



REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
JUNE 22-23, 2020, VIDEOCONFERENCE

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **Noncontroversial legislation – NCAA Bylaw 21.9.6.2 and Figure 21.1 – Committee Membership.**

- (1) Recommendation. That noncontroversial legislation to amend Figure 21.1 within Bylaw 21.9.6.2 be amended as follows to adjust the representation of the Division III Men’s Volleyball Committee in a manner that accommodates the change in regional alignment from two to three regions.

Committee	Number of Members (current)	Number of Members (proposed)
Volleyball Committee, Men’s	4, including two members from each region.	4, including one member from each region, plus an at-large member from any of the three regions.

- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2021.
- (3) Rationale. The Division III Championships Committee approved the Division III Men’s Volleyball Committee’s recommendation to expand the number of regions in the sport from two to three in order to better balance the number of sponsoring institutions within each region [see Informational Item 10-g(3) below]. The recommendation to adopt noncontroversial legislation to adjust the representation of the Men’s Volleyball Committee retains the overall number of members at four but modifies the composition so that each region would be represented by one member, instead of the two that currently represent each region. Also, the additional member would come from any of the three regions.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

- **None.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. Opening remarks and review of schedule and agenda.** Division III Championships Committee Chair Kiki Jacobs welcomed committee members and reviewed the meeting schedule and key discussion items. Members also summarized on-campus management of social justice and racial equality issues that have emerged over the past several months. NCAA staff noted the use of the Association's social media accounts (by sport, for example) to promote the student-athlete voice, and to begin targeting the NCAA's championships platforms to raise awareness.
- 2. Recent committee reports.** The committee reviewed and approved its June 2 videoconference report as presented.
- 3. Governance update.** NCAA governance staff reviewed the following key items with the committee: 1) Ongoing communication of actions resulting from the pandemic; 2) Student-athlete name, image and likeness concepts being considered by various groups within the NCAA membership; 3) Impact of the recent Arrington settlement on Division III member institutions regarding student-athlete health and safety (specifically concussion); 4) Ongoing work with the Division III Commissioners Association (and within the NCAA in general) on officiating issues; 5) A decision from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel to delay until 2021-22 several rules that were supposed to go into effect in 2020-21 (the delay was due to COVID-19 impacts); and 6) LGBTQ recognition awards.
- 4. NCAA Division III Administrative Committee update.** Heather Benning provided an update from the committee's June 10 meeting, noting the decision to declare August 10 or the first day of class, whichever is earlier, as the first permissible practice date for all fall sports for 2020-21.
- 5. NCAA Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee update.** Braly Keller provided an update on behalf of the Division III SAAC that included the group's review of issues related to student-athlete mental wellness, particularly in light of the impact of COVID-19 on student-athletes; progress on the name, image and likeness space; and SAAC discussions on social justice and racial equality issues.
- 6. Championships and alliances updates.**
 - a. Championships intern.** Staff introduced the new championships intern for 2020-21, Demetria Woodard, a former basketball student-athlete at Nazareth College.
 - b. Host site selection.** Staff provided an update of the timeline and process for selecting hosts for championships from the fall of 2022 through the spring of 2026, noting that the Division III Championships Committee will be positioned to review initial recommendations at its September meeting.

c. Fall sports championship administration – COVID-19 impacts. Joni Comstock, NCAA senior vice president of championships, joined the committee to discuss the administration of fall sport championships, noting that the safety and health of student-athletes, staff and spectators remains paramount, and that fall championships should continue to be conducted in a manner that celebrates student-athletes and provides quality experiences. At the same time, the ongoing and unpredictable impacts of COVID-19 have created the need to develop contingency plans to manage fall championship sites and travel to ensure the delivery of health and safety protocols, including plans to predetermine fall preliminary round sites and reduce the overall total number of site. While such contingencies have not been activated or finalized, the NCAA Board of Governors has asked for input by its August 5 meeting in order to provide further direction. Accordingly, the Championships Committee and other groups in the governance structure (e.g., sport committees) are being urged to develop baseline/threshold principles for championships administration that would help the Board of Governors determine next steps. (See Informational Item 11.)

