAA championships. The committee will be updated on the Association-wide review during future meetings.
- c. **Officiating fees review.** The committee also asked staff to examine officials fees for NCAA Division III championships to discern whether adjustments were necessary. The committee asked staff to gather preliminary information that includes the impact of officiating fees on availability of officials.
- d. **Football technology.** Staff updated the committee on rules pertaining to coach-to-player helmet technology being used by schools in the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision. The NCAA Football Rules Committee is exploring whether there is interest in other segments of the membership to allow this technology (acknowledging the costs associated with it) as a permissive rule and is seeking broader feedback before the rules committee convenes later this month, particularly from athletics directors and other staff who would be able to talk more specifically about whether the budget impact would impact the decision. Committee members noted a desire to know more about the costs and competitive advantages regarding the technology before offering further perspectives.

9. Fall championships recap.

- a. **NCAA Power Index.** Staff updated the committee on the NPI implementation that took place for the fall championships and noted generally positive feedback from those sport committees. Championships Committee members who are liaisons to the fall sport

committees also offered feedback. Staff then previewed the NPI usage for winter and spring championships. The committee noted that education regarding how the NPI works continues to be important. The committee also acknowledged its previous agreement that the “dials” sport committees set for 2024-25 will remain in place for two years, and if changes are warranted for a given sport(s), those would not be implemented after a one-year delay to give institutions a chance to adjust their schedules accordingly. Staff informed the committee that a broader NPI review will be conducted at a future meeting when the fall sport committees will have submitted their annual meeting reports.

- b. **Streaming initiatives.** Staff also updated the committee on streaming analytics for the fall championships. This fall was the first time Division III required hosts to live stream every round of team championships available on NCAA.com. In total, 210 competitions streamed through the NCAA.com/Hudl partnership – all available for free. Viewers watched a combined 11.5 million minutes of live content this fall compared to 2.3 million last year. The field hockey championship also was promoted via the NCAA fan database and had a 158% increase in viewership.

10. Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) update. The committee’s liaison to PROP summarized the reports from the panel’s most recent meetings as information.

11. Sport committee reports.

a. Football.

- **Camera requirement for streaming.** The Championships Committee reviewed and supported the recommendation from the Division III Football Committee to require hosts of first-round, second-round, third-round and quarterfinal games of the Division III Football Championship to provide a minimum of two cameras for streaming purposes. (See Action Item.)

b. Men’s basketball.

- **Championship format for 2026.** The Championships Committee approved a recommendation from the Division III Men’s Basketball Committee to adjust the format for the 2026 Division III Men’s Basketball Championship to accommodate the championship game being conducted as part of the Men’s Final Four. The format for 2026 will be as follows:
 - First/second rounds remain unchanged and will follow the traditional date formula. Sixty-four teams will travel to 16 non-predetermined sites, with the 32 first-round games played on Friday, March 6. The 16 second-round games will be played at the same sites on Saturday, March 7.

- Third-round games will be held on the second weekend of the championship played at eight non-predetermined sites – four on Friday, March 13 and four on Saturday, March 14.
- The eight third-round winners will travel to Fort Wayne, Indiana, to play the quarterfinals and semifinals at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum on Thursday and Saturday, March 19 and 21.
- The national championship game is scheduled for April 5 at Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis.

The Championships Committee noted that outside of the date of the national championship game, the traditional championship dates are maintained to eliminate the impact the joint championship would have on the regular season and conference tournaments. Like previous joint men's basketball championships, the quarterfinals are being moved to the same site as the semifinals, as this ensures the best experience for the final eight institutions at a neutral site. The committee also noted that the budget for this one-year adjustment (\$48,000) was previously approved with the fiscal year 2025-26 budget.

c. Wrestling.

- **Wrestling regional site.** The committee approved the Division III Wrestling Committee's recommendation that Messiah University host the 2025 Region III Regional.

12. Future meeting/videoconference dates.

- a. March 18, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- b. April 15, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- c. May 13, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- d. June 16-17 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).
- e. August 19, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- f. September 8-9 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).
- g. October 14, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- h. November 18, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- i. December 9, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- j. February 2-3, 2026 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis)

NCAA Division III Championships Committee

February 3, 2025, Virtual Meeting

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Committee Chair: Leonard Trevino, Chatham University

*Staff Liaisons: Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances*

NCAA Division III Championships Committee February 3, 2025, Virtual Meeting	
Attendees:	
Renee Bostic, State University of New York at New Paltz.	
Arturo Casas, Manchester University.	
Tim Demant, Whitworth University.	
Jason Doviak, Alfred State University.	
Chad Eisele, Hampden-Sydney College.	
Maureen Harty, College Conference of Illinois & Wisconsin.	
Shannon Howley, Montclair State University.	
Duey Naatz, University of Wisconsin-Stout.	
Russ Rogers, Stevens Institute of Technology.	
Sara Shoffner, Huntingdon College.	
Leonard Trevino, Chatham University.	
Jason Verdugo, Hamline University.	
Ashley Wagner, Notre Dame of Maryland University.	
Absentees:	
None.	
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:	
Elise Boulton, Margaret Gaines, Ty Halpin, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers and Bill Regan.	