



REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE  
JUNE 2, 2020, VIDEOCONFERENCE

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

- None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

**1. Welcome and announcements.** Championships Committee chair Kiki Jacobs welcomed the group to the videoconference and reviewed the agenda.

**2. Approval of recent reports.** The committee approved the report from its May 19 videoconference.

**3. Nominating Committee report.**

**a. Nomination process for Association-wide committees.** The Championships Committee supported the Nominating Committee's recommendation to establish a nomination subcommittee with specific policies and procedures for nominating individuals to serve on Association-wide committees, National Collegiate sport committees and playing rules committees beginning August 1, 2020.

**b. Sport committee reappointment.** The Championships Committee approved the following sport committee reappointment, effective September 1, 2020:

- NCAA Division III Women's Golf Committee – Mary Giorgi, head golf coach, St. Catherine University, Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

**c. Sport and playing rules committee appointments.** The Championships Committee approved the following sport and playing rules committee appointments, effective September 1, 2020, unless otherwise noted:

- (1) NCAA Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Committee (immediate vacancy replacing Mykul Haun) – Tracy Johnson, head coach, St. Olaf College, Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

- (2) NCAA Division III Women's Ice Hockey Committee – East region: Dave LaBaff, head women's hockey coach, State University of New York at Canton, North Atlantic Conference.
- (3) NCAA Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving Rules Committee – Jessen Book, head swimming coach, Kenyon College, North Coast Athletic Conference.
- (4) NCAA Division III Men's Tennis Committee (immediate vacancy replacing Patrick Summers) – Michael Lynch, director of athletics, Babson College, New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference. [Mr. Lynch will complete Mr. Summers' term (August 31, 2021) and be eligible for reappointment per NCAA Bylaw 21.9.1.3.1.]
- (5) NCAA Division III Wrestling Committee – Upper Midwest Region: Kim Blum, director of athletics, University of Wisconsin-Lacrosse, Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

#### **4. COVID-19 issues – championship impacts.**

- a. **Relevant actions to date.** Staff noted the Division III Administrative Committee formally approved the Championships Committee's recommendation that minimum contest requirements for championship selection be reduced by 33 percent in all sports for the 2020-21 academic year. Also, the Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee will convene later this month to deliberate additional cost-cutting measures the Championships Committee previously prioritized, such as suspending a pilot program (currently in year one of two) that separates conference opponents in the first round of a championship and not reimbursing local ground transportation in team sports and individual/team sports for schools that travel by air. The Championships Committee's recommendations to eliminate championship banquets in 2020-21 and conduct all sport committee meetings via digital platforms instead of in person were approved earlier this spring.
- b. **Potential guidelines surrounding a compressed fall season.** Championships Committee members began discussing how to conduct fall championships should COVID-19 restrictions affect the normal conduct of the regular season or impact plans for necessary for the health and safety of student-athletes and team personnel. The committee assumes at this point that modifications will be necessary and that what is left to determine is the severity of those modifications. While some modifications may ultimately compromise the high level of competitive equity and fairness the membership is accustomed to, the Championships Committee supported the preservation of student-athlete championship opportunities as a top priority.
  - **Playing and practice season issues.** The committee suggested that, if fall sport regular seasons are not able to be conducted in a typical manner, a four-to-five-

week regular season would be sufficient in all sports except football for conferences to play a “conference-centric” schedule that provides for competition among only conference members, or a schedule that includes conference and in-region competition. This principle is the same the committee used during its review of minimum contest requirements for championship selection purposes, as it aligns with the Division III philosophy that emphasizes conference and regional competition as a core tenet. While the committee considered other playing and practice season models, members were most comfortable with at least preserving a four-to-five-week period for regular-season competition with the established dates for championships selections and competition.

- **Minimum number of sponsoring institutions required to conduct a championship.** Given that the effects of the pandemic may alter the number of sponsoring institutions in a given sport, the committee discussed what minimum number or percentage of sponsoring institutions would be necessary to conduct a championship. Committee members expressed interest in a “sliding scale” approach that would apply the Division III access ratio to determine bracket/field size based on the number of eligible institutions per sport. The committee asked staff to develop various models along these lines for consideration during the committee’s next meeting. The committee also noted the need for sport committee input in this area to inform decision making.
- **Automatic qualification.** The committee discussed the impact of sponsorship fluctuation and bracket modification on automatic qualification and determined the following:
  - **Conferences that fall below four core members.** The committee supported that if a conference in good AQ standing, including via the grace period, falls below the required minimum of four core members due to the effects of COVID-19 during the 2020-21 academic year, the conference would lose its AQ for the 2020-21 academic year; however, the conference could regain the AQ in 2021-22 if it is able to return to the minimum of four core members.
  - **Conferences already in grace-period status.** The committee agreed that conferences already in grace-period status will still need to apply for a waiver to seek relief for 2020-21.
- **Selection and bracketing.** The committee discussed but did not reach any conclusions in this area since input from sport committees and additional review of the “sliding scale” model for bracket/field size will impact ultimate recommendations. The committee noted that it will have more information to consider by its June 22-23 meeting.

## 5. Future meetings.

- June 22-23, 2020 (videoconference).
- September 14-15, 2020 (videoconference).
- February 2-3, 2021 (videoconference).

*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 June 2, 2020, Videoconference	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Robin Baker, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.	
Heather Benning, Midwest Conference.	
Kiki Jacobs, Roger Williams University.	
Braly Keller, Nebraska Wesleyan University.	
Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8.	
Michelle Morgan, John Carroll University.	
John Neese, Hardin-Simmons University.	
Penny Siqueiros, Wesleyan College (Georgia).	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
Jason Fein, Bates College.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.	
<b>NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:</b>	
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances.	
Julie Sargent, Academic and Membership Affairs.	
Liz Turner Suscha, Championships and Alliances.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Dan Dutcher, Laura Klee, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers.	