7. Academic and membership affairs updates.

a. NEAC men’s lacrosse waiver request. The committee considered but did not support a request from the North Eastern Athletic Conference to waive the requirement for maintaining at least four of seven members as core institutions to be eligible for an AQ for the 2021 season in men’s lacrosse. The NEAC experienced a significant change in membership with four core institutions, all of which sponsor men’s lacrosse, departing the league at the conclusion of the 2019-20 academic year. The committee sympathized with the NEAC’s position but acknowledged that the NEAC relies heavily on affiliate membership from a partner conference to meet sponsorship requirements in men’s lacrosse and was reluctant to set a precedent by approving a waiver for multisport conference requirements in this instance.

b. CCIW men’s volleyball waiver request. The committee considered but did not support a request from the College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin to waive the seven consistent member requirement during the two year waiting period for the conference to earn its AQ in men’s volleyball. In addition to there being no case precedent for approving similar requests, the committee was not compelled to deviate from the bylaw which calls for consistency among those members.

8. Playing Rules Oversight Panel. The committee reviewed reports from recent PROP meetings as information only.

9. Championships budget. The committee reviewed budget-to-actuals regarding championships expenses through May 31 of the 2019-20 fiscal year.

10. Sport committee reports.

a. Baseball.

- **Championship date formula modification.** The committee engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding a proposal from the Baseball Committee to move the championship back one week so that regionals would begin during Memorial Day Weekend instead of the week prior. The proposal results from a resolution adopted at the 2020 NCAA Convention directing the Division III Baseball and Softball Committees to evaluate potential changes to the championship date formulas for those two sports to mitigate concerns regarding poor playing conditions due to inclement weather, missed class time due to rescheduled contests that then overlap with final exams or graduation ceremonies, and equity concerns between spring sport and fall sport student-athletes. The Championships Committee acknowledged that the sport committees completed their charge as directed but that the myriad issues resulting from the subsequent COVID-19 crisis have complicated matters significantly. Accordingly, while the Championships Committee is not necessarily opposed to the proposal, members decided to table it due to the uncertain economic conditions surrounding higher education and intercollegiate athletics at this time. Additionally, the committee wants to seek input from other spring sports regarding their championship date formulas to ensure that decisions aren't made in a vacuum. The committee noted that the proposal would not become effective until the 2023 championship, which means that the committee could reconsider the proposal during one of its upcoming meetings without unduly disrupting site selection in the event the decision was to support the recommendation.

b. Women's basketball.

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee approved the following 44 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Women's Basketball Championship: Alleghany Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Southwest Conference; Atlantic East Conference; Capital Athletic Conference; Centennial Conference; City University of New York Athletic Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial State Athletic Conference; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8 Conference; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference; Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Atlantic Conference Freedom; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Midwest Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Collegiate Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference; New Jersey Athletic Conference; North Atlantic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; North Eastern Athletic

Conference; Northern Athletics Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; State University of New York Athletic Conference; University Athletic Association; Upper Midwest Conference; USA South Athletic Conference; and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Polly Thomason, head women's basketball coach at the University of Texas at Dallas, serve as chair of the Division III Women's Basketball Committee.
- (3) **Determination of conference automatic qualifier.** The committee tabled a request to modify legislation regarding the deadline by when conferences must submit their automatic qualifier for selection purposes in order to seek input from other sport committees.

c. Field hockey.

- (1) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Ashley Smeltzer-Kraft, head field hockey coach and senior woman administrator at Shenandoah University, serve as chair of the Division III Field Hockey Committee.
- (2) **Recusal policy recommendation.** The committee tabled a request to re-evaluate the policy for national committee member recusal when their team is under consideration for selection and during bracketing in order to seek input from other sport committees. (The committee noted the matter could be discussed in the September meeting during which sport committee chairs will participate.)

d. Football.

- **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Duey Naatz, director of athletics at University of Wisconsin, Stout, serve as chair of the Division III Football Committee

e. Softball.

- **Championship date formula modification.** The committee engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding a proposal from the Softball Committee to move the championship back one week so that the finals would be conducted the weekend after Memorial Day rather than over Memorial Day Weekend as is done currently. The Championships Committee ultimately decided to table the proposal for the same reasons as stated in Informational Item 10-a above.

f. Men's and women's track and field and cross country.

- (1) **2020 cross country regional site.** The committee approved that Christopher Newport University host the 2020 Division III Men's and Women's South/Southeast Regional. (The sport committee resolicited bids after the originally selected host withdrew.)
- (2) **2022 indoor track and field championships site.** The committee approved that JDL Fast Track host the 2022 NCAA Division III Men's and Women's Indoor Track and Field Championships. (The sport committee resolicited bids after the originally selected host withdrew.)

g. Men's volleyball.

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee approved the following 11 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2021 NCAA Division III Men's Volleyball Championship: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; City University of New York Athletic Conference; Continental Volleyball Conference; Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Middle Atlantic Conferences; Midwest Collegiate Volleyball League; New England Collegiate Conference (year 2 grace period); North Eastern Athletics Conference; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Skyline Conference; United Volleyball Conference.
- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Mike Zapolski, athletics director at Augustana College (Illinois), serve as chair of the NCAA Division III Men's Volleyball Committee.
- (3) **Regional alignment and committee composition.** The committee approved that Division III men's volleyball be expanded from two to three regions to better balance sponsorship per region, and that noncontroversial legislation be adopted to amend Bylaw 21.9.6.2 to adjust the representation of the men's volleyball committee roster (while remaining at four members) to coincide with the new regional alignment (see Action Item above). Each region would be represented by one member, instead of the two that currently represent each region, and the additional member would come from any of the three regions.

h. Women's volleyball.

- (1) **Automatic qualification.** The committee approved the following 43 conferences for automatic qualification to the 2020 NCAA Division III Women's Volleyball Championship: Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference; American Southwest Conference; Capital Athletic Conference; Centennial Conference; City University of New York Athletic Conference; College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin; Colonial States Athletic Conference; Commonwealth Coast Conference; Empire 8;

Great Northeast Athletic Conference; Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference; Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Landmark Conference; Liberty League; Little East Conference; Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference; Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association; Middle Atlantic Conference Commonwealth; Middle Athletic Conference Freedom; Midwest Conference; Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; New England Collegiate Conference; New England Small College Athletic Conference; New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference; New Jersey Athletic Conference; North Atlantic Conference; North Coast Athletic Conference; North Eastern Athletic Conference; Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference; Northwest Conference; Ohio Athletic Conference; Old Dominion Athletic Conference; Presidents' Athletic Conference; Skyline Conference; Southern Athletic Association; Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference; St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; State University of New York Athletic Conference; University Athletic Association; Upper Midwest Conference; USA South Athletic Conference; and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

- (2) **Committee chair.** The committee approved that Danny Miller, associate director of athletics, compliance officer and head women's volleyball coach at Averett University, serve as chair of the Division III Women's Volleyball Committee.

11. COVID-19 issues – championships impacts.

a. Spring 2020 AQ grace period waiver requests.

- (1) **Capital Athletic Conference.** The committee considered the CAC's request for an additional grace year in men's tennis but did not support the request at this time because members were not satisfied with the rationale provided. The committee is unclear how the need for the waiver is based on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.
- (2) **Heartland Collegiate Lacrosse Conference.** The committee considered but tabled a request from the Heartland Collegiate Lacrosse Conference to provide an additional grace year because Year 2 of the grace year period was lost to the COVID-19 crisis. The committee noted that the conference had planned before the pandemic to partner with Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference to grow sponsorship, but the partnership dissolved in the wake of the health crisis. The committee has asked for additional details surrounding this dissolution in order to further evaluate whether the waiver should be granted.

- b. **2020-21 championship bracket and pool allocation analysis.** The committee began discussing contingency scenarios for managing fall sport championships in the event the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 crisis significantly impact sports sponsorship this fall. While the committee acknowledged it is still too early to take any definitive action in this

space, members began analyzing championship brackets and formats based on varying sponsorship percentages by sport to determine how best to provide a quality championship experience under compromised circumstances. Committee members did not reach a consensus at this point; however, they understand that the NCAA Board of Governors will be looking for input from the governance substructure by its August 5 meeting. Accordingly, the committee will pursue this matter further during subsequent to formalize recommendations.

12. Championships topics for feedback.

- a. Selection criteria concepts.** Sport committees were surveyed in May 2020 to gauge their satisfaction with current selection criteria and whether there was any interest in considering new or different criteria. Survey results indicated general satisfaction with the current legislated criteria, but respondents also expressed interest in exploring how new or different criteria could help the selection process (i.e., provide a set of optional criteria that sport committees could choose to use in their selection process in addition to the required criteria). Championships Committee members agreed that the survey results merit further discussion with sport committees and advised that a working group or subcommittee that includes representation from the Division III Commissioners Association be created to explore options that may eventually inform a proposal to modify the current legislated requirements. On a related topic, committee members suggested exploration of the idea to establish a national ranking generated by sport committees in conjunction with weekly regional rankings to better prepare sport committees for championship selections.
- b. Regional alignment and rankings protocol.** Due to the adoption of the new regional realignment plan which provides greater balance in the number of schools assigned to each region, sport committees were asked whether a fixed number of teams or a fixed percentage of teams would be preferred for rankings. While a fixed percentage was slightly preferred by sport committees, the percentages selected as the fixed number all fell within the current allowable range (15-21 percent) and ranged between five and 11 teams ranked per region. Those that selected a fixed number had a slightly greater percentage range when choosing a fixed number, but all chose between seven and 10 for the fixed number. Given the overriding desire for consistency, equity and transparency in the rankings process across sports, the Championships Committee agreed that requiring all sport committees to rank a fixed percentage of 20 percent per region is the best approach. The committee reasoned that the percentage approach is already used by a slight majority of sport committees, and that the 20 percent likely will not significantly affect the number of teams sport committees that said they preferred a fixed number would rank (i.e., in most cases 20 percent equates favorably to the number of teams those sport committees had been ranking per region). The committee agreed that the new approach will go into effect for the 2021-22 academic year in order to have time to educate the membership and reduce potential confusion. (See the attachment for the new regional alignments by sport.)

13. Future meetings dates. The committee agreed to increase meeting frequency for the foreseeable future in addition to the following meetings already scheduled.

- a. September 14-15, 2020 (includes time with sport committee chairs).
- b. February 2-3, 2021.
- c. June 21-22, 2021.

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 22-23, 2020, Videoconference
Attendees:
Robin Baker, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.
Heather Benning, Midwest Conference.
Jason Fein, Bates College.
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).
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:
Mark Aiken, Joni Comstock, Dan Dutcher, Jan Gentry, Greg Johnson, Laura Klee, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers, Rachel Seewald, Micki Spears, Nick Strah, Kelly Whitaker, J.P. Williams, Demetria Woodard.

SPORT	BY REGION COUNT									
	Note: data is based on 2019-20 conference affiliation.									
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
	(6-8 ranked teams)	(5-7 ranked teams)	(6-9 ranked teams)	(6-8 ranked teams)	(6-9 ranked teams)	(6-8 ranked teams)	(8-11 ranked teams)	(6-9 ranked teams)	(6-9 ranked teams)	(6-8 ranked teams)
MEN'S SOCCER current: 66 ranked teams proposed: 61-86 ranked teams	GNAC	12 Commonwealth Coast	9 Empire 8	8 CUNYAC	9 Atlantic East	7 Capital	6 AMCC	11 CCIW	9 American Rivers	9 American Southwest
	North Atlantic	8 MASCAC	8 Liberty League	10 MAC Freedom	8 Centennial	10 ODAC	13 North Coast	9 SLIAC	10 Minnesota Intercol.	11 Northwest
	NESCAC	11 NECC	6 Skyline	12 NJAC	10 Colonial States	8 SAA	8 Ohio	10 U. of Chicago	1 UMAC	9 SCAC
	Little East	9 Brandeis	1 SUNYAC	10 NEAC	12 Landmark	8 USA South	12 Presidents'	9 Washington U.	1 Wis.-Platteville	1 SCAC
			Pine Manor NEWMAC	1 8	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1
	40	33	41	40	43	40	51	41	42	39
WOMEN'S SOCCER current: 67 ranked teams proposed: 66-92 ranked teams	GNAC	13 Commonwealth Coast	9 Empire 8	8 CUNYAC	6 Atlantic East	7 Capital	6 AMCC	11 CCIW	9 American Rivers	9 American Southwest
	North Atlantic	8 MASCAC	8 Liberty League	10 MAC Freedom	8 Centennial	11 ODAC	14 North Coast	10 SLIAC	10 Minnesota Intercol.	12 Northwest
	NESCAC	11 NECC	7 Skyline	11 NJAC	10 Colonial States	10 SAA	8 Ohio	10 U. of Chicago	1 UMAC	9 SCAC
	Little East	9 Brandeis	1 SUNYAC	10 NEAC	12 Landmark	8 USA South	16 Presidents'	9 Maranatha	1 Wisconsin Intercol.	8 SCAC
			Pine Manor NEWMAC	1 11	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1
	41	37	40	37	47	45	51	44	50	39
SOFTBALL current: 67 ranked teams proposed: 61-86 ranked teams	GNAC	12 Commonwealth Coast	9 Empire 8	7 CUNYAC	8 Atlantic East	6 Capital	5 AMCC	11 CCIW	9 American Rivers	9 American Southwest
	North Atlantic	7 Little East	9 Liberty	8 MAC Freedom	7 Centennial	9 ODAC	11 Michigan Intercol.	9 Heartland	9 Minnesota Intercol.	12 Northwest
	NECC	7 MASCAC	8 Skyline	10 NJAC	10 Colonial States	9 SAA	7 North Coast	9 NACC	12 Midwest	10 SCAC
	NESCAC	10 NEWMAC	10 SUNYAC	10 NEAC	12 Landmark	7 USA South	16 Ohio	10 U. of Chicago	1 UMAC	9 SCAC
			Brandeis Pine Manor	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1
	36	38	35	38	42	40	50	50	42	35
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL current: 74 ranked teams proposed: 65-89 ranked teams	GNAC	13 Commonwealth Coast	9 Empire 8	8 CUNYAC	8 Atlantic East	7 ODAC	13 AMCC	11 CCIW	9 American Rivers	9 American Southwest
	North Atlantic	6 MASCAC	8 Liberty League	8 MAC Freedom	8 Centennial	11 SAA	8 Michigan Intercol.	9 Heartland	10 Minnesota Intercol.	12 Northwest
	NESCAC	11 NECC	8 Skyline	12 NJAC	9 Colonial States	10 USA South	15 North Coast	9 U. of Chicago	1 UMAC	9 SCAC
	Little East	9 Brandeis	1 SUNYAC	10 NEAC	12 Landmark	7 Emory U.	1 Ohio	10 Washington U.	1 Finlandia	1 SCAC
			Pine Manor NEWMAC	1 11	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1
	39	38	39	38	47	43	49	53	41	39
MEN'S LACROSSE 37 ranked teams	Commonwealth Coast	9 Empire 8	8 Atlantic East	7 Heartland Coll. Lacrosse	5 CCIW	6 Michigan Intercol.	7			
	GNAC	10 Liberty League	9 Capital	6 North Coast	10 Midwest Lacrosse	13				
	Little East	10 NEAC	9 Centennial	9 ODAC	11 SAA	7				
	NESCAC	11 Skyline	8 Colonial	7 Ohio	10 SAA	7				
	NEWMAC	7 SUNYAC	8 Landmark	7 Presidents'	8 Centenary (LA)	1				
North Atlantic	12		MAC Commonwealth	9 USA South	9 Colorado College	1				
			MAC Freedom	8 La Roche	1 Johnson & Wales (Denver)	1				
					U. of Dallas	1				
					Northland College	1				
					Southwestern (TX)	1				
					Whittier	1				
	59	42	53	54	41					
WOMEN'S LACROSSE 48 ranked teams	GNAC	12 Commonwealth Coast	9 Empire 8	8 Atlantic East	7 Capital	6 Heartland Women's La	6 CCIW	8		
	Little East	8 MASCAC	8 Liberty League	11 Centennial	10 ODAC	11 North Coast	9 Michigan Intercol.	8		
	NESCAC	11 NECC	5 NJAC	7 Colonial States	6 SAA	7 NEAC	10 Midwest Women's Lac	14		
	North Atlantic	6 NEWMAC	10 Skyline	9 Landmark	8 USA South	10 Ohio	9 Northwest	7		
				SUNYAC	10 MAC Freedom	8 PAC	8 SCAC	7		
				MAC Commonwealth	9	SCAC	3			
						Wis.-River Falls	1			
						Wis.-LaCrosse	1			
	37	32	45	48	34	42	49